

# URGENT ACTION

## ATTACK CAUSES FORCED DISPLACEMENT

**The binational Indigenous Yukpa people living in Cúcuta, in the east of Colombia, suffered an armed attack on 17 May followed by their forced displacement.**

Late at night on 17 May, a hostel located in the neighbourhood of Nuevo Escobal, Cúcuta, where **more than 300 Indigenous Yukpa people** from Venezuela were living, was attacked by an unidentified armed group, presumably paramilitaries. Community representatives report receiving direct threats to their life and integrity and that the Colombian authorities have not activated the necessary contingency plans for their support in Cúcuta but have, in contrast, remained silent in the face of these events.

As a consequence of the armed attack, the Jesuit Refugee Service has reported that 106 Indigenous people, including 56 children, were forced to move to the Santander Park in Cúcuta in search of refuge and assistance from the local authorities and subsequently some were displaced to the Venezuelan border.

It has been brought to Amnesty International's attention that the local authorities have so far failed to pay sufficient attention to these displaced people from Venezuela, and have, on the contrary, stated their intention to force them to return, in violation of their right to remain in the country and to enjoy proper protection and assistance.

### 1) TAKE ACTION

**Write a letter, send an email, call, fax or tweet:**

- Urging the Minister of the Interior and relevant local authorities to immediately activate the Contingency Plan established under Law 1448 of 2011 in order to provide assistance to the Indigenous Yukpa People forced from their homes by armed attacks in the region;
- Calling on the authorities to provide care and assistance, including their requested relocation within Colombia, in order to guarantee the life, integrity and continued existence of the Indigenous Yukpa People in Colombia;
- Urging the immediate launch of the ethnic safeguard plan for the binational Indigenous Yukpa People and guarantees of their rights within Colombian territory.

**Contact below official by 3 July, 2018:**

President

Señor Juan Manuel Santos  
Presidente de la República Palacio de Nariño, Carrera 8 No.7-26  
Bogotá, Colombia  
Email: [contacto@presidencia.gov.co](mailto:contacto@presidencia.gov.co)

**Salutation: Dear President Santos**

Ambassador Camilo Reyes, Embassy of Colombia  
1724 Massachusetts Ave NW, Washington DC 20036  
Phone: 202 387 8338 | Fax: 202-232-8643  
Email: [embassyofcolombia@colombiaemb.org](mailto:embassyofcolombia@colombiaemb.org)  
**Salutation: Dear Ambassador**

### 2) LET US KNOW YOU TOOK ACTION

[Click here](#) to let us know if you took action on this case! *This is Urgent Action 59.18*

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**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In March 2018, Amnesty International denounced that Indigenous Yukpa people who had crossed the border to Colombia were facing eviction and the threat of being sent back to Venezuela, violating their rights as a binational People. The Colombian State is denying their right to remain in the country and their rights as Indigenous Peoples.

The Yukpa people settled in Cúcuta have been evicted twice since 1 October 2017 on the orders of the city mayor. They were forced back to Venezuela under the excuse they had returned voluntarily, thus assigning them the category of "foreign citizens".

They are currently living in highly precarious conditions lacking basic services such as drinking water, food and access to health or education. The Colombian constitution recognizes cross-bordering Indigenous Peoples as entitled to be treated as citizens. The treatment they receive from State institutions should therefore be the same as any Colombian Indigenous community affected by a crisis within its territory.

In 2009, the Constitutional Court ordered the formulation and implementation of safeguard plans to respond to the critical situation experienced by 34 Indigenous Peoples of Colombia affected by the armed conflict and forced displacement, including the Yukpa people.

Name: More than 300 Indigenous Yukpa people in Cúcuta  
Gender m/f: All

More Information on UA: 59/18 AI Index: AMR 23/8459/2018 Issue Date: 22 May 2018