

# URGENT ACTION

## INDIGENOUS PEOPLE THREATENED AND DISPLACED

**More than 200 indigenous Nasa Embera Chamí from La Delfina reservation in Buenaventura (West), Colombia, are currently displaced following an armed attack to a member of their community on 8 June. They are in need of decisive security measures to protect them and access to humanitarian aid such as food, health services and shelter.**

In the early morning of June 8, 2018, the indigenous teacher and community leader **Gonzalo Hilamo Mesa** suffered an armed attack in his home with two bullets fired against his residence by unknown men. Mr. Mesa was unharmed, however this recent attack generated fear and terror among the community who massively moved from the area and are currently stationed and confined in a nearby school called Technical-Husbandry Educational Institution (Institución Educativa Técnico Agropecuaria, NACHASIN).

The National Indigenous Organization (Organización Nacional Indígena, ONIC) reports there are currently eighty women, including 5 pregnant; ninety men and eighty children, for a total of two hundred and fifty indigenous people overcrowding the school facility. They are in need of food, medicine and access to health services as well as basic shelter items such as tents, blankets and clothing.

The attack to Gonzalo Hilamo Mesa came after attacks by allegedly illegal armed groups into the Nasa Embera Chamí territory in the past weeks. On 27 May, ONIC reported that indigenous community members **Pablo Emilio Dagua** and **Adriana Montero** were found dead after their disappearance was recorded on 26 May. The causes of their death and the possible perpetrators are still unknown, however, ONIC indicated that their bodies presented apparent signs of torture.

### 1) TAKE ACTION

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

- Urging authorities to conduct a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation of the attack to Gonzalo Hilamo Mesa and the killings of Pablo Emilia Dagua and Adriana Montero, and that all those found responsible be brought to justice;
- Demanding them to provide effective collective protection measures to this community in consultation with them, implementing plans for the prevention and protection of displaced Indigenous communities, in compliance with Constitutional Court Resolution 004/2009;
- Calling the authorities to provide comprehensive assistance with cultural relevance to guarantee the right to life, health, food and shelter of Nasa Embera Chamí reservation in La Delfina, Buenaventura.

**Contact these two officials by 23 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)  
 Twitter: [@JuanManSantos](https://twitter.com/JuanManSantos)  
**Salutation: Dear President**

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 112.18*

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**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The indigenous people located in the Delfina reservation moved from the north of Cauca to the District of Buenaventura in 1952 in search of lands suitable for agriculture, and escaping from violence in their territories. In 2007 the official reserve was legally constituted, being titled as –Resguardo Indigenous Nasa Embera Chamí La Delfina / Indigenous Cabildo of the Community Nasa Kiwe. The reserve occupies an area of 2,706 hectares. The reserve has also been the recipient of displaced indigenous people from all over the Pacific of the ethnic groups Nasa Kiwe and Embera Chamí.

Members of this community have also participated actively during the Buenaventura civil strike in 2017, Amnesty International reported disturbances in this sector highlighting the excessive use of force by the army and the police (AMR 23/6325/2017).

Two major issues have generated the civil unrest in Buenaventura, which is mostly populated by Afro-Colombian and Indigenous communities: the city has long been systematically abandoned by the state (resulting in 80% of the population living in poverty, and a generalized lack of access to fundamental human rights), and a high level of violence due to the presence of several rival actors (drug traffickers, criminal gangs, and other armed groups including guerrillas).

Forced displacement is one of the most serious violations of human rights committed in the context of the armed conflict. According to official figures, published by the Unit for Assistance and Comprehensive Reparation of Victims (Unidad para la Atención y Reparación Integral de Víctimas, UARIV), the total number of registered victims of the conflict is 8,532,636, of whom 7,265,072 are victims of forced displacement.

In 2004, the Constitutional Court issued an “Unconstitutional State of Affairs” (“Estado de Cosas Inconstitucional”, ECI), citing the massive and systematic violations of the fundamental rights of displaced people in the country and the weak institutional response in terms of assistance and comprehensive reparation to the victims of forced displacement (<http://www.corteconstitucional.gov.co/relatoria/2004/t-025-04.htm>). However, 13 years later, this situation does not appear to have changed. On the contrary, there has been little progress as regards institutional responses despite the dramatic situation in which people and communities find themselves when they leave their lands in order to flee armed conflict.

The Constitutional Court has repeatedly recognized the special consequences of forced displacement for Indigenous People and the factors that intensify their victimization. Forced displacement has an impact not only on their physical integrity and freedom of movement, but also puts at risk their customs and cultural survival.

Name: Gonzalo Hilamo Mesa / Nasa Embera Chamí indigenous people  
Gender m/f: male / community

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