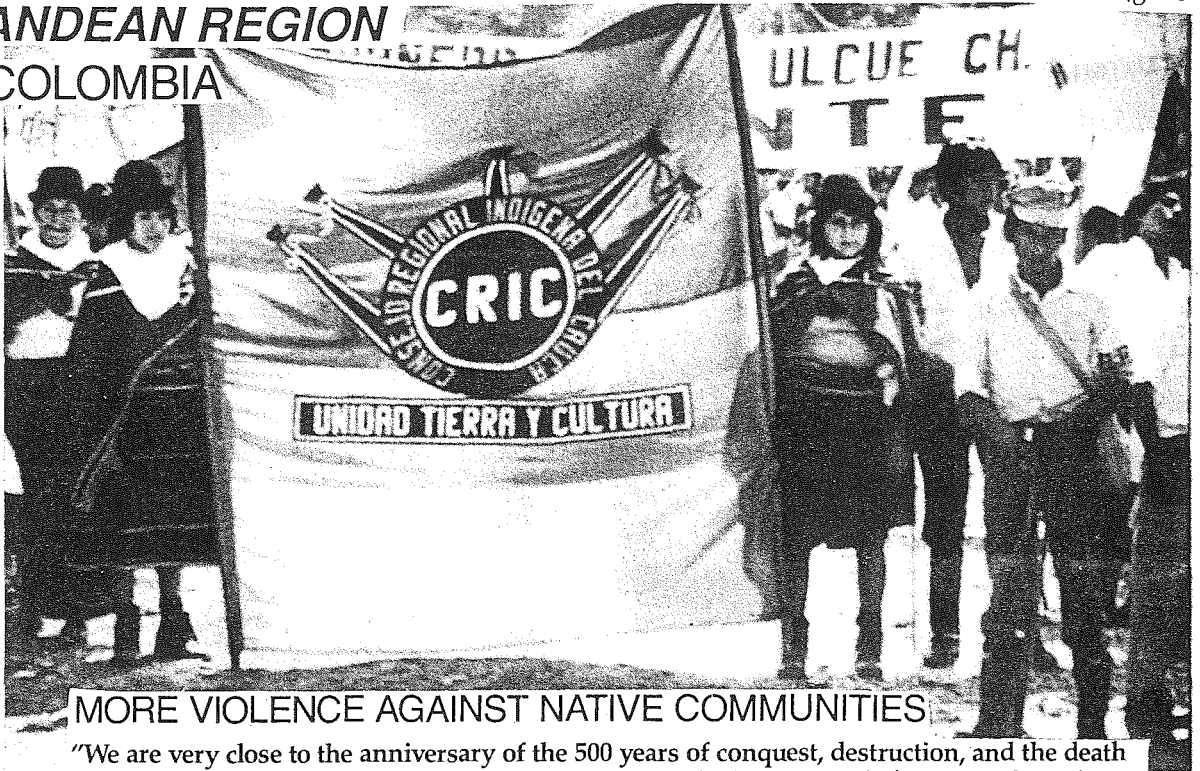


## ANDEAN REGION COLOMBIA



### MORE VIOLENCE AGAINST NATIVE COMMUNITIES

"We are very close to the anniversary of the 500 years of conquest, destruction, and the death of our people. We the Indians haven't had any truce in the hard struggle for survival as ethnic groups for our life, land, autonomy, and the right to be recognized by the national society."  
—editorial in "Unidad Alvaro Ulcué," newspaper of the CRIC.

Late last year, the Regional Indian Council of Cauca (CRIC) held its Eighth Congress in the area of Tierradentro with the participation of more than 4,000 Indian delegates from the department of Cauca. CRIC has long been one of the strongest Indian organizations of the Americas, and the resolutions of its Congress show that the delegates viewed problems affecting Indian people as symptomatic of deep-rooted problems in Colombian society.

According to CRIC, "the Indian movement does not dwell on its own issues, but it is also concerned with the rest of the Colombian people who have been suffering massacres, arbitrary detentions, and assassinations by the armed groups—whether military or paramilitary.

"Faced with these circumstances, the Indian communities see the need to create mechanisms for unity, to organize and confront the dirty war with which we live in this country. Equally important are the proposals presented for the peace plan through a national dialogue with the participation of the government, guerrilla, civic movements, political sectors, Indian and peasant organizations, and the private sector, to look for a way out without more bloodshed."

Among the resolutions of the CRIC Congress were:

- Commission for National Affairs: "It is not wise to enter into a general way, for this would bring more bloodshed to all sectors, and the social and economic consequences for the country would be disastrous. Although the popular sectors do not want war, they must be prepared to confront it, for the massacres are unjustifiable. An integrated program of agrarian reform must also be implanted.

• Commission for Development: "The elaboration of development plans should start at the level of the communities and zones looking at their specific conditions and characteristics with the direct participation of the *cabildos* (local organizations) and the communal companies and stores of the *resguardo* (Indian communal lands)." CRIC delegates also called for legalization of the *resguardos* and the enlargement of some territories; diversification of production; development of traditional techniques and the use of other technologies that help to increase production at low cost and that do not deteriorate the condition of the soil and water; expansion of other activities besides cattleraising, such as goat and sheep herding; acquiring a better knowledge of the mineral resources existing in the *resguardos* and the protection of these resources from outsiders by the *cabildos*, and to demand from the State the surface and subsoil rights as the property of the *resguardos*.

• Commission for Health and Education: "To develop and strengthen culture within communities, especially through working with children, creating bilingual schools and supporting traditional medicine, and studying the effects of media on the communities.

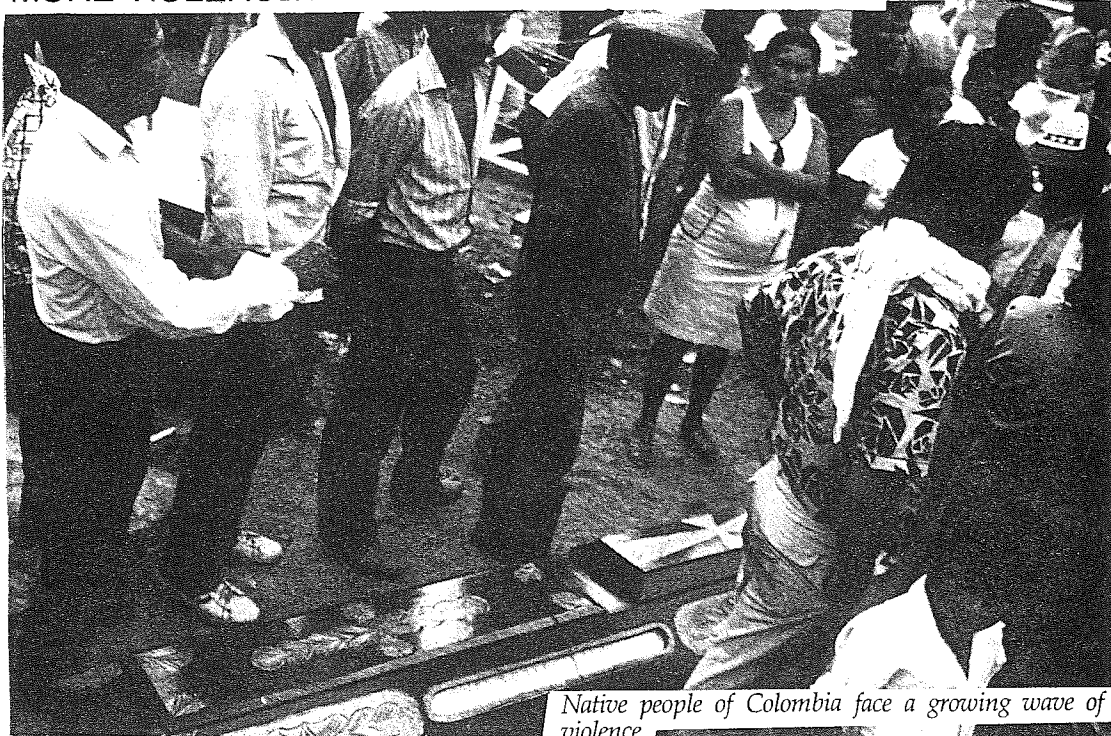
• Commission for Relations with the State: "To hold the government responsible for its negligence in the investigation of the assassinations of 180 leaders since the creation of the CRIC. These assassinations have, in effect, been legalized under the Statute of Antiterrorism by giving support to civil 'self-defense' groups."

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHILDREN OF CAUCA

A message of hope for the future was communicated by the Indian children who also participated in the meeting:

"Compañeros: "We the children, representatives of the Indian regions of Tolima, Poblazón, Nariño, and the Indian and peasant communities of the Cauca department came together with the goal of exchanging ideas, tasks, and games with other children. We, too, want to learn of the situation that other communities are facing in the struggle to defend our rights, culture, land, language, and the traditions which start at childhood. We think that we should participate in all the activities our older people develop for the benefit of the communities because we are the future for continuing those struggles."

SOURCE: "Unidad Alvaro Ulcué," Apartado 516, Popayán, Colombia.



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*Native people of Colombia face a growing wave of violence.*

The wave of violence and abuses against Native communities has increased in a country where life often hangs by a thin thread. The motives for assassinations are varied: to rob Indian land, to intimidate organizers, to intimidate Indians seen as collaborating with the guerrillas, and those seen as being informants for the army; or simply because they are Indians.

The following is a list of some of the Native people who were murdered in 1988:

Four Tukanos from the area of San José del Guaviare;

Five Emberas in Satinga;

Fourteen Native people in Casanare;

Twelve Indians in Araracuara;

Peliberto Moniel, Alfredo Miente Ortiz, Luis Francisco Pérez Solano, and Ignacio Peñate Pérez from San Andrés de Sotavento;

Ramon Tote from Resguardo de Coconuco;

Graciliano Matos, Cúbeo;

Emeterio Mesa Garabato, Alejandro Chirimi, Facundo Gambato from the Comunidad Réo Satinga, Costa Pacífica;

Plinio Ordóñez Orozco, Comunidad Indígena del Resguardo de Jambalo;

Hernando Camayo, plus five more Indian people from Parcialidad de las Delicias, Buenos Aires.

**POR EL DERECHO A LA VIDA!**

