

Urgent Appeal:

For humanitarian access and protection for the civilian population affected by the conflict in Colombia

Bogotá, January 31, 2022

In response to the rise in armed clashes and acts of violence over recent weeks in the departments of Arauca, Meta, Guaviare, Casanare, Norte de Santander, Nariño, Cauca, Chocó, Antioquia, and Vichada, the Humanitarian NGO Forum makes an urgent appeal for the protection of the lives and fundamental rights of the civilian population and communities in these and other departments.

These events are worsening the humanitarian situation in Colombia which includes: a rise in forced displacement and confinement of persons and communities; an increase in the number of victims of anti-personnel mines and improvised explosive devices; and the recruitment, use and exploitation of children and adolescents.

The ongoing humanitarian crisis compels humanitarian organizations to continue to set in motion emergency responses. In 2021, humanitarian organizations belonging to the Forum assisted 503,851 conflict-affected people in Colombia. They also undertook a response to mitigate the effects of the Venezuelan migration/refugee crisis, which included assistance for 1,701,820 people. In 2022, despite the difficulties, we are continuing to undertake much needed humanitarian response in Colombia.

Humanitarian access to all areas and people must be guaranteed, as established in International Humanitarian Law. The work of all organizations, operating under the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence, must be recognized and respected.

We urge authorities to demonstrate an overwhelming commitment to protecting the civilian population, and that they continue to facilitate unconditional access for the complementary humanitarian response which we provide in Colombia.

As part of our humanitarian commitment, we call upon all conflicting parties to immediately stop their attacks which are gravely affecting the lives, wellbeing and protection of the civilian population. We join the nationwide calls for the fulfillment of humanitarian agreements in the territories, which help to alleviate community suffering and guarantee unhindered humanitarian access to assist the population.



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