



Centro de Derechos Humanos Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas, AC.

San Cristobal de Las Casas, Chiapas

17th august 2020

Urgent Action No. 10
versión inglés

Armed Agression in Aldama

- **26 armed attacks against inhabitants of the communities of Aldama**

The Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas Human Rights Center A.C. (Frayba), has received urgent and serious information from both the inhabitants of the Aldama municipality and the Permanent Commission of the 115 Displaced Community Members of Aldama, Chiapas, Mexico regarding the risk to life, integrity and personal security, and the forced displacement within communities belonging to the Maya Tsotsil people in the municipality of Aldama; actions perpetrated by the paramilitary group of Santa Martha, Chenalhó.

According to testimonies, the attacks began at 7:23pm on Friday, August 14, 2020 and have not ceased, even up to the issuance of this urgent action.

On Saturday, August 15, the aggressions intensified. The inhabitants reported that the armed group had crossed the limits of Aldama, endangering the communities of Pedro Cotsilnam and Yeton in the Aldama municipality, and they also reported that they could see that aggressors were divided into three armed groups and that they were in different positions.

Shots were fired at 10:50 in the evening. Strong detonations were heard and a family was attacked in Yeton's community. We hope that there will be no injuries and no casualties, though until the present moment we have no information. They reported this on August 15th at 11:33 pm.

The families who were attacked by the armed group had to move to another community and they also reported that the state police, who are stationed in the community of Tabak, did not intervene in this situation.

On August 16, 2020, they again reported that the armed civilian group continued to attack the communities of Yeton, Ch'ivit, and Tselejpotobtik in the municipality of Aldama, at 8:56 pm. The state police stationed in Tabak have not acted.

The residents announced that the people of the armed groups are at different positions of attack such as: the Bridge, K'ante', Temple, Pantheon, Xchuch te', Vale'tik, Santa Martha, and at the Brick point within the 60 hectares in dispute, from where they attacked the communities of Aldama at 9:25 pm on August 16, 2020.

The attacks continued into the afternoon, during the night, and into the early morning as was the situation of aggression in the community of San Pedro Cotsilnam Aldama in the point of T'ul Vits Santa Martha in the

CAMINAMOS CON LOS PUEBLOS.

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municipality of Chenalhó. The armed action lasted from 11:30 to 12:14 hours, which has become a recurring pattern.

Other reports place armed aggression in the community of Koko' Aldama by the armed groups of Santa Martha Chenalhó, from the point of Tok'oy Saclum at 12:38 am, August 17. The community of Tselejpotobtik in Aldama continues to be attacked with high-caliber firearms.

The shooting does not stop despite the requests for intervention that we from Frayba made, along with the reports of the 115 representatives of the communities of Aldama, to the state authorities; the response is indifference infused with racism and discrimination by the federal government of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador and the state government of the Governor of Chiapas Rutilio Escandón Cadenas.

Another pattern is that the attacks persist and are intensified on the weekends, and the points of aggression are the same: the Bridge, Tijera Caridad, K'ante' Temple since it began at 2 pm on August 16. And they continue until this moment, 12:53 AM at dawn on August 17. Shooting continues at the point of "Chalontik" Tijera Caridad between Santa Martha towards the Aldama communities of Tselejpotobtik and Juxton, recorded at 1:37 am.

There are at least 26 attacks in total with high-caliber weapons, carried out by paramilitary armed civilian groups operating in that region and coming from the communities of Santa Martha in the Chenalhó municipality.

This situation of violence creates an atmosphere of terror for the populations of the communities mentioned, as well as in others located on the borders of Aldama and Chenalhó. We insist that, with the national contingency for COVID-19, the risk increases for a majority of women, children, and elderly people who find themselves in positions of great vulnerability and who take refuge in the mountains in the face of repeated attacks.

Therefore, we urge the Mexican State to:

- Activate security and precautionary measures to avoid events that are difficult to redress, such as the right to life, security and personal integrity, and the escalation of forced displacement.
- Investigate promptly and adequately, as well as sanction, disarm, and dismantle the paramilitary armed groups in Chenalhó, which are directly responsible for the armed attacks that have caused forced displacement in the Altos de Chiapas region.

We invite the national and international civil society to sign the urgent action petition that you will find on the Frayba website, www.frayba.org.mx, and/or send your concerns to:

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