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# **GENERAL SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN ZULIA PERIJÁ SUBREGION ROSARIO DE PERIJÁ AND MACHIKUES DE PERIJÁ**

# GENERAL SITUATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN ZULIA

## PERIJÁ SUBREGION

### ROSARIO DE PERIJÁ AND MACHIQUES DE PERIJÁ

Commission for Human Rights of Zulia State (Codhez)

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# GENERAL OVERVIEW

This bulletin documents the general human rights situation of the inhabitants of the Perijá sub-region in the state of Zulia, comprising the municipalities of Rosario de Perijá and Machiques de Perijá. The report describes the most important aspects of its context, socioeconomic situation and resilience processes, as well as two of its complex realities related to the situation of the Yukpa people and access to public services. The Perijá sub-region is located on the western shore of Lake Maracaibo and borders Colombia.

Part of the data and information considered for this report were the result of a visit made in April of this year to the parish of El Rosario (Villa del Rosario) of the Rosario de Perijá municipality, through the testimonies of its inhabitants who participated freely, with prior informed consent. Also, information was collected from news and reports published in national, regional, and local media, from May 2023 to May 2024. Given the lack of official information on these two municipalities, various digital sources were reviewed to gather more information and content, and it was found that there is little public, updated, and objective information on the Rosario de Perijá and Machiques de Perijá municipalities.

The visit was a learning experience, an experience of resilience and hope. We learned about the work that the *Diocese of Machiques*, attached to *Caritas Venezuela*, has been developing for 21 years, with active programs in the municipalities of Machiques de Perijá, Rosario de Perijá, Jesús María Semprún and Catatumbo. In Rosario de Perijá there are three branches: *Nuestra Señora del Rosario*, *El Buen Pastor*, and *Cristo Rey*. These programs are aimed at vulnerable groups that require special attention in the areas of protection risks, food, nutrition, and livelihoods. Special mention should be made of the *Alert, Monitoring and Nutritional Attention System (SAMAN)* program, for the detection, attention, and maintenance of the adequate nutritional well-being of children up to 5 years of age, pregnant women, and lactating women.

Another admirable work we met was the *Rotary Club of Rosario de Perijá*, who provide services to elderly people and people with chronic diseases that require dialysis. The first of these tasks is carried out at the Rosario de Perijá Municipal Nursing Home, where food, medical attention, recreation, rest and transportation are provided at least three times a week. The second task is carried out in the operational dialysis unit located within the Rotary Complex, which manages to serve about 50 people, including those from neighboring municipalities.

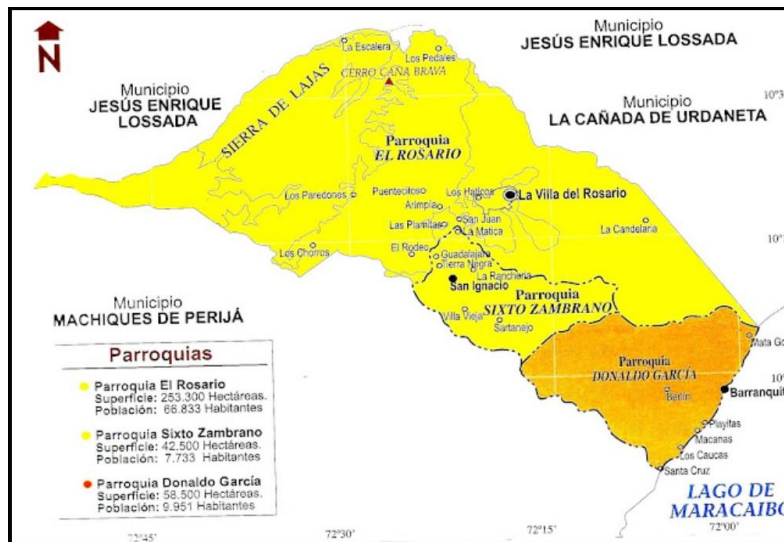
The Perijá sub-region is the agro-industrial engine of Zulia, today in decline, but with the commitment of many producers and workers to face the crisis and fight for a rebirth with the conviction of social and economic growth. However, at the same time of this struggle, the violation of the rights of the people who live there, without access to health, education, and decent livelihoods, continues to worsen. Massive migrations are increasing, sometimes in conditions of insecurity and lack of protection. The optimal provision of public services continues to be an outstanding debt that has been pending for years. Insecurity is opening its way further every day. Indigenous peoples suffer neglect, stigmatization and abandonment, without government efforts to understand their culture and generate spaces and channels of cordial communication to provide solutions to their problems accessing rights and services. As can be noticed, there are many obstacles to overcome, which is why this commitment to growth must be inclusive and involve

everyone: government at all levels, producers, workers, civil society, indigenous peoples, and organized communities.

## 1. CONTEXT OF THE PERIJÁ SUBREGION

The Perijá subregion is made up of two of the largest municipalities in Zulia State: Rosario de Perijá and Machiques de Perijá. Located in the west of the State on the Colombian-Venezuelan border, they are bordered by the Sierra de Perijá mountain range (declared a national park in 1978).

The Rosario de Perijá<sup>1</sup> municipality has a territorial extension of 3,543 km<sup>2</sup>. It was founded on July 21, 1989, its capital is La Villa del Rosario<sup>2</sup>, and is made up of three parishes: Donaldo García, El Rosario, and Sixto Zambrano<sup>3</sup>. It is in the foothills of the Sierra de Perijá, within the watersheds of the Palmar and Apón rivers, surrounded by the savannah between Perijá and Lake Maracaibo<sup>4</sup>. The demonym is Perijanero or Rosarense, although sometimes it is also used the demonym Villeros or Villeras.



Source: Waya Nuchonyu Maleiwa Infocenter.

The municipality Rosario de Perijá has its own anthem, coat of arms and flag. The anthem (*Foundation*, with lyrics and music by Reynaldo Reyes Navarro, and arrangements by Carlos Aarón Nava Romero) was created on August 6, 1997. The flag was designed on January 5, 1995. The first coat of arms was created on January 10, 1990<sup>5</sup>.



Flag of Rosario de Perijá



Coat of arms of Rosario de Perijá

According to the Inso Encovi 2021, the Rosario de Perijá municipality has a population of 86,168 inhabitants (41,920 women and 44,248 men). 61% of the population of this Zulian municipality is between 15 and 64 years of age, 33% is under 15 years of age, and 6% is 65 years of age and older<sup>6</sup>. The average number of inhabitants per household in Rosario de Perijá is 3.5 persons. In 33% of the households there are children under 5 years of age, and in 17.5% of the households there are older adults (65 years of age or older). Of the total number of households in Rosario de Perijá, 49.9% are headed by women<sup>7</sup>.

According to the same data recorded by the Inso Encovi 2021, 96% of the municipality's population lives below the poverty line<sup>8</sup>, while 81% lives below the extreme poverty line<sup>9</sup>. 96% of households headed by women are living in poverty<sup>10</sup>. There is evidence of the existence of a significant number of people living in precarious conditions, with serious limitations on accessing basic conditions that allow them to satisfy their most basic needs.

The municipality of Rosario de Perijá is home to indigenous peoples, such as the Yukpas and Wayuu, as well as the only remaining community of the Japreria people. Historically, these indigenous communities have been oppressed and their traditions and cultures have been violated, and they have been subjected to multiple human, rights and material shortages.

Rosario de Perijá has variable topography (massif, Andean foothills, plains, floodplains, and coastline<sup>11</sup>). In the southernmost area it has a flat relief, near Lake Maracaibo, until it reaches a more mountainous relief. In the western part it presents a broken topography, and in a third sector its relief is mountainous constituted by part of the Serranía de Perijá (which height varies between 600 and 3,740 meters high). It has a sub-humid climate, with varied rainfall, and temperatures ranging between 26°C and 35°C<sup>12</sup>. Particularly, the landscape of La Villa del Rosario is identified as a peripheral rural area of low vegetation<sup>13</sup>.

Its vegetation is typical of the high forests (dry and tropical) and dense: the tropical dry forest, the premontane rainforest that extends along the foothills of the mountains with a thick vegetation conducive to the birth of rivers, with dense and extensive vegetation<sup>14</sup>. This vegetation has been heavily intervened for the establishment of pastures. In addition, Rosario de Perijá has an important hydrography, with rivers that originate in the Sierra de Perijá and flow into Lake Maracaibo: El Palmar, San Juan, Apón, Cogollo, Lajas, Motilones, Santa Ana and Laja<sup>15</sup>.

The municipality of Machiques de Perijá<sup>16</sup> is the largest in the state of Zulia, with an area of 10,361 km<sup>2</sup>. It was founded on June 26, 1989, its capital is Machiques, and is made up of four parishes: San José de Perijá, Bartolomé de las Casas (Las Piedras de Perijá), Río Negro, and Libertad<sup>17</sup>. It has an extensive border with Colombia, to the north it borders with the municipality of Rosario de Perijá and to the south with the municipalities of Jesús María Semprún and Catatumbo. The demonym is Machiquense.

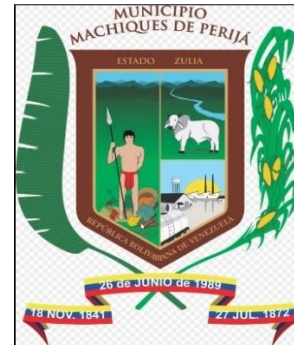


Source: Wikipedia (2023)

The municipality Machiques de Perijá also has its own anthem, coat of arms and flag. The anthem (*Sierra Virgen*, author Víctor Hugo Márquez) was created in 1994. The flag was designed on May 23, 2011. The coat of arms was created on November 5, 1994.



Flag of Machiques de Perijá



Coat of arms of Machiques de Perijá

According to the Inso Encovi 2021, the municipality of Machiques de Perijá has a population of 124,492 inhabitants (60,389 women and 64,103 men). 61% of the population of this municipality is between 15 and 64 years of age, 33% is under 15 years of age, and 6% is 65 years of age and older<sup>18</sup>. On average, the rate of inhabitants per household in Machiques de Perijá is 3.4 persons, 31.6% of the households are inhabited by children under 5 years of age, and 17.9% of the households are inhabited by older adults (65 years of age or older). Of the total number of households in Machiques de Perijá, 44.6% are headed by women<sup>19</sup>.

Regarding households in poverty, the *Inso Encovi 2021* indicates that 99% of the municipality's population lives below the poverty line<sup>20</sup>, while 81% lives below the extreme poverty line<sup>21</sup>. 97% of households headed by women are living in poverty<sup>22</sup>. As in the neighboring municipality of Rosario de Perijá, the severe conditions of crisis in rights, goods and services also suffered by the inhabitants of this municipality are evident, with multidimensional needs and shortages.

Machiques de Perijá is inhabited by a significant population of the Yukpa, Barí and Wayuu ethnic groups. There are several indigenous communities that have lived in this area since ancestral times and whose territories constitute their natural habitat: Tokuko, Tinaco, Aroy, Sirapta, Ayapaina, Chaptapa, Guamo, among others<sup>23</sup>. In any case, the experiences of the inhabitants of these communities are similar to those of Rosario de Perijá: victims of violations of their rights, state neglect and disrespect for their culture and traditions.

The predominant vegetation in the municipality is dry forest and humid forest. There are two types of topography: a flat area located between the Negro and Santa Ana rivers, and a mountainous area that is part of the Sierra de Perijá<sup>24</sup>. At the beginning of the year, fires were reported in the Sierra de Perijá mountain range<sup>25</sup>. These areas are home to protected animal species such as the spectacled bear, the white-faced monkey and the mountain lion.

## 2. SOCIOECONOMIC SITUATION AND RESILIENCE

Rosario de Perijá's main activity is cattle ranching, which is crucial to the economy of the Zulian region. Agriculture is also part of its strategic activities, especially the cultivation of corn, cassava and plantains. The exploitation of limestone is another important activity, destined for the cement manufacturing process. The municipality has tourism potential because of the numerous excursion and recreational activities that could be offered and that would contribute to the development of the area, the creation of livelihoods, and the socioeconomic activation of the municipality. However, it is a potential that is little exploited, for various reasons: lack of political will, lack of investment, and the generalized insecurity in this area of Zulia.

The total employment rate in the municipality<sup>26</sup> for 2021 was 42%<sup>27</sup>, with an economically active rate of 45%<sup>28</sup>, 43% of the population was salaried<sup>29</sup>, and 45% were self-employed and family helpers<sup>30</sup>. The unemployment rate was estimated at 8%<sup>31</sup>. In terms of access to education, 49% of young people between the ages of 15 and 24 are neither studying nor employed<sup>32</sup>. Likewise, the rate of school attendance among children and young people (3 to 24 years old) is 59.5%, and only 12.3% of young people between 18 and 24 years old attended school<sup>33</sup>.

Machiques de Perijá's agricultural activity, especially cattle raising, also represents its most important job and income generating activity. It stands out for the quality of its cattle herds and the implementation of advanced insemination and embryo implantation techniques, which has allowed it to become one of the most important centers to produce raw material for the dairy industry, with the massive production of milk, cheese and butter. There is also forestry activity and, to a lesser extent, fishing activity. Like Rosario de Perijá, given its strategic location with forest characteristics and abundant rivers, Machiques is a favorable area for tourism, with tourist resorts on the Kunana, Macoita, Tokuco, Yaza, Apón rivers, and the Laguna de las Doncellas on the shores of Lake Maracaibo. However, it is also a poorly attended activity. Many indigenous people are dedicated to handicrafts, such as ceramics, basketry and ritual objects.

By 2021, in Machiques de Perijá the total employment rate<sup>34</sup> was 45%<sup>35</sup>, with an economically active rate of 47%<sup>36</sup>, 40% of the population was salaried<sup>37</sup>, and 54% were self-employed and family helpers<sup>38</sup>. Meanwhile, the unemployment rate was estimated at 6%<sup>39</sup>. 51% of young people between the ages of 15 and 24 were neither studying nor employed<sup>40</sup>, while the rate of school attendance among children and young people (ages 3 to 24) was 61.2%, and only 12.6% of young people between the ages of 18 and 24 attended school<sup>41</sup>.

Currently, the Perijá sub-region has been one of the most affected by the complex humanitarian emergency. These affectations translate into the abandonment of the fields, insecurity, the absence of sustained policies for the consolidation of the agro-industry and the activation of tourism as livelihoods with wide scope, the massive migration of economically active people, the violation of the rights of indigenous peoples and communities, among other aspects, show a socioeconomic panorama that continues in frank deterioration, damaging the life projects of entire families and remarking the setback of an essential sub-region for the production and growth of Zulia.

In general, according to the testimonies gathered in the field research, most people work in informal businesses, even as fuel smugglers. Those who manage to get a formal job are usually on the government payroll (public employees, teachers), but logically, salaries are not enough, so they have to resort to jobs on the side to survive, such as baking, styling, cutting and sewing. The entire economy moves in dollars and Colombian pesos in cash; the bolivar circulates very infrequently. Few businesses accept transfers, mobile payment and point of sale. Commerce is very affected by the socioeconomic situation and agricultural and livestock production is increasingly difficult, which limits the employee recruitment.

In addition, there is a serious situation of legal and citizen insecurity in both municipalities. One of the most affected sectors in this regard are agricultural producers, who for years have turned to various governmental channels to draw attention to this worrying scourge, which is increasing day by day. For example, in March 2024, the labor union of producers denounced the invasion of three farms located in the Cachamana sector, Río Negro from Machiques de Perijá parish -without expressly mentioning the alleged perpetrators, although they have supposedly been identified-, a situation that puts not only the production at risk, but also the life and integrity of the owners and workers of these farms. Therefore, they requested the intervention of governmental bodies to stop this practice of people entering and illegally taking these farms to steal goods and then resell them, in addition to the harassment towards the producers of the Perijá sub-region<sup>42</sup>.

Mass migration has also been observed in the subregion. Every week, groups of between thirty and seventy people migrate, seeking to cross the Darien. Only children and adolescents, the elderly and the sick are left behind. In practice, households are made up only of grandparents and grandchildren, waiting for remittances from relatives abroad if they manage to send something. But there is also an important pendular migratory flow among the residents of Rosario de Perijá, who move to Colombia to look for temporary jobs.

Faced with this reality, communities try to reinvent themselves with the support of solidarity actors who accompany them in their struggle and persistence of their right to move forward with human dignity. This report documents two experiences of organizations that live in Rosario de Perijá, that through their selfless, responsible and people-focused work, provide services to mitigate needs and suffering that sometimes save lives, such as *Caritas: Diocese of Machiques*, and *Rotary International: Rosario de Perijá*. Codhez visited them to learn about their work of entrepreneurship, resilience and integral and dignified development of human beings, with special emphasis on the most vulnerable, such as children, adolescents, women and the elderly<sup>43</sup>.

The *Diocese of Machiques*, attached to *Caritas Venezuela*, was founded 21 years ago and has twenty-three teams made up of active volunteer parish Caritas members. Geographically, it has active programs in the municipalities of Machiques de Perijá, Rosario de Perijá, Jesús María



Semprúm and Catatumbo. In Rosario de Perijá, Caritas operates the headquarters called *Nuestra Señora del Rosario*, located in the parish of El Rosario, next to Bolívar Square. Additionally, there are also the *El Buen Pastor* and *Cristo Rey* branches.



Photo: Jorge Galet.

As part of the work carried out by the *Diocese of Machiques*, its director commented that there are currently 9 community support and assistance programs in operation: grandparents' dining room, medical programs, help with medicines, wardrobes, visits to communities, visits to sick people, visits to people deprived of their freedom, livelihood management, and the Alert, Monitoring and Nutritional Attention System (SAMAN).

SAMAN is a program that detects, cares for and maintains adequate nutritional well-being of children from 0 to 5 years of age, pregnant and lactating women, who are identified with malnutrition. In addition, this program has several components of comprehensive support: nutritional; health; food aid; training and promotion of hygiene, sanitation and safe water; and human development through lectures on various topics, such as nutrition, sanitation, prevention of gender violence, human rights, among others.



Photo: Jorge Galet.

The strategies and activities carried out in the application of these programs are diverse, including medical attention for the determination of anthropometric measurements of children, pregnant women and lactating women; the identification of people in a state of malnutrition and in greater vulnerability; the delivery of treatment according to their state of malnutrition; training on nutrition; and the monitoring of cases.



Photo: Jorge Galet.

On the specific issue of food security and nutrition, a monthly sample taken by the *Diocese of Machiques* of 150 children and adolescents served by *Caritas*, showed that 10% are moderately to severely malnourished (this percentage is acutely malnourished or wasted); 14% are chronically malnourished. In terms of diet, they usually eat once or twice a day, if they can get food, generally simple: a single arepa, a single portion of rice, banana, topocho, a single portion of pasta. Sometimes they add cheese to their diet. Protein is almost nonexistent due to its high price. In any case, it is estimated that of the children and adolescents served by this Diocese, a rate between 86% and 90% recover from malnutrition.

On the other hand, *Rotary International*, is a global network of 1.4 million neighbors, friends, leaders and problem-solvers who aspire to a world where people come together and take action to create lasting change in the world, for their communities and themselves. For more than 110 years, Rotary's people of action have tackled the world's most serious problems with passion, energy, and competence. Whether it's literacy projects, peacebuilding, or access to water and health care, they strive to improve the world, always persevering until they succeed. Rotary members take responsibility for taking action to address the most pernicious problems affecting humanity. Through 46,000 clubs, they promote peace, fight diseases, provide access to clean water, encourage good hygiene, protect mothers and children, promote education, develop local economies, and protect the environment<sup>44</sup>.



Photo: Jorge Galet.

In this regard, there is a *Rotary* club in the municipality of Rosario de Perijá, which has a president and a group of fifteen members. Part of their work is carried out in the Municipal Nursing Home of Rosario de Perijá, located in the parish of El Rosario, which was reopened in 2022, and was named after *Father Marcelino Laurens*, in honor of this priest who exercised his ecclesiastical mission in Rosario de Perijá for 50 years. In this facility, the older people are guaranteed food, medical attention, recreation, rest and transportation. It has seventeen rooms for rest, after meals.



Photo: Jorge Galet.

Currently, they serve a population of approximately 55 older adults, three times a week (Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays). Another 15 older adults receive their meals through neighbors and relatives, given their deteriorated state of health, who pick them up at the headquarters with the same frequency as the group served at the municipal nursing home. The help

received from Rotary members is constant, in addition to private donations, but mainly depends on the Mayor's Office of the Rosario de Perijá municipality. Likewise, within the *Rosario de Perijá Rotary Complex*, there is an operational dialysis unit, which has an electric plant and serves more than 50 patients, both from the Rosario de Perijá municipality as well as from neighboring municipalities.

As can be noted, in the middle of the shortages and limitations and State inertia in this area of Zulia state, there are people, communities and organizations that struggle to reclaim the human rights of hundreds of people affected and in need of attention, to recover their lives and contribute to their personal, family and social wellbeing.

### 3. COMPLEX REALITIES: SITUATION OF THE YUKPA ETHNIC GROUP AND ACCESS TO PUBLIC SERVICES

This section outlines two of the complex circumstances that severely affect the Perijá subregion, the first determined by the violation of the rights and neglect of the Yukpa people, and the second referring to the generalized deficiency in the provision of public services that affects most people living in both municipalities. These are issues that require immediate solutions, with observance of the needs and respect for the characteristic culture of this sub-region.

#### The Yukpa ethnic group

As noted, the Perijá subregion is the traditional indigenous habitat<sup>45</sup> of some peoples and communities, including the Yukpa ethnic group. The indigenous habitat has a meaning that goes beyond mere settlement or geographic location. Thus, according to the provisions of the Organic Law of Indigenous Peoples and Communities<sup>46</sup>, the indigenous habitat is represented by the “...set of physical, chemical, biological and socio-cultural elements that constitute the environment in which the indigenous peoples and communities develop and allow the development of their traditional ways of life. It includes the soil, water, air, flora, fauna and in general all those material and immaterial resources necessary to guarantee the life and development of indigenous peoples and communities” (Article 2).

The Yukpa have their natural habitat in the Sierra de Perijá, between Colombia and Venezuela. Their territory was extended from the Cesar River in Colombia to Lake Maracaibo in Venezuela<sup>47</sup>. The Yukpa are one of the oldest communities in the region, and the translation of the word Yukpa means *Meek Indian*. Their language is Yukpa-Japreria, commonly used among the communities, but Spanish is also spoken in the presence of other people. Historically, the Yukpa have been strong defenders of their territories and rights, and for the preservation of their culture and way of life. In 1960 they formed the organization Indigenous Union of Sierra de Perijá (UISP) to defend their rights and promote the development of their communities. In 1979, together with other indigenous peoples of Zulia, they won recognition of their right to collective ownership of their ancestral lands<sup>48</sup>. The Yukpa economy is based on growing corn, beans, cassava and plantains in small plots of land. They also raise poultry, cattle, fish and gather fruit. Yukpa men make bows and arrows; women make a variety of handicrafts: hammocks, baskets and utensils<sup>49</sup>.

Since 1999, they have been recognized as an indigenous community and, therefore, their language and culture, the right to land and natural resources in their ancestral territory, which must be respected and protected by the Venezuelan State. However, the current context suffered by the Yukpa people is due in part to the failure of the Venezuelan State to comply with its constitutional obligation to delimit their territory and reclaim the ancestral rights of this indigenous community.

Unfortunately, the current State neglect and the absence of public policies aimed at the preservation of the culture and defense of the rights of the Yukpa people, has resulted in a set of acute problems that greatly affect the inhabitants of Rosario de Perijá and Machiques de Perijá, which translate into claims and demands before unfulfilled promises by the national government, protest actions and closures of main roads, damage to the basic activities of the municipalities such as health, economy, education, among others. And while all this is happening, the State orders to limit the exercise of rights, and remains inert by not providing solutions focused on safeguarding all people without any discrimination.

Among the promises not kept by the national government is the failure to comply with the agreement to purchase Yukpa handicraft production. It is even reported that the national government made a commitment to purchase a large production of handicrafts but has ignored it. This clearly represents a form of manipulation in the face of the needs and shortages suffered by this ethnic group. This situation has generated intense protests by various groups of the Yukpa communities, some of them unleashing violence, especially when they have been prevented from traveling to the cities of Caracas or Maracaibo to claim their rights<sup>50</sup>.

In April 2024, some representative sectors of the Rosario de Perijá municipality (cattle ranchers, merchants, health sector, transportation, churches), headed by the Mayor's Office, requested the intervention of regional and national authorities to mediate in the worrying situation related to the closing of roads by Yukpa communities -such as Troncal 6 (Machiques Colón), an essential route for the production and distribution of food and raw material-. These closures are due to the impediment imposed by the Bolivarian National Guard so that the Yukpas cannot advance in their journey to the capital of the Republic for the sale of their handicrafts<sup>51</sup>, violating their rights to free transit and commerce. In fact, at the beginning of April, members of the Bolivarian National Guard and officers of the Bolivarian National Police prevented the crossing of a group of Yukpa people -alleging superior orders- who were on their way to Caracas to sell some 7,800 pieces of handicrafts, while the passage of other private drivers and public transportation flowed without difficulty<sup>52</sup>.

These abusive dynamics of repression and criminalization by Venezuelan state security agencies against the Yukpa people are not new. For example, in July 2023, some 70 motorcycles belonging to Yukpa people traveling to the city of Maracaibo were detained by agents of the Bolivarian National Police. This situation occurred before the visit to Maracaibo of the president of the Republic for the commemoration of the *Maracaibo Lake Naval Battle Day*<sup>53</sup>.

As part of the actions of the national government, a Mediation Commission -appointed by the leadership of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV) and the vice-presidency for indigenous affairs- was established to hear the requests of the Yukpa people in Rosario de Perijá, particularly the one related to going to Caracas to sell their handicrafts to the national government, to which the spokespersons of the Commission expressed: *"We cannot make that commitment. We have to say it with sincerity"*<sup>54</sup>.

At the end of April 2024, in the absence of answers, a small group of Yukpa people -with bows and arrows- closed the Troncal 6 (Machiques Colón)<sup>55</sup> road again. According to information, it was a group of 40 Yukpa people belonging to the Yaza River basin who closed the road and made human barriers to prevent vehicular circulation<sup>56</sup>. In these circumstances, the mayors and municipal councils of Rosario de Perijá and Machiques de Perijá, agreed to raise the situation to "national and

international instances”, denouncing the closing of the main roads because, according to the decision taken by these instances, it causes serious social, economic and health damages: shortage of supplies, obstacles for people with chronic diseases, school absenteeism, among others<sup>57</sup>.

However, the call for attention in these scenarios of protests, struggles and confrontations should be to avoid the stigmatization and criminalization of the Yukpa people<sup>58</sup>, who have inhabited these lands since before the Spanish conquest and colonization. Ancestral rights must be given their just measure and any racist posture must be eradicated. We urge to raise awareness to avoid the intensification of violent actions, and to contribute among all to make visible the injustices and multifactorial needs faced by the Yukpa ethnic group<sup>59</sup>, to find ways of harmony, agreements and general welfare for all the inhabitants of the sub-region of Perijá.

### **Access to public services**

As in the rest of the municipalities of the Zulian region, the crisis of public services is still on the rise, the attempts of improvised and inconsistent solutions are the main protagonists, without a real impact on the improvement of the quality of life and welfare of the people of Rosario de Perijá and Machiques de Perijá. This section is based on the different testimonies collected in the municipality of Rosario de Perijá.

#### **Electric service**

In the sub-region of Perijá, power rationing is common and normal, everyday, at least four hours. Depending on the sector, the number of hours and number of power rationing outages increases daily.

At the beginning of the year, there were rumors of a permanent emergency due to the constant power rationing -among other aspects, such as the lack of diesel oil and the poor agricultural roads on Troncal 6 (Machiques Colón)-. At that time, it was reported that the replacement of the sublacustrine cable that passes through Lake Maracaibo (a replacement about which no further information was subsequently obtained), would further accentuate the power outages and would greatly limit the regular operations of the producing farms, without the possibility of connecting power plants due to the shortage of diesel oil necessary for their operation<sup>60</sup>.

However, as a way to mitigate the electric crisis that is plaguing the region, specifically in the health area, the Mayor's Office of Rosario de Perijá installed a photovoltaic or solar energy system in the *Teresa González* outpatient clinic in the Barranquitas sector, to guarantee the flow of electricity in the delivery room, shock room, hospitalization, observation room, treatment room, emergency room, nursing area, residence, hallways and external areas, becoming the first health center in Zulia to operate with solar energy or clean energy. It is estimated that this work will benefit 15,000 people<sup>61</sup>.

#### **Drinking water and domestic gas**

In Rosario de Perijá, some sectors have never received piped drinking water service, so the population resorts to the construction of artesian wells, as well as the purchase of refills of water containers and water tanks by tanker trucks. The water container is approximately USD 10, which is inaccessible to the great majority of the population.

According to locals' testimonies, there is no domestic gas piping system. The gas cylinder is the main source of gas for cooking, but it is not always available for sale. When gas cylinders are

available for sale, refilling usually costs between USD 15 and 20. When there is a shortage, refilling each cylinder can cost up to USD 50.

### **Education and health**

It is reported that schools belonging to the public education system do not have classes every day; children only attend classes three times a week. School canteens are not operating, since the school feeding program is paralyzed.

Regarding the right to health, only one hospital was reported to be in operation, in addition to two comprehensive diagnostic centers (CDI). These health institutions have health personnel but lack supplies and medicines to provide their service. Everything a patient requires must be provided by family members. Among those interviewed, it was commented that during the period of shortages the situation was extremely critical because medicines were not available; now they are available in pharmacies, but their prices are dollarized, and it is extremely difficult to acquire them.

### **Transportation and fuel**

According to testimonies provided during the community visit in Rosario de Perijá, the persistence of fuel shortages was evidenced, a very unstable service, since gasoline can disappear for days, even months, causing long lines. Occasionally, the supply is regularized a little, which is a temporary relief for the daily life of the community, considering that since it is a rural and agricultural municipality, the existing public transportation service is minimal (which is charged in foreign currency, either in dollars or Colombian pesos. Drivers are not used to receive bolivars in cash), in addition to the long distances that people have to travel to work, especially in remote farms or slaughterhouses. In any case, with the fuel shortage, the municipality's production decreases, and the suffering of the population worsens.

In July 2023, the mayor of Rosario de Perijá declared a municipal emergency due to the shortage of fuel, which eventually arrived every 8 days to the service stations, and for which 70% of the agricultural production was paralyzed<sup>62</sup>. Then, two months later, the mayor denounced the irregular sale of gasoline by a group of Yukpa people, in public spaces and without proper management, and denounced the death of a Yukpa child in an accident involving a pick-up truck carrying four fuel tankers<sup>63</sup>.

More recently, it was denounced the existence of mafias that control the supply of gasoline in Rosario de Perijá with the purpose of generating shortages and facilitating its resale. Apparently, by March 2024, only three service stations located in the parish of Sixto Zambrano were supplying fuel for the entire municipality. In view of this irregularity, the corresponding complaint was filed with the Public Prosecutor's Office, with no response up to that moment. According to testimonies, a good part of the little fuel that arrives to the municipality is diverted, it is denounced that in some stations, trucks with modified gas tanks enter and are supplied with up to 400 liters of gasoline, or modified cars that supply up to 120 liters each, while the majority of the population, who wait patiently in kilometers long lines, could only access 40 liters each<sup>64</sup>.

### **Urban sanitation and infrastructure**

In Rosario de Perijá, the garbage collection units are insufficient to cover the routes and sectors for the collection of solid waste, so the citizens must resort to private garbage collectors to dispose of their garbage.

From the infrastructure point of view, the communities of the municipality are built along the national highway. Therefore, when the main roads are closed (such as the ones mentioned previously), the municipality is almost completely paralyzed, restricting and completely enclosing the population, since there are no alternative exits. Most of the roads are deteriorated, even though they are strategic routes for agroindustrial production. The streets lack signage and are poorly lit, some roads have no sidewalks or curbs, and most of the sewers are abandoned, which is even worse during the rainy season.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Undoubtedly, the municipalities of Rosario de Perijá and Machiques de Perijá represent one of the strategic zones of the state of Zulia. Its geographical location and the richness of its nature are the two great potentials that allowed the establishment of a neuralgic agro-industrial center for the national production, the generation of jobs and the integral development, turning it into an attractive sub-region for investment and economic growth. However, its inhabitants are currently struggling to sustain themselves in the midst of a national crisis and governmental neglect.

The people of Rosario de Perijá and Machiques de Perijá face serious obstacles in accessing their rights. As noted, for years there have been serious restrictions on the exercise of basic rights for their human development, such as health, education and work. Despite having health personnel in health institutions, they are short of supplies and medicines. Public education functions half-heartedly; there is no constant and priority attention to children's education. The sources of work are scarce, people must apply additional strategies to survive, without stable and secure livelihoods. Mentioning only these three aspects shows the worrisome panorama of poverty, sadness and regression among the households of this sub-region, which every day witness the closing -or non-existence- of opportunities for their progress and wellbeing. In view of this situation, the importance of the support and permanence of organizations such as the *Diocese of Machiques attached to Caritas Venezuela* and the *Rotary Club of Rosario de Perijá* is highlighted, so that they continue in their work to mitigate the suffering and contribute to the integral and dignified development of people.

This violation of rights also translates into a lack of sufficient and efficient basic services: disproportionate power outages, lack of piped water, lack of a domestic gas network, gasoline smuggling and shortages, limited public transportation, and deteriorated and abandoned infrastructure have a direct impact on people's quality of life, pushing them to venture on dangerous journeys in search of hope outside the country. In addition, the serious insecurity faced by producers and farm workers is highlighted. It is necessary to design public policies that respond to these needs, that go beyond an electoral propaganda issue, and aim at the effective solution of the problems with a human rights perspective and, if necessary, with a differentiated approach.

Once again, it is important to reflect on the current circumstances of the Yukpa people, an oppressed and vulnerable community who have the right to be heard and cared for. Today the Yukpa people are subjected to hunger, deadly diseases, violence, stigmatization and criminalization. It is important to understand their culture, to put ourselves in the shoes of the other to understand their realities. The call is to not impose improvised measures to manipulate and lie to them before their unanswered urgencies. Respect and tolerance towards culture, and frank and friendly dialogue, must be the way forward.



We recommend the necessary coordination between national, regional and local authorities, with the presence of producers, workers, civil society organizations, organized communities and indigenous peoples, for generating specific plans and projects according to the requirements of each sector, but under a justice criterion and prioritization of needs.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Interactive map: <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Rosario+De+Perij%C3%A1,+4047,+Zulia/@10.2306925,-72.4427194,10z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m6!3m5!1s0x8e8a73ca477ddd5d:0x9ad77a639b4ef548!8m2!3d10.2101802!4d-72.236379!16s%2Fm%2F0czd6ky?entry=ttnu>.

<sup>2</sup> The Villa del Rosario was founded on May 9, 1722, by Don Juan de Chourio by Royal Decree of the Spanish Government.

<sup>3</sup> Sensagent *Dictionary, Definition and meaning of Rosario de Perijá Municipality*, at <https://diccionario.sensagent.com/municipio%20rosario%20de%20perija/es-es/>.

<sup>4</sup> Waya Nuchonyu Maleiwa Infocenter, *Rosario de Perijá Municipality*, at [https://infocentrowayanuchonyumaleiwa.blogspot.com/p/municipio-rosario-de-perija\\_4.html](https://infocentrowayanuchonyumaleiwa.blogspot.com/p/municipio-rosario-de-perija_4.html).

<sup>5</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>6</sup> Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicadores-demograficos/>.

<sup>7</sup> Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-de-vivienda-y-hogar/>.

<sup>8</sup> It refers to the percentage ratio between the population belonging to households with total per capita income below the poverty line and the total population. To determine the poverty line, it is considered the estimation of the value of the basic food basket (Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-pobreza/definiciones-del-sector-pobreza/>).

<sup>9</sup> It refers to the percentage ratio between the population belonging to households with total per capita income below the extreme poverty line and the total of households. To determine the poverty line, it is considered the estimation of the value of the basic food basket (Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-pobreza/definiciones-del-sector-pobreza/>).

<sup>10</sup> Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-pobreza/>.

<sup>11</sup> Waya Nuchonyu Maleiwa Infocenter, *Rosario de Perijá Municipality*, at [https://infocentrowayanuchonyumaleiwa.blogspot.com/p/municipio-rosario-de-perija\\_4.html](https://infocentrowayanuchonyumaleiwa.blogspot.com/p/municipio-rosario-de-perija_4.html).

<sup>12</sup> Sensagent *Dictionary, Definition and meaning of Villa del Rosario (Venezuela)*, at <https://diccionario.sensagent.com/municipio%20rosario%20de%20perija/es-es/>.

<sup>13</sup> Waya Nuchonyu Maleiwa Infocenter, *Rosario de Perijá Municipality*, at [https://infocentrowayanuchonyumaleiwa.blogspot.com/p/municipio-rosario-de-perija\\_4.html](https://infocentrowayanuchonyumaleiwa.blogspot.com/p/municipio-rosario-de-perija_4.html).

<sup>14</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>15</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>16</sup> Interactive map: <https://en-in.topographic-map.com/map-m15gp/Machiques/?popup=10.18052%2C-72.50668>.

<sup>17</sup> El Zuliano Rajao, *Machiques de Perijá Municipality, Zulia*, at <http://www.elzulianorajao.com/noticias/municipio-machiques-de-perija-zulia/>.

<sup>18</sup> Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicadores-demograficos/>.

<sup>19</sup> Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-de-vivienda-y-hogar/>.

<sup>20</sup> It refers to the percentage ratio between the population belonging to households with total per capita income below the poverty line and the total population. To determine the poverty line, it is considered the estimation of the value of the basic food basket (Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-pobreza/definiciones-del-sector-pobreza/>).

<sup>21</sup> It refers to the percentage ratio between the population belonging to households with total per capita income below the extreme poverty line and the total of households. To determine the poverty line, it is considered the estimation of the value of the basic food basket (Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-pobreza/definiciones-del-sector-pobreza/>).

<sup>22</sup> Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-pobreza/>.

<sup>23</sup> Camarillo Edgar (2017), *About the Foundation and History of Machiques de Perijá*. In: Between Chronicles and Chroniclers. Compiled by Egli Dorantes. National Experimental University Rafael María Baralt. Cabimas, Venezuela. Pp. 57-61.

<sup>24</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>25</sup> Radio Fe y Alegría Venezuela News (January 26, 2024), Machiques: celebrating the Zulianity while facing a crisis,” at <https://www.radiofeyalegrianoticias.com/machiques-celebran-la-zulianidad-con-una-crisis-a-cuesta/>.

<sup>26</sup> Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-de-empleo/>.

<sup>27</sup> Formed by the percentage ratio between the population of 15 years of age and over who were employed in the reference period and the population of 15 years of age and over (Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-de-empleo/definiciones-del-sector-empleo/>).

<sup>28</sup> Refers to the percentage share of the economically active (employed and unemployed) population of 15 years of age and over within the population of 15 years of age and over (Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-de-empleo/definiciones-del-sector-empleo/>).

<sup>29</sup> Refers to the percentage ratio between the employed population of 15 years of age and over in the category of employees or workers in the public or private sector and the total employed population of 15 years of age and over (Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-de-empleo/definiciones-del-sector-empleo/>).

<sup>30</sup> Refers to the percentage ratio between the population aged 15 years and older employed as self-employed or as a family helper (paid or unpaid) and the total employed population aged 15 years and older (Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-de-empleo/definiciones-del-sector-empleo/>).

<sup>31</sup> Represents the percentage ratio between the population between 15 and 24 years of age that was unemployed in the reference period and the economically active population of this age group (Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-de-empleo/definiciones-del-sector-empleo/>).

<sup>32</sup> It has to do with the relative importance of the youth population between 15 and 24 years of age who do not regularly attend an educational center and who were not engaged in any economic activity in the reference period, in relation to the youth population of this age group (Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-de-empleo/definiciones-del-sector-empleo/>).

<sup>33</sup> Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-de-educacion/>.

<sup>34</sup> Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-de-empleo/>.

<sup>35</sup> Formed by the percentage ratio between the population of 15 years of age and over who were employed in the reference period and the population of 15 years of age and over (Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-de-empleo/definiciones-del-sector-empleo/>).

<sup>36</sup> Refers to the percentage share of the economically active (employed and unemployed) population of 15 years of age and over within the population of 15 years of age and over (Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-de-empleo/definiciones-del-sector-empleo/>).

<sup>37</sup> Refers to the percentage ratio between the employed population of 15 years of age and over in the category of employees or workers in the public or private sector and the total employed population of 15 years of age and over (Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-de-empleo/definiciones-del-sector-empleo/>).

<sup>38</sup> Refers to the percentage ratio between the population aged 15 years and older employed as self-employed or as a family helper (paid or unpaid) and the total employed population aged 15 years and older (Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-de-empleo/definiciones-del-sector-empleo/>).

<sup>39</sup> Represents the percentage ratio between the population between 15 and 24 years of age that was unemployed in the reference period and the economically active population of this age group (Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-de-empleo/definiciones-del-sector-empleo/>).

<sup>40</sup> It has to do with the relative importance of the youth population between 15 and 24 years of age who do not regularly attend an educational center and who were not engaged in any economic activity in the reference period, in relation to

the youth population of this age group (Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-de-empleo/definiciones-del-sector-empleo/>).

<sup>41</sup> Institute for Economic and Social Research of the Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB) (2021), *Inso-Encovi 2021*, at <https://insoencovi.ucab.edu.ve/indicador-de-educacion/>.

<sup>42</sup> Perijaneros.com (March 14, 2024), "Labor union of producers denounces invasion of three farms in Machiques", at <https://www.perijaneros.com/2024/03/Gremio-de-productores-denuncia-invasion-de-tres-fincas-en-Machiques.html>.

<sup>43</sup> Caritas de Venezuela (2024), *Who are we?*, at <https://caritasvenezuela.org/quienes-somos/>.

<sup>44</sup> Rotary (2024), *Who are we?*, at <https://www.rotary.org/en/about-rotary/>.

<sup>45</sup> "Article 2...1. Indigenous Habitat: The totality of the space occupied and owned by indigenous peoples and communities, in which their physical, cultural, spiritual, social, economic and political life is developed; which includes the areas of cultivation, hunting, river and sea fishing, harvesting, shepherding, settlement, traditional roads, canals and waterways, sacred and historical places and others necessary to guarantee and develop their specific ways of life" (National Assembly, 2001, *Law of Demarcation and Guarantee of the Habitat and Lands of the Indigenous Peoples*. Official Gazette No. 37.118. January 12, 2001).

<sup>46</sup> National Assembly (2005), *Organic Law of Indigenous Peoples and Communities*. Official Gazette No. 38.344. December 27, 2005.

<sup>47</sup> National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC) (2024), *#VolverAlOrigen. Yukpa*, at <https://www.onic.org.co/pueblos/1168-yuko>.

<sup>48</sup> Noticia al Día (June 9, 2023), "Who are the Yukpas or 'Meek Indians': How they are organized, culture, tradition and rights," at <https://noticialdia.com/al-dia/quienes-son-los-yukpas-o-indios-mansos-como-se-organizan-cultura-tradicion-y-derechos/>.

<sup>49</sup> El Nacional (June 12, 2023), "Explanatory notes on the Yukpa conflict," at <https://www.elnacional.com/opinion/notas-explicativas-sobre-el-conflicto-yukpa/>.

<sup>50</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>51</sup> La Verdad (April 11, 2024), "People in Rosario de Perijá ask for a solution to the problem with the Yukpas", at <https://laverdad.com/en-rosario-de-perija-piden-solucion-a-la-problematica-con-los-yukpas/>.

<sup>52</sup> Noticia al Día (April 6, 2024), "GNB authorities in Villa del Rosario neutralize a group of Yukpas who were on their way to Caracas to sell handicrafts", at <https://noticialdia.com/sucesos/autoridades-de-la-gnb-en-la-villa-del-rosario-neutraliza-a-un-grupo-de-yukpas-que-iba-a-caracas-a-vender-artesania/>.

<sup>53</sup> Noticia al Día (July 24, 2023), "70 motorized Yukpas are prevented from passing through Villa del Rosario: they want to get to Paseo del Lago to talk to Maduro", at <https://noticialdia.com/sucesos/impiden-paso-a-70-yukpas-motorizados-en-villa-del-rosario-quieren-llegar-al-paseo-del-lago-para-hablar-con-maduro/>.

<sup>54</sup> Radio Fe y Alegría Noticias Venezuela (April 14, 2024), "Mediation Commission heard requests from the Yukpas in Rosario de Perijá", at <https://www.radiofeyalegrianoticias.com/comision-de-mediacion-escucho-solicitudes-de-los-yukpas-en-rosario-de-perija/>.

<sup>55</sup> Noticia al Día (April 22, 2024), "Yukpas close the Troncal 6 Machiques-Colón road again", at <https://noticialdia.com/zulia/yukpas-vuelven-a-cerrar-el-paso-en-la-troncal-6-de-machiques-colon/>.

<sup>56</sup> El Regional del Zulia (April 23, 2024), "Yukpas intensify the occupation of Troncal 6 in Villa del Rosario on Tuesday, April 23", at <https://diarioelregionaldelzulia.com/yukpas-arrecian-toma-de-la-troncal-6-en-la-villa-del-rosario-este-martes-23-de-abril/>.

<sup>57</sup> Perijaneros.com (April 26, 2024), "Yukpa case will be taken to national and international instances," at <https://www.perijaneros.com/2024/04/Caso-de-yukpas-sera-llevado-a-instancias-nacionales-e-internacionales%20.html>.

<sup>58</sup> Look Statement by *Clima21 and Odevida-Venezuela regarding the current conflict situation related to the Yukpa people* (June 15, 2023), at <https://humvenezuela.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Pronunciamento-yukpa4-1.pdf>.

<sup>59</sup> Look *Codhez Statement: Urgent Need to Respect the Culture and Tradition of the Yukpa Indigenous Communities in Zulia* (June 24, 2023), at <https://codhez.org/urge-el-respeto-a-la-cultura-y-tradicion-de-las-comunidades-indigenas-yukpa-en-el-zulia/>.

<sup>60</sup> El Regional del Zulia (January 20, 2024), "ROSARIO DE PERIJÁ: Dairy and meat production decreases due to lack of diesel and electricity," at <https://diarioelregionaldelzulia.com/rosario-de-perija-merma-produccion-de-lacteos-y-carnes-por-falta-de-gasoil-y-electricidad/>.

<sup>61</sup> El Pitazo (April 30, 2024), "Zulia | Mayor's Office of Rosario de Perijá lights an outpatient clinic with solar energy due to electrical failures", at <https://elpitazo.net/occidente/zulia-alcaldia-de-rosario-de-perija-alumbra-ambulatorio-con-energia-solar-ante-fallas-electricas/>.

<sup>62</sup> El Pitazo (July 6, 2023), "Zulia: Mayor declares emergency in Rosario de Perijá municipality due to fuel shortage", at <https://elpitazo.net/occidente/zulia-alcalde-declara-en-emergencia-el-municipio-rosario-de-perija-por-escasez-de-combustible/>.

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<sup>63</sup> Tal Cual (September 22, 2023), “*While the Waraos can't buy gasoline, the Yukpas sell it as contraband*”, at <https://talcualdigital.com/mientras-los-waraos-no-pueden-comprar-gasolina-los-yukpas-la-venden-en-contrabando/>.

<sup>64</sup> Perijaneros.com (March 6, 2024), “*Gasoline Mafias board the product, cause shortages and then resell it in Rosario de Perijá*”, at <https://www.perijaneros.com/2024/03/Mafias-de-la-gasolina-acaparan-el-producto-y-causan-escasez-en-Rosario-de-Perija%20.html>.