Clash between farmers and indigenous group injures 1 Jet van Dijck 20 June 2012



A confrontation between indigenous people and farmers in southwestern Colombia injured fourteen people, Radio Caracol reported Thursday.

The clash occurred at midnight on Tuesday and was apparently the result of a dispute over land ownership in the municipality of Cajibio, located in the center of the southwestern Cauca department.

Colombia's Institute for Rural Development, INCODER, apparently entitled the territory in question to displaced farmers in Cajibio as part of the Victims and Land Restitution Law, only to discover that an indigenous community in the region had already claimed the land.

Both sides fought with machetes amid flying sticks and rocks, leaving fourteen people seriously injured who were rushed to nearby hospitals, according to Fausto Campo, the municipal councilor of Cajibio. The indigenous group also incinerated farmers houses along with their crops.

Orlando Castro, a farmer in the area, requested the presence of police and relevant authorities, "before the community kills itself," pointing out that reinforcements for both sides were apparently coming to offer physical support.

Last year it was reported that according to INCODER director Juan Manuel Ospina, nearly five million acres of land was taken illegally by armed groups and state officials. Ospina announced in May 2011 that Incoder would invest \$222.8 million into the preparatory phase of the land restitution process, that seeks to return land to those displaced by violence.

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