



Stop the killings!

*Defend Social Leaders
in Colombia*

'Colombia must act to stop killings
and attacks against human rights defenders'

- United Nations 

Thousands of social leaders – including human rights defenders, community organisers and trade unionists – have been killed in recent decades in Colombia and the violence against them continues today. Trade unionists have been particularly targeted, with close to 3,000 murdered in the last 30 years.

In November 2016, the Colombian government signed a peace agreement with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) to end over half a century of armed conflict. However, the murder of social leaders has continued throughout the peace process and since the signing of the final deal the killings have reached alarming levels.

According to Colombian human rights organisations, **533 social leaders were killed between January 2016 and December 2018**. At least 85 former FARC guerrillas taking part in the reincorporation process have also been killed.

Illegal criminal organisations, which often include old paramilitary structures that functioned alongside state security forces, are still the principal perpetrators of the violence. The killings have particularly increased in rural areas where community organisations are working to implement the peace agreement chapters on coca crop substitution and land reform.

The violence is a continuation of a deeply entrenched strategy to protect local political and economic interests. The perpetrators are rarely brought to justice.

Despite the dangers, social leaders in Colombia continue to organise, to fight and to set an international example in the global struggle for peace, human rights, and social justice.

Who are the social leaders?

Social leaders targeted by violence in Colombia include:

- Indigenous and African-Colombian leaders
- Community leaders
- Trade unionists
- Environmental activists
- Journalists
- Human rights defenders
- Peace activists
- Political organisers
- LGBT activists
- Women's rights leaders

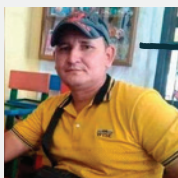




Maritza Quiroz, victims' rights campaigner.

Murdered in Santa Marta, Magdalena, 5 January 2019.

Maritza represented African-Colombian women who, like her, had been forcibly displaced from their homes. Paramilitaries killed her husband several years earlier. She was murdered at the home she shared with other women victims.



Luis Tarazona Salamanca, human rights defender.

Murdered in Tibú, Catatumbo, 8 November 2018.

Luis was a rural organiser for peasant farmer communities and a member of the ASCAMCAT human rights organisation. Two months before his death, he met with a JFC delegation visiting Catatumbo to learn about conditions there.



Jhorman Arlex Ipia, trade unionist.

Murdered in Pueblo Nuevo, Cauca, on 9 October 2018.

Jhorman was in the FENSUAGRO agricultural trade union and the Patriotic March political organisation. He was also involved in various human rights organisations supporting peasant farmer communities.



What can you do?

Support the work of Justice for Colombia at: www.justiceforcolombia.org

Ask your MP to raise the issue in Parliament

Follow JFC on social media to find out about public actions and events

Inform yourself and other people about the crisis



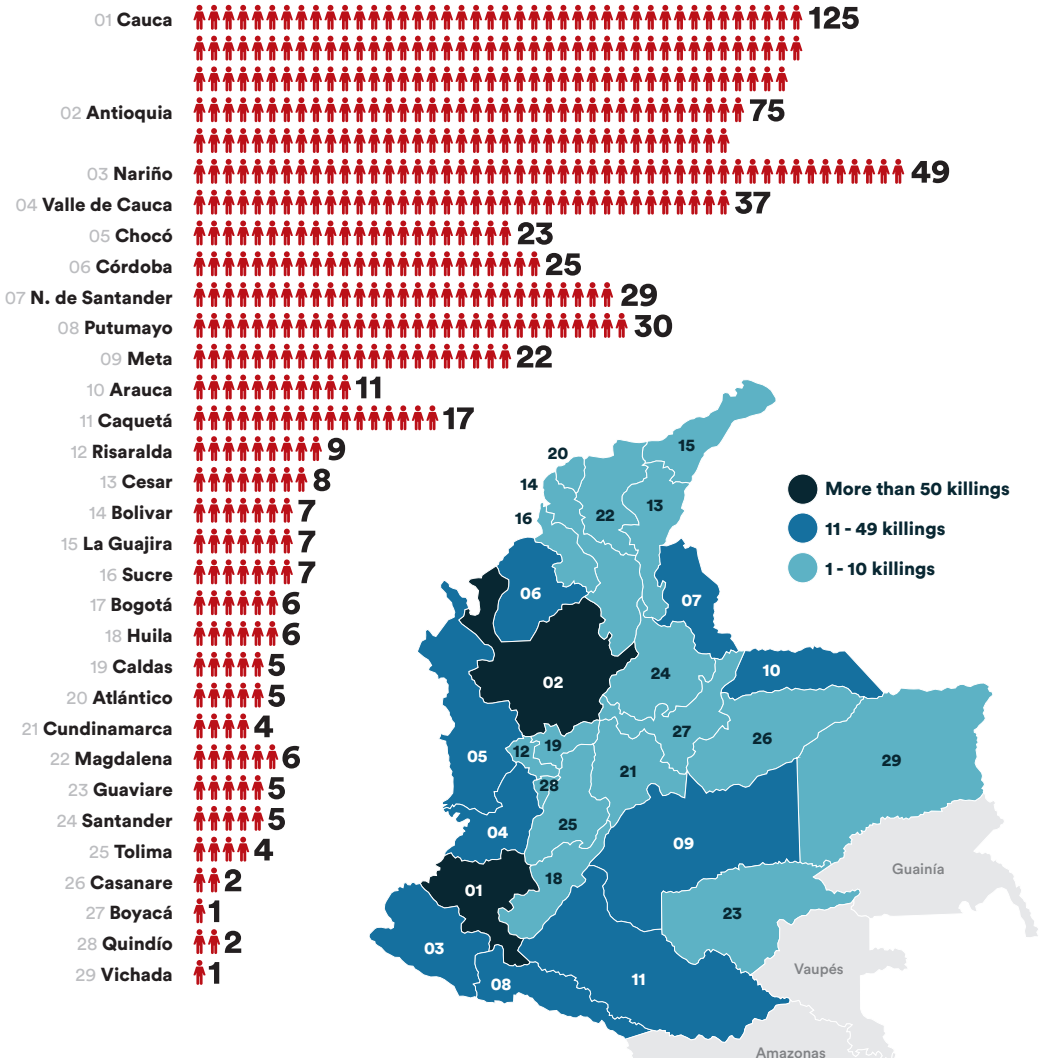
What does JFC do?

- Highlight the situation for social leaders in Colombia
- Mobilise political support from British and Irish Parliaments
- Promote solidarity from the British and Irish trade union movements
- Provide permanent support to social leaders on the front line in Colombia

Between 2016 and 2018,

533 social leaders
were **murdered**
in Colombia.

These killings took place
in 29 of the country's 32 departments.



[@JFColombia](#)
[Justice for Colombia](#)
[justiceforcolombia](#)

www.justiceforcolombia.org

This information was compiled by the Colombian organisations
Marcha Patriótica, Cumbre Agraria and INDEPAZ.

Supported by:

T THOMPSONS
SOLICITORS