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## Colombia: Indigenous woman human rights defender Daniela Soto and the Indigenous Guard targeted during protests

On 9 May 2021, indigenous woman human rights defender **Daniela Soto** received two gunshots to her abdomen from armed civilians in armoured vans in the La María area of Cañas Gordas, south of Cali. During the attack, at least 11 indigenous human rights defenders from the Indigenous Guard were also injured. The attacks occurred in the context of the ongoing national strike, in which members of the Indigenous Guard have been participating, against a tax reform promoted by the government of President Iván Duque and against police brutality in Colombia.

[Daniela Soto](#) is a Nasa woman human rights defender from the ancestral territory of Sath Tama Kiwe Resguardo of Las Mercedes Caldono in the department of Cauca. From a young age she has worked to protect indigenous peoples' rights, especially women's rights and land rights. Daniela Soto is currently a philosophy student at the University of Cauca, and takes part in the Women's Program of the Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca (CRIC), and is also a member of the Network of Young Peace Builders of the Mi Sangre Foundation.

Daniela Soto was part of the CRIC delegation that arrived to the city of Cali on 28 April 2021 to support the national strike. Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned about the attacks directed towards the Indigenous Guard in Cali, particularly during the weekend of 7-9 May 2021. Local organizations have [documented](#) at least 47 killings during the nation-wide protests in the past weeks. [The Indigenous Guard](#) in Colombia is an inspiring example of a protection collective that works to protect the continent as a whole, and the human rights community and were the winners of the [Front Line Defenders Award](#) in 2020. Front Line Defenders recognizes the legitimate work of the Indigenous Guard and its members, as well as the legitimate work of woman human rights defender Daniela Soto, and urges the right to protest be respected and guaranteed, and that all acts of violence by public forces are to be properly investigated.

### Front Line Defenders urges the Colombian authorities to:

1. Conduct an impartial and thorough investigation regarding the attacks against Daniela Soto and the 11 indigenous human rights defenders from the Indigenous Guard;
2. Take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of protesters in the context of the ongoing national strike;
3. Guarantee in all circumstances that all human rights defenders in Colombia are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions and judicial harassment.