
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GLOBAL CENTRE FOR PLURALISM ANNOUNCES LEYNER PALACIOS ASPRILLA OF COLOMBIA A WINNER OF THE 2017 GLOBAL PLURALISM AWARD

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION ANNOUNCES COLOMBIAN COMMUNITY LEADER AND HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATE A WINNER OF THIS YEAR'S INAUGURAL AWARD

OTTAWA – October 3, 2017 – Leyner Palacios Asprilla of Colombia has been fighting for the rights of Colombian conflict victims for over 20 years. Recognizing the historic marginalization and violence suffered by Colombia's ethnic communities, the [Global Centre for Pluralism](http://WWW.PLURALISM.CA), an international research and education organization dedicated to advancing respect for diversity around the world, has selected Palacios Asprilla as a winner of the inaugural [Global Pluralism Award](#).

“The peace accords with the armed group Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) put an end to 52 years of civic conflict, the world's oldest domestic conflict. There are real opportunities for peace and reconciliation but challenges remain. Marginalized communities must be fully included in the peace process and their rights guaranteed. The advocacy work of victims like Palacios Asprilla reminds us that reconciliation is necessary and possible,” said Joe Clark, former Prime Minister of Canada and Chair of the Jury.

As co-founder of the Comité por los Derechos de las Víctimas de Bojayá, Palacios Asprilla has given a voice to over 11,000 victims of the Colombian conflict who live in Bojayá, Chocó. For centuries, this community had no voice because of their poverty and isolation. Through his role with the Comité, he represented Bojayá's massacre victims during the peace negotiations between the FARC and the Colombian government, a contribution for which he was nominated for the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize.

The Comité por los Derechos de las Víctimas de Bojayá has united 34 semi-autonomous Emberá Amerindian communities and 18 Afro-Colombian communities in their common struggle

to end the Colombian conflict. Palacios Asprilla also defended the rights of community leaders to give their consent before any development or extraction projects begin on their land.

The Global Centre for Pluralism, founded by His Highness the Aga Khan and the Government of Canada, will recognize Palacios Asprilla and two other 2017 Global Pluralism Award winners, Daniel Webb of Australia and Alice Wairimu Nderitu of Kenya, for their extraordinary and innovative work to advance respect for diversity at the inaugural award ceremony on November 15, 2017 in Ottawa, Canada. Each winner will receive \$50,000 CAD to further their work.

About the Global Centre for Pluralism

Founded in Ottawa by His Highness the Aga Khan in partnership with the Government of Canada, the Global Centre for Pluralism is an independent, charitable organization. Inspired by Canada's experience as a diverse and inclusive country, the Centre was created to advance positive responses to the challenge of living peacefully and productively together in diverse societies.

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Award Winners:

[Leyner Palacios Asprilla](#), Comité por los Derechos de las Víctimas de Bojayá, Colombia

[Alice Wairimu Nderitu](#), Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, Kenya

[Daniel Webb](#), Human Rights Law Centre, Australia

Honourable Mentions:

[ATD Quart Monde](#), France

[BeAnotherLab](#), Spain

[Fundación Construir](#), Bolivia

[Hand Talk](#), Brazil

[Sawa for Development and Aid](#), Lebanon

[Wapikoni Mobile](#), Canada

[Welcoming America](#), United States