



July 2, 2024

Security for the IEANPE Must Be Guaranteed, and Efforts to Advance the Ethnic Chapter Redoubled

On June 19, seven shots were fired at the security apparatus belonging to Armando Wariyou Valbuena, the Secretary General of the High Instance for Ethnic Peoples (IEANPE), while it transited through the Cesar department. We are happy to learn that no one was injured and express our solidarity with Mr. Valbuena and the IEANPE. This latest security incident reminds us of the December 3, 2023, assassination of another IEANPE member, Phanor Guazaquillo of the Nasa Peoples from the Ancestral Territory of Kwéxs Kiwe-Nuestra Tierra.

We do not want to have any further attacks and murders of members of the IEANPE. The U.S. should urge the Colombian government to have the National Protection Unit (UNP) reinforce Mr. Valbuena and other members of the IEANPE's security measures. It is of utmost importance for the U.S. to push the Colombian attorney general to swiftly investigate and bring to justice the intellectual and material authors of this assassination attempt.

On June 6, the IEANPE released its third report on implementing the Ethnic Chapter of the 2016 Peace Accord. This report finds that there is a considerable delay in implementing the latter. The gap in the implementation of the Ethnic Chapter, according to the IEANPE, ranges from 4.47 to 30.10 percentage points. An estimated 38 percent of the indicators designed to gauge the advancement of the Ethnic Chapter do not show any progress, 4 percent show intermediate progress, and only 21 percent show progress. Four percent of the ethnic indicators do not have a mechanism and objectives to apply the indicator in the territories. The IEANPE includes a series of recommendations that, if put in place, can advance implementation of the Ethnic Chapter to at least 60 percent in 2026.

It is imperative that the U.S., as the first international accompanier, devise with Colombia a joint strategy to implement the Ethnic Chapter. The strategy should be devised in consultation and concertation with the IEANPE and incorporate its recommendations. According to the Consultancy for Human Rights and Displacement (CODES), 61.6 percent of new victims of internal displacement since the signing of the 2016 peace accord are of ethnic origin. Given the complex humanitarian emergencies facing many Afro-Colombian and Indigenous territories and the security crisis facing Indigenous and Afro-Colombian leaders, the application of the Ethnic Chapter is required to prevent further irreparable harm from taking place against these communities. While we appreciate the Petro government's expressions of support for ethnic communities and the Ethnic Chapter and the U.S. government's favorable rhetoric regarding the same, we want both to redouble their efforts to close the gap between intention and action on the ground.