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World Council
of Anthropological
Associations

The World Council of Anthropological Associations (WCAA) views with great concern the escalating violence in Colombia since the outburst of a National Strike on April 28, 2021.

While initially triggered against tax reform, this National Strike turned into an outlet for Colombians to express their indignation and weariness at the country's extremely complex socio-political situation, further deepened by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Reports on human rights violations have denounced assassinations, disappearances, and torture committed by security forces, as well as alarming statistics on arrests. The Indepaz Institute registered 963 arbitrary detentions by May 9, including students; and among them, at least one studying anthropology. Moreover, ongoing stigmatization of Social Sciences professionals and students resort to accusations of their supposed links with illegal forces as a stratagem to silence their claims and commitments of social transformations.

We are also concerned about the attacks directed to indigenous peoples whose organizations and public demonstrations have been the victims of disproportionate police repression and armed paramilitary or civilian attacks, and which invariably come together with racist and discriminatory discourses. Even the Indigenous Minga, an example of a peaceful social demonstration, were victims of an armed attack on May 9, 2021 which left several indigenous people injured, including a recognized indigenous leader of the Nasa people who for years has led initiatives to strengthen the indigenous territories, social fabric, and the construction of peace.

The Association of Latin American Anthropology/ Asociación Latinoamericana de Antropología (ALA) (<http://bit.ly/ALAColombia>), like the Association of Brazilian Anthropology/ Associação Brasileira de Antropologia (ABA) (<http://bit.ly/ABAColombia>), and the Colegio de Antropólogos y Etnólogos Sociales de México/ College of Social Anthropologists and Ethnologists of Mexico (CEAS) (<http://bit.ly/CEASColombia>), all of them

WCAA full members, have expressed in public statements their solidarity with colleagues, students, and the Colombian people.

Along the same lines, the WCAA rejects all acts of violence perpetrated by the Colombian government and further condemns the use of security forces as a response to popular demands. We urge a prompt peaceful conflict resolution within the framework of Human Rights.

The WCAA stands in solidarity with Colombian colleagues and makes itself available to mediate within the international anthropological community the necessary means to protect their human rights.

On the Behalf of the WCAA Organizing Committee

Isaac Nyamongo
Chair, WCAA OC

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