



STATEMENT

DEFEND COLOMBIA'S AGRARIAN REFORM AND THE 4RS FROM THE FAR-RIGHT BACKLASH

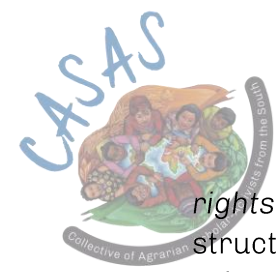
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We, the undersigned signatories including members of the Collective of Agrarian Scholar-Activists from the South (CASAS), Participants in the International Academic Conference for Land, Life & Society held at the Universidad de Cartagena, engaged researchers, allies and supporters from around the world, affirm the collective declaration issued on February 22, 2026. The Cartagena Declaration sets out our shared principles, building on the Medellín Manifesto (April 2025), the Cape Town Declaration (October 2025), and the Brasilia Statement (December 2025). Today, we reconvene to express our collective voice and confront a specific and urgent threat to everything we have previously affirmed.

Our Declaration is unequivocal: land, water, marine spaces, and forests are life. Land cannot be reduced to a productive input, a commodity, a financial asset, or a wasteland awaiting investment. It is livelihood, identity, memory, culture, dignity, and life. When social movements of peasants, rural working people in the rural areas and Indigenous Peoples demand democratization of land, they are demanding the right to life itself. We stand with social movements advancing an agenda of democratizing the politics of land, redefined around the inseparable 4Rs: Recognition, Redistribution, Restitution and Regulation. These are not sequential or optional steps; they are mutually reinforcing and must be pursued in unison.

Between 2022 and 2026, Colombia transformed the long-standing demands of Peasants, Indigenous Peoples, and Afro-descendant Communities into concrete progress aimed at overcoming decades of counter-agrarian reform, social injustice, systematic violence and forced displacement in the countryside. Under the “Gobierno del Cambio” the inseparable 4Rs - Restitution, Regulation, Recognition and Redistribution were brought to life through Agrarian Reform Policy, the implementation of the Peace Agreement’s First Point: the Comprehensive Rural Reform, and the institutional transformation of the agriculture sector giving institutional leverage to agrarian movements struggles.

Restitution began to heal the wounds of forced displacement by returning *280.000 Ha* to Indigenous Peoples and Afro-descendant Communities. **Redistribution** advanced through the acquisitions of *779.000 Ha* allocated to landless families for food production - returning productive land to those who work and produce food - alongside the *formalization of land*



rights over **2 million Ha** to peasant families; These measures aimed to dismantle the unequal structure of land ownership. **Regulation** reshaped the country's economy by protecting prime soils for food sovereignty - covering **197.000 Ha** under *Special Protection Zones for Food Production*- against unsustainable land use, while also steering productive assets from extractive models and allocating them for peasant and family farming. **Recognition** materialised at unprecedented scale, with the *official recognition of 25 peasants' territorialities covering 1.2 million Ha (including the creation of 20 Peasant Reserves Zones), 203 Indigenous Reserves comprising 1.3 million Ha* - coupled with the granting of autonomous governance over **6.6 million Ha** of Amazonian territory to Indigenous Peoples; and the official acknowledgment of 102 Community Councils for Black Communities safeguarding **68.000 Ha** of collective lands.

The overall effect of these measures has been the most significant reduction in rural poverty levels this century. Between 2022 and 2025, 205.000 people overcame multidimensional poverty, monetary poverty fell from 42.5% to 39.5%, and 311.000 people escaped extreme poverty over the same period. For the first time in a generation, the countryside began to heal from the scars of dispossession, displacement, paramilitarism, extractivism and systemic violence. The Colombian experience demonstrates that Agrarian Justice is not utopian—it is achievable through political will, collective action and social mobilization.

We witnessed this transformation firsthand at the *II International Conference on Agrarian Reform (ICARRD+20)* in Cartagena, held alongside our academic conference and the *Forum of Peoples and Social Movements: United for Land, Water, Territories, and Dignity*. We express our unwavering solidarity with the Colombian “Gobierno del Cambio” and its leadership in the face of relentless false accusations, political attacks, and the reversal of its social achievements. We repudiate the misrepresentation of land delivery statistics and the obstruction of the Agrarian Jurisdiction bill, a legislative effort to provide rural communities with the institutional mechanisms to resolve land conflicts peacefully¹. We stand with the victims of a systematic pattern of threats, intimidation, and even torture targeting peasant families who received land through State distribution programmes—attacks that have intensified significantly following the recent electoral changes. These incidents have been documented and denounced before the Office of the Attorney General². The government's efforts to redistribute land and promote democratic participation in rural areas have been recognised by multilateral organisations and observed by the global community. We are no longer debating policy; we are confronting a systematic campaign of intimidation. Threats are escalating against agrarian reform beneficiaries and the very government officials tasked with implementing the law and policy. The same structures that historically drowned Colombia's countryside in blood are regrouping to dismantle this

¹<https://www.minjusticia.gov.co/Sala-de-prensa/Paginas/MinAgricultura-y-MinJusticia-advierten-que-el-hundimiento-de-la-Jurisdiccion-Agraria-prolonga-una-deuda-historica.aspx>

²<https://www.presidencia.gov.co/prensa/Paginas/Agencia-Nacional-de-Tierras-denuncia-ante-Fiscalia-amenazas-y-torturas-contr-beneficiarios-de-la-Reforma-260630.aspx>



legacy. We see this as a premeditated assault on the rule of law and the physical integrity of those who have waited decades for justice.

Our Global Call to Action

As scholars committed to rigorous, evidence-based, and co-produced research, we reject the technocratic, top-down, and market-based policies that have for decades resulted in poverty, inequality, dispossession, land degradation, and rural distress. We call for systemic transformation—not cosmetic adjustments. The international community cannot remain a passive spectator. Therefore, we demand the following actions:

1. **Safeguard the institutional and legal achievements of the National Land Agency (ANT) and the Judiciary.** The new far-right government will seek to paralyze, defund, or dismantle the administrative and judicial apparatus that made land redistribution possible. We demand that the Colombian executive respect the existing rulings, administrative resolutions, and land adjudications issued by the ANT and the Constitutional Court.
2. **Deploy urgent, real-time protection mechanisms for rural leaders and government officials.** Threats are not abstract—they are being directed at specific individuals, including agrarian reform beneficiaries, members of Agrarian Reform Committees, Indigenous Governors, Afro-Colombian community council members, and the public servants of the National Land Agency and the Land Restitution Unit who have been implementing reform. We call for the immediate deployment of international observation missions to high-conflict territories where paramilitary structures are regrouping to intimidate and eliminate rural leaders. We urge the UN Human Rights Office, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), and the European Union to establish permanent protective accompaniment and rapid-response protocols for those under direct threat.
3. **Counter the criminalization and stigmatization of agrarian reform defenders.** The far-right narrative is already framing campesino, Indigenous, and Afro-Colombian leaders as “guerrilla sympathizers” or “obstacles to development.” This stigmatization is a deliberate strategy to justify repression and legitimize paramilitary violence. We call on international human rights bodies—the UN Human Rights Council, the IACHR, and Amnesty International—to publicly denounce this criminalization and to pressure the Colombian state to cease all judicial, political and physical persecution of rural leaders exercising their constitutional and territorial rights. Solidarity means refuting the smear campaigns that seek to delegitimize the historic struggle for land and those who valiantly risk their safety in that struggle.



4. **Condition international cooperation, trade, and investment on the respect for rural Constitutional Gains and the implementation of the Peace Agreement Accords.** We urge multilateral banks, international financial institutions and international cooperation agencies to condition future aid, trade agreements, and investment portfolios on the strict adherence to Colombia's peace accord rural provisions, the constitutional protections for Peasants, Indigenous and Afro-descendant territories, and the commitments made at ICARRD+20.
5. **Establish a Permanent International Observatory for the Colombian Agrarian Transition.** Beyond one-time missions, we demand the creation of a dedicated, multi-stakeholder observatory—composed of academics, social movements, UN agencies, and regional human rights bodies—to monitor, document, and report in real time on every executive decree, legislative initiative, judicial ruling, and budgetary decision issued by the new far-right government that threatens to reverse territorial and social gains. This observatory would publish monthly reports, issue early warnings, and coordinate legal and grassroots counteractions to defend every hectare of land and every right won over the past four years. The reform of the FAO's Global Land Observatory into a participatory, community-led platform must begin with Colombia as a pilot case.

To defend agrarian reform is to defend the very pluralism of our societies. The “Gobierno del Cambio” has shown that a different rural reality is possible. We will not allow the reactionary oligarchy, backed by foreign powers, to silence that possibility with threats and violence. The world must stand with Colombia's countryside. We will defend its future against those who wish to drown it in the blood of its past.



This statement, organised by the network of over 400 members of the Collective of Agrarian Scholar-Activists from the South (CASAS), is also supported by the following signatories:

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