

Thompson Rivers University Students' Union

805 TRU Way, Kamloops BC, V2C 0C8



President Iván Duque
Palacio de Nariño, Carrera 8 No.7-26
Bogotá, Colombia

May 13th 2019

Please protect the Indigenous and Afro-descendant persons in Bojayá, Chocó

Dear President Duque,

On behalf of the Thompson Rivers University Students' Union, we urge you to investigate the life-threatening attacks and forced displacement of **7000 Indigenous and Afro-descendant persons in Bojayá, Choco**. It has come to our attention the guerilla group National Liberation Army and the paramilitary group Gaitanistas Self-Defence Forces of Colombia are increasing hostilities in Indigenous and Afro-descendant territories.

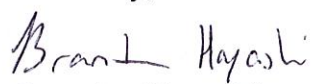
We are deeply troubled by reports from Amnesty International that people in the communities of **Unión Baquiaza, Union Cuití, Carrillo, Playita, Mesopotamia, and Egoróquera** are at risk. Members of the National Liberation Army and the Gaitanistas Self-Defence Forces have been implicated in placing anti-personal mines near these communities, recruiting children, murdering social leaders, and besieging entire communities.

We strongly urge you to immediately deploy a comprehensive protection plan for the people at risk, in the previously mentioned communities; this plan should respect their autonomous cultural practices. Furthermore, we request a thorough investigation of any illegal activity by armed groups that affect the rights of these communities and that perpetrators are brought to justice.

We encourage you to ensure that these communities are provided justice, reparations for damages, and guarantees against future human rights violations that put these communities at risk.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,


Brandon Hayashi
Vice-President Equity
TRU Students' Union

cc. His Excellency Federico Eduardo Hoyos Salazar, The Honourable Chrystia Freeland