



COMITÉ PERMANENTE POR LA DEFENSA DE LOS DERECHOS HUMANOS

Report on aggressions against human rights defenders from the Permanent Committee of Human Rights (CPDH).

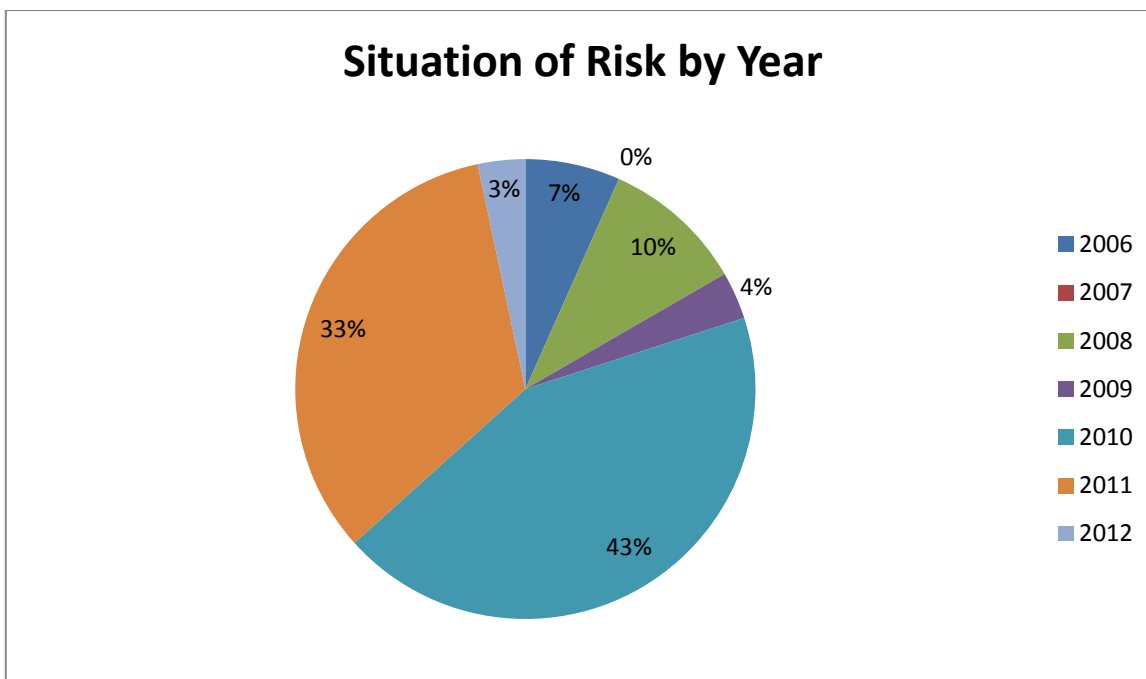
Introduction

The CPDH is a nongovernmental organisation created out of the conclusions of the 1st National Forum for Human Rights and Democratic Freedom, held in 1979 in response to the human rights violations of the Turbay Ayala government. Since then the CPDH has led a hard struggle in defence of human rights, democratic freedom and the protection of the civilian population in the midst of the armed conflict; creating spaces for integration of the right to life, peace processes and the defence of fundamental rights, based around the central axes of a holistic concept of rights, citizen participation and the struggle against paramilitarism and impunity.

Since its foundation in 1979 the CPDH has suffered the assassination of 54 of its leaders, starting with the murder of the lawyer Fernando Vélez Méndez, president of CPDH in Puerto Berrio, Antioquia on the 27th January 1983. The list of crimes continues with Héctor Abad Gómez, president of CPDH Antioquia, assassinated on 25th August 1987 and the killings of Leonardo Betancur Taborda, Jesús María Valle, Josué Giraldo, Carlos Bernal, Jaime Pardo Leal and many others. The objective of these crimes was to silence the denunciations CPDH was making against institutional abuses of the civilian population in diverse regions of the country. The direct consequence was the annihilation of many regional and local chapters of the CPDH. Currently, CPDH leaders face a panorama of ongoing false accusations, imprisonment, threats, and assassination.



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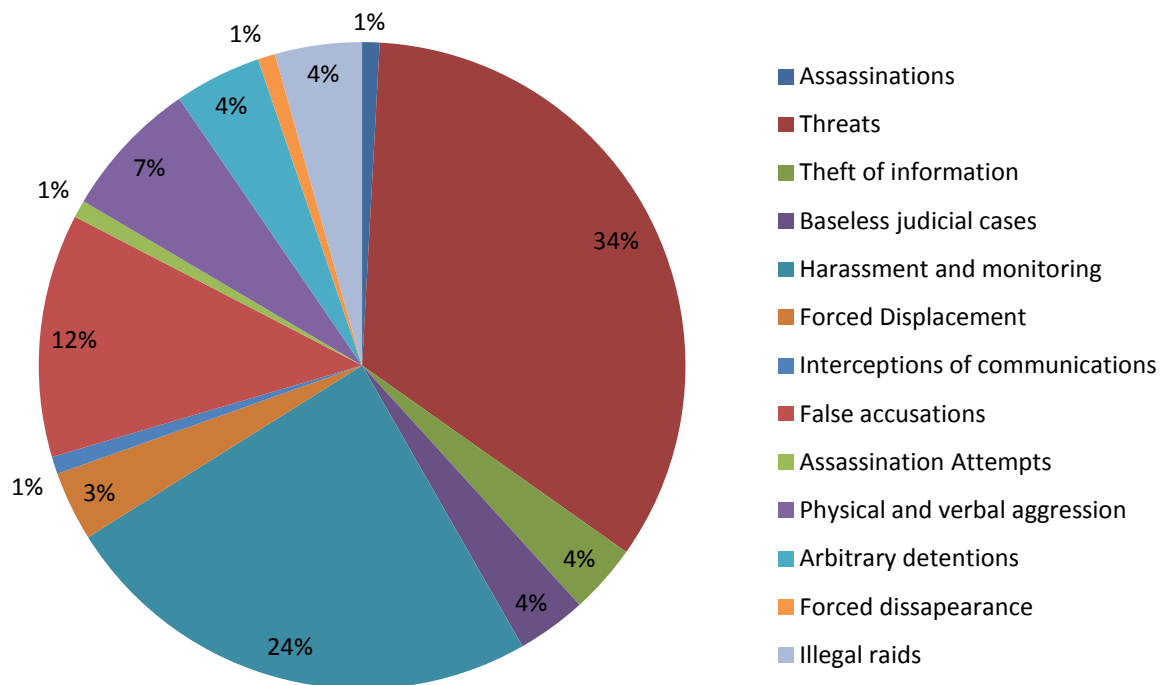


Since 2006, the year in which the highest number of violations against CPDH members took place was 2010, a situation which demonstrates that government policies are not aimed at reducing the aggressions against human rights defenders, but rather are oriented towards victimizing them, with the objective of silencing their denouncements against institutional and paramilitary abuses of the civilian population, creating an obstacle to the work they carry out to the benefit of Colombian society.



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Agression by type of violation





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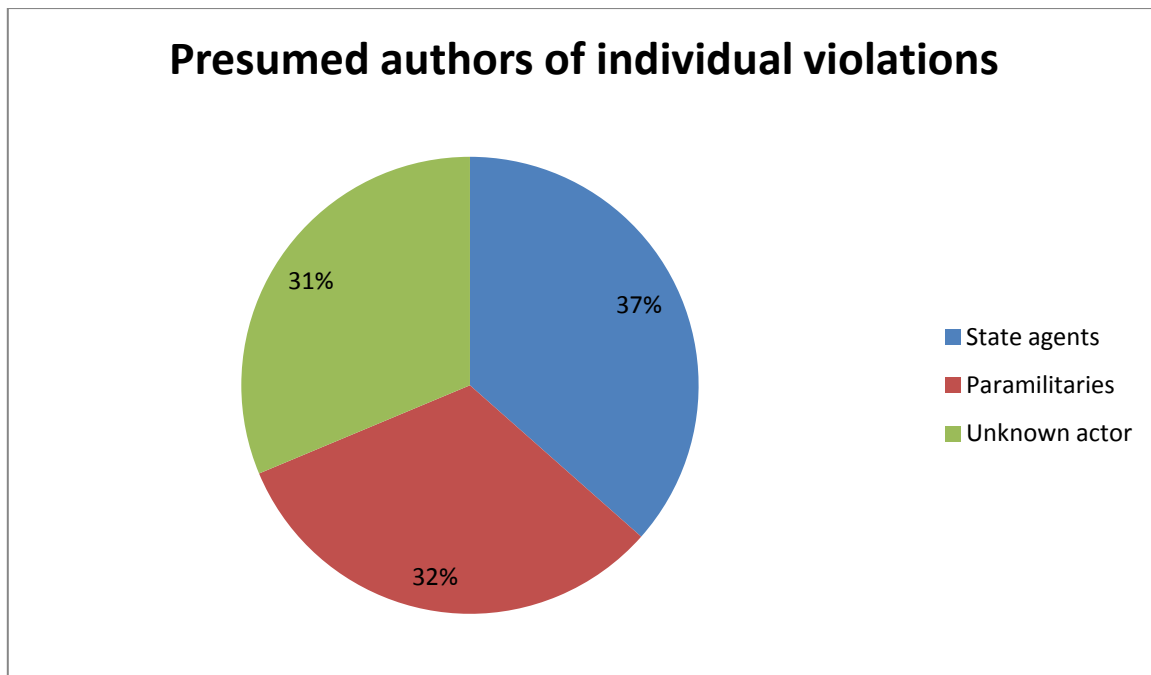
Type of violation	State Agent	Paramilitaries	Unknown Actor	Total
Assassinations			1	1
Threats	1	27	11	39
Theft of information	3		1	4
Baseless judicial cases	4			4
Harassment and monitoring	12	1	15	28
Forced displacement		4		4
Interceptions of communications	1			1
False accusations	8	3	3	14
Assassination attempts	1			1
Physical and verbal aggression	3	1	4	8
Arbitrary detention	5			5
Forced disappearance		1		1
Illegal raids	4		1	5
Total individual aggressions	42	37	36	115

Since 2006 to the present day, the time this report focuses on, the members of the CPDH have been the subject of 14 types of aggression. Of the individual attacks registered, 34% were threats, 24% were harassment and monitoring, 12% were false accusations, 7% were physical or verbal aggression, 4% were thefts of information, baseless judicial cases, arbitrary detentions and illegal raids; 3% were forced displacement and 1% were assassinations, interceptions of communications, assassination attempts and forced disappearances.

The threats, harassment and false accusations have been the most common methods used to inhibit the work of our members, carried out in their majority by state actors or paramilitary groups.



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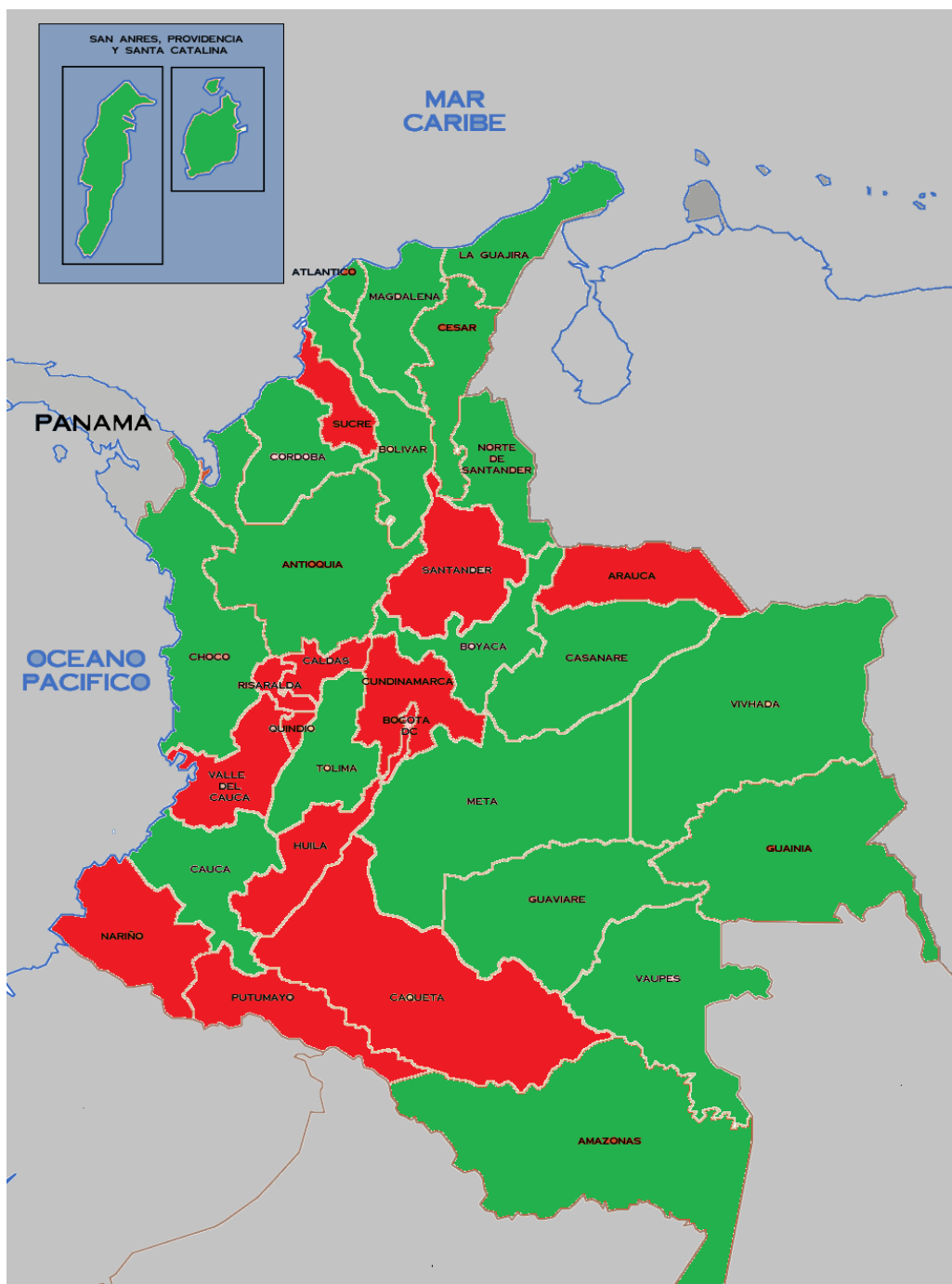
As the above graph demonstrates the presumed authors in the majority of violations against CPDH human rights defenders, were committed by state agents (military intelligence, state forces, SIJIN [judicial police], the Attorney General's Office, among others), which further proves that current government policy, and that of the previous government, aims at victimisation and systematic persecution against CPDH members.

Paramilitary groups follow state agents closely, responsible for 32% of abuses, and finally unknown actors, responsible for 31% of aggressions committed.

Risk by Region



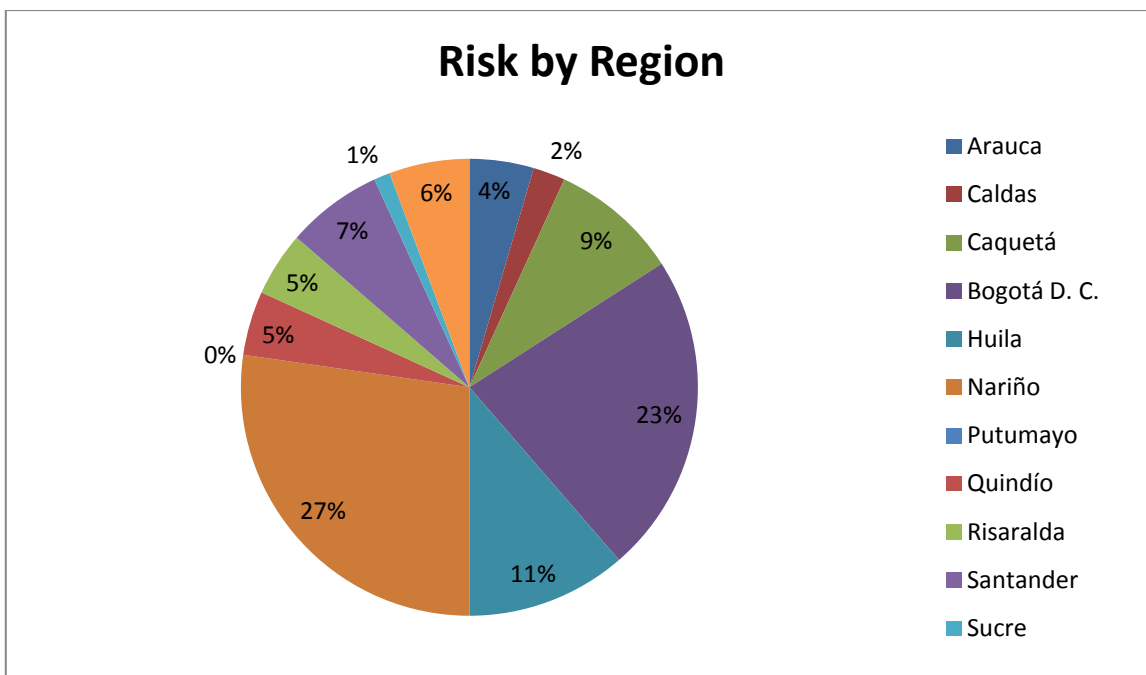
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The departments of Nariño, Bogotá D. C. and Huila, have the highest number of reported aggressions in the country.

Cases such as Putumayo y Sucre, although they do not report a significant percentage of the aggressions, are areas which currently represent a high rate of threat against CPDH members given that they have a high paramilitary presence and since the past year the CPDH has provided legal accompaniment to victims of paramilitarism and of the state in these regions.



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Conclusions

Based on this report, we can conclude that:

- We are confronted with cases of extreme gravity and urgency that put in real and imminent danger the personal integrity, freedom and security of CPDH members.
- There is an evident lack of will on the part of the government to implement real policies of prevention and protection. This is shown by the precariousness of the Ministry of the Interior protection scheme, which currently does not have the necessary measures for security to avoid harm and guarantee human rights protection for CPDH members.
- Despite the risk that some CPDH members face, of those who previously had protection measures, the Ministry of the Interior has now withdrawn these measures without carrying out the normal risk level evaluation, leaving them exposed to attacks against their fundamental rights.
- The Attorney General's Office should be coherent in its function and mission to fulfil an efficient administration of justice and it must show progress and results in the investigations carried out as a result of our denouncements that serve to clear-up the facts and to identify the authors of the crimes, in order to avert further abuses.