



## Struggle against Nestlé

More than 300 days ago, the National Union of Agrifood System Workers (SINANTRAINAL) set up a “resistance tent” outside the plant of the multinational Nestlé in Bugalagrande (Valle del Cauca). This company has 1,200 workers who pack instant choco late, dairy products and coffee in different forms, as well as other culinary inputs such as soups, broths and creams.

The collective bargaining agreement signed between the union and the company expired on May 31, 2024, but since then the company has refused to renegotiate it. Colombian law establishes that 60 days before the expiration of a collective bargaining agreement, unions must notify their intentions to submit a new list of demands and negotiate with the employer the new agreement. SINANTRAINAL submitted to Nestlé the list of demands and the negotiating committee chosen by its members to represent them. However, instead of negotiating, the multinational modified the internal work regulations with regressive norms such as mandatory work on holidays and Sundays. The labor hour flexibilization would prevent members from participating in union assemblies, sports, recreation and cultural activities.

In response, the Union Board used the permits included in the collective bargaining agreement to set up a tent in front of the multinational to denounce the situation, but given the refusal to negotiate, it was not possible to declare a strike and in response NESTLÉ fired them, despite having special clauses that did not allow it, arguing that they could not make use of such union rights.

Nestlé fired four more workers for not complying with the new regulations. The company announced more layoffs, including those of people who had been granted enhanced labor stability privileges for health reasons. Until a few weeks ago, the union



counted a total of 48 dismissed workers. So far, with the legal litigation, the reinstatement of seven of them has been achieved, of which one could not withstand the employer's pressure and resigned.

According to figures from the Labor and Union Information System (SISLAB) published in 2024, there are 6,000 unions in Colombia and only 4% of the working population is affiliated to one of them. Nestlé is just one of the companies that has nurtured an anti-union culture in Colombia, co-responsible for this devastating situation.

The union apathy of Colombian workers cannot be explained without comprehending the historical violence of which they have been victims. At the moment, there is an ongoing open investigation of five Nestlé executives for the murders committed by paramilitary groups against two SINANTRAINAL executives..

# Ancestral miners vs multinationals

The history of criminalization of traditional miners dates back to the 2001 Mining Code (Law 685), drafted with funds from Canadian cooperation. This code established a mining model based on the logic of free mining, which grants concessions to the first applicant. This logic favors large companies, which have the necessary resources to overcome technical, environmental and administrative barriers. Thus, overnight, the artisanal mining practices of peasant, Afro-descendant and indigenous communities, going back several generations, were reclassified as illegal exploitation, opening the way to systematic criminalization.

For years, ancestral miners have been demanding differentiated legal recognition. They demand that their traditional practices are distinguished from illegal exploitation linked to organized crime. They

demand the granting of specific concessions adapted to their reality as small producers, as well as access to technical assistance and financing to improve their practices. But this demand for legalization has been instrumentalized. Companies such as Aris Mining, a Canadian multinational formerly known as Gran Colombia Gold, seek to integrate small-scale miners through subcontracting models, as is the case in the Páramo de Santurbán.

However, subcontracting does not concern artisanal or independent miners. It targets local mining companies, which often maintain economic ties with the multinationals. Although they employ local people, these companies do not represent the claims of the ancestral mining communities: they neutralize them and, in doing so, allow Aris Mining to use them for its advertising campaigns..





# Oil union struggle

After more than 20 years since a historic strike against the privatization of the state-owned company ECOPETROL, the USO union, which today celebrates its 102nd anniversary, remains committed to the struggle for the public management of oil and its derivatives. In Colombia, as in many countries in the global South, the extractive infrastructure is designed to extract the crude oil and transport it to the ports to be transformed in the USA and returned in the form of gasoline, deepening Colombia's absolute economic and political dependence on the big brother in the North. This historic struggle includes building a strong union capable of closing the gates of the Barrancabermeja refinery as happened last March 18th on the day of national mobilization in favor of the pension, labor, health and education reforms that the right wing is blocking in the Congress of the Republic. The USO, alongside the communities, also fights against the dangerous exploitation of resources, as



is the case of fracking, but it is not every day that a union dares to refuse offers of job creation in favor of environmental protection.

The workers of the Unión Sindical Obrera work in extraction zones, that is zones of armed conflict, where they are subjected to threats, and even attacks, if they stand with the communities to demand accountability from the multinationals operating in the oil fields.



# Association of Workers for a Dignified Life

## ASOTRAVID

Unemployment, informality and precariousness make dignified lives impossible for millions of working people in Colombia. In Colombia, eight out of every ten new jobs are informal. By February 2025, the proportion of people in informal sector was 56.8% and the rate of unemployment was 10.3%. Thus, ASOTRAVID has been advancing in the articulation of processes and people in conditions of informality and labor precariousness, strengthening the organization of workers through committees, associations and organizations that defend the right to work and generate proposals to overcome the crisis that the country is going through.

The government is currently advancing a popular consultation to approve a labor reform with the objective of guaranteeing greater rights and welfare for the country's working class. However, it is a reform that still has many gaps regarding the condition of informality of most of the people.



Nevertheless, the scenario invites to mobilization of workers' organizations to visibilize their proposals and raise their voices to strengthen the organization of workers through popular assemblies and participate in this consultation with proposals from the grassroots and promote truly transformative and structural reforms

