

## Intervention:

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“And now a black blight torments a people, a blight that does not explode like bombs or crack like gunfire. Other men from other worlds want hunger and death to come in, a hunger that kills silently, that can kill the silent.”

I will tell you about a people that is not silent, despite those who would wish to silence them.

My gratitude to those who can listen to us with their conscience because we will be discussing death, a people's risk of extermination, and who is responsible and can be made accountable.

Over more than 20 years of work, our organisation has managed to corroborate several things vis-à-vis the complaints of Indigenous, Afro-descendant, and small-scale farming communities of La Guajira in Colombia:

- i) The coal exported from our country is coal brimming with death and destruction. The extracted coal that reaches your country has meant constant VIOLATION OF HUMAN AND ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS, as has been STATED IN COLOMBIAN COURT SENTENCES about the ineffective and disingenuous compliance of companies.
- ii) The affected communities have identified and face ABUSES OF POWER and enormous asymmetries in the relations between States, the company, and communities.
- iii) The communities are in a struggle to defend life, water, and territory from violations [of their rights] to a healthy environment and ecological balance, against pollution and the mine's high-water consumption in a semiarid region, diseases, ignorance of the climate crisis, and the need to act urgently in the face of labour rights violations.

The information presented to your offices exists within the context of a DISPUTE OVER THE TRUTH between one of the parties, the communities—who have only their voices, their felt and lived reality, and some judicial sentences that have not been fulfilled and fall short of accountability for senior decision makers—and the company, which counts on communicative power, corporate capture, wealth, and countries that, finding it difficult to review their conscience and dream of a different world, believe that we can continue to live as we have until now.

We once said the following to the shareholders of these companies: it may be that the world is condemned to suffer the invisible dictatorship of finances and profit, and that no one in the auditorium really cares that the money they receive cost the life of a Wayuu child, that

it did not matter because it was not their children who would not be able to sleep at night due to a coughing fit, and that it was of no importance because it was not they who as mothers and fathers would have to weep for their children dying of hunger and thirst; but in La Guajira, more than 5,000 children have died in the last decade.

And it may be that the world is condemned to live under the spell of the words of those who lie, of those who cheat, and who take advantage of people's vulnerability. Perhaps you have settled for varnished stories about the Social Responsibility they claim to apply and have chained yourselves to their lies.

But there is only one reality for them, for you, and for the whole world: the climate crisis. One day, the companies will no longer be able to pass off their encouraging statistics because the world will simply no longer tolerate their lies. The climate crisis is something that we will all experience. No one will be able to flee from it. Profits will not keep us warm or feed us.

It is urgent that those who have any opportunity to help stop so much death, do so. It is urgent that those who hold office and represent consumer states help to prevent this from continuing, and from becoming accomplices to others' destruction and suffering.

It is necessary to monitor the companies denounced by communities, even companies that have declared themselves responsible. It is necessary to exact justice so that these companies do not remain in impunity.

The need for alternatives and a transition is a reality. The response to a change in the traditional energy matrix is a reality. All that is necessary is to listen to those who have answers rather than to those who have lied, those who see in others the faces of fools whom they can subject to a model that, day by day, becomes an ever greater failure for humanity.