

## **The Land of Fire - Colombian Communities Under Threat**

**Free Event: panel discussion**

**Date: Thursday 2 December, 18:30 – 20:30**

**Place: Human Rights Action Centre, 17-25 New Inn Yard, EC2 3EA**

Starting with a 5 minute video entitled *The Luis Carlos Pérez Lawyers' Collective: helping small-scale farmers defend their human rights*

### **Panel Speakers:**

- Julia Figueroa, Luis Carlos Pérez Lawyers' Collective (CCALP)
- Judith Maldonado, Luis Carlos Pérez Lawyers' Collective (CCALP)
- Representative from Colombia Solidarity Campaign
- Rob Hawke, Peace Brigades International (PBI) UK Section
- Louise Winstanley, ABColumbia

The event will be chaired by Shane Enright, Amnesty International UK

Contributions from the panellists will be followed by an audience Q&A and discussion.

The north eastern region of Colombia has been one of the hardest hit in the country's long-running armed conflict. Catatumbo, a remote hinterland protected for its biodiversity and indigenous cultural heritage, is also home to some of the largest untapped reserves of coal and oil on the planet, as well as a lucrative corridor for the production and trafficking of cocaine. Traditional small-scale farmers and indigenous communities have seen their way of life ravaged by an interminable war between paramilitaries, guerrilla, and the Colombian army. The result has been a humanitarian tragedy: more than 10,000 civilians killed, 600 disappeared, and more than 100,000 internally displaced.

The Luis Carlos Perez Lawyer's Collective (CCALCP) supports grassroots organisations with legal advice and training, and advocates on a national and international level to raise awareness about the socio-economic impact of armed violence and large scale extractive projects in the region. Despite enjoying the support of the international community, the lawyers of CCALP continue to suffer routine threats, robbery, and harassment from illegal armed groups, and have been the victims of illegal state surveillance.