

COCA COLA ATTACKS THE WORKERS' PROTEST

On March 13 and 14, we, the workers at the Coca Cola bottling plant in the city of Barranquilla, Colombia, members of Sinaltrainal (National Union of Food Industry Workers), held a protest outside the plant. We are protesting the company's attempt to impose a contract on us. Management called in the police to forcefully break us up, to intimidate and weaken our demonstration. In Bucaramanga, the company called officials of the Labor Ministry who arrived to verify a supposed cessation of activities.

In Medellin, days before the protest, inside a bottling plant, photos of the leaders of Sinaltrainal were found in a copy machine. We are very concerned about the intended use of these photos. We fear for our lives and safety.

Sinaltrainal demands of Coca Cola that it resolves the list of demands presented on January 3, 2014. We reject the demands of the employer that the union accept an imposed collective agreement.

We demand that Coca Cola protects the life and safety of the workers threatened with death and give guarantees for the workers that with their families have had to flee the cities of Santa Marta, Cartagena, and Barrancabermeja, among others.

We demand that Coca Cola return the leaders of Sinaltrainal, who were removed by force, to their jobs and comply with the orders given by the government judges to reinstate them.

We demand:

That Coca Cola withdraw the proceedings presented before the labor judge seeking to have the Sinaltrainal section in Villavicencio declared illegal.

That Coca Cola comply with the agreement with Sinaltrainal in the Collective Work Pact and the judgement of the Constitutional Court, which has ordered that businesses provide paid leave for union activities.

That Coca Cola respects the rights of sick workers, guaranteeing medical attention and respect for work restrictions.

That Coca Cola accurately pay wages and does not continue to unlawfully appropriate the income of workers.

Sinaltrainal supports the workers of Coca Cola in Spain who are fighting for their right to a job.

In Medellín, the management of Coca Cola used police with armored tanks to suppress outsourced workers that had joined Sinaltrainal and were protesting against the dismissal of one of the workers; The police arrived and intimidated workers inside the bottling plant, remaining several days. Workers were pressured in their homes, and then fired.

More than 100 outsourced workers by Coca Cola, through their front company Eficacia, were fired after joining Sinaltrainal. Others were pressured to give up their contracts and fired so they could be subcontracted through Atencom, a front company created by Coca Cola.

Coca Cola has criminally sued leaders of Sinaltrainal and presented a complaint before the Labor Ministry, accusing us of carrying out violence at a rally August 21, 2013 and collecting union dues.

In Cali, officials of the bottlers of Coca Cola have depicted Sinaltrainal leaders as guerrillas when they allowed an outsourced worker and his family his family to participate in a recreational activity.

We the workers at Coca Cola affiliated with Sinaltrainal have been victims of unjust incarceration, subjected to frameups, orders of capture by paramilitary thugs who have forced members of Sinaltrainal to renounce the union. one of our unión headquarters was burned, 11 workers assassinated, others exiled and currently we continue to be threatened with death, sued, displaced, and fired etc.

We hold the management of Coca Cola responsible if a tragedy occurs among the bottling plant workers, for inciting the union and non-union workers so that they confront the members of Sinaltrainal that they encounter in the protests, such as happened on March 14, 2014 with Mr. Cesar Julian Jaimenes, Chief of Maintenance of Coca Cola in the city of Bucaramanga.

That the policy of persecution be halted against Coca Cola workers that are members of Sinaltrainal.

For our future and that of our families, we invite all workers to support the union demands and organize to fight and defend our rights.

Indifference is the fuel that feeds all the injustices that are committed against workers.

(The slogan on the union's Coca Cola graphic has double meaning: "Become Aware" as well as "Drink Awareness".)



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