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PBI-USA

Peace Brigades International - USA

PBI was founded in 1981 with the mandate to create space for peace and protect human rights. PBI has a horizontal, international structure with an international coordinating office in Brussels, international committees and working groups, eight field projects, and a dozen country groups, including PBI-USA. The work of PBI-USA is made possible through the efforts of a small staff and a host of dedicated interns and volunteers, including PBI-USA's Board of Directors (the National Coordinating Committee or NCC).

Staff:

Amelia Parker **Pat Davis**
Finance Director Advocacy Director

National Coordinating Committee (NCC):

Camille Coleman **Katherine Bissell-Cordova**
New York, NY Chicago, IL

Andrew Miller **Faith Garlington**
Washington, DC San Francisco, CA

If you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to support the work of PBI:

- Return the included envelope with a check or credit card information to the address below; or
- Go to www.pbiusa.org and click on "Donate to PBI-USA" to donate online; or
- Call us and make a credit or debit card donation by phone (202-232-0142)

PBI-USA
P.O. Box 75880
Washington, DC 20013

Thank you for standing with us alongside human rights defenders at risk.

Do you have a few hours per month to dedicate to international peace and solidarity?

PBI-USA invites you to join our board of directors (the National Coordinating Committee/NCC).



To express your interest in joining the NCC, send us an email or give us a call at info@pbiusa.org or 202-232-0142.

With the challenges and complexities of the Covid-19 pandemic, PBI continues to remain flexible and adaptable to the urgent needs of the human rights defenders we accompany. Over the past year, priorities and plans have shifted and, similar to so many other organizations, PBI has been reflecting on and adjusting our work to ensure that the protection we provide to human rights defenders across the world remains relevant and effective when new challenges arise.

PBI-USA continues to provide advocacy support and raise awareness about the work of human rights defenders and the threats they face. In May 2022, Jorge Rodriguez-Larrain transitioned out of the role of PBI-USA Grassroots Fundraiser and Communications Director and we will soon launch a hiring process to fill the vacancy. In addition to the support provided by staff, members of the PBI-USA National Coordinating Committee (NCC) also play a support role and sometimes that role brings NCC members into direct contact with human rights defenders.

In coordination with PBI-Colombia, NCC member Andrew Miller traveled to Bogotá in May 2022 as advocacy director for Amazon Watch to join a field visit down the Putumayo River alongside PBI field volunteers, local human rights defenders, diplomats from various embassies, and Jani Silva, a community leader and environmental defender who fears for her life and therefore only returns home when accompanied by human rights observers. The PBI team collaborated with embassies to organize a field visit as a show of international concern for a series of rainforest communities called the Amazon Pearl, under threat by illegal narco-paramilitary organizations and multinational oil companies.

Human rights defenders are on the front lines, providing essential support to vulnerable people in their communities, calling attention to the needs of the most vulnerable, and demanding that human rights be put at the forefront of international discussions. Those most at risk are defending land and environmental rights, the rights of indigenous people, freedom of expression, women's rights and the rights of the LGBTQ+ community. PBI's accompaniment extends to all five of these sectors across the countries we work in.

As a movement of activists working towards social justice, PBI remains committed to the protection of human rights defenders as a way of advancing towards the fulfillment of human rights across the world.

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The work I do today – supporting Indigenous peoples and other local communities as they protect the Amazon rainforest – is a direct result of the profound experiences I had as a PBI volunteer.

ANDREW MILLER

Advocacy Director
Amazon Watch

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*Pictured with Jani Silva,
Colombian environmental
defender, in May 2022



PBI Field Updates

Honduras

With a team of 12 field volunteers, PBI supports HRDs ranging from LGBTQIA+ activists, to lawyers supporting victims of human rights violations, in a country that is constantly signalled as one of the most dangerous for HRDs.

Mexico

Two teams of PBI field volunteers support organizations in northern and southern Mexico ranging from those defending their land and territory to those helping the families of the victims of enforced disappearance. In 2021, PBI commemorated 20 years of providing protection to HRDs in Mexico.

Colombia

In Colombia, 44 PBI field volunteers respond to emergencies arising due to the brutal repression of peaceful protests, an escalation of violence in rural areas, and the lack of implementation of the Peace Agreement.

Nicaragua

Increasing repression in Nicaragua has led to an increase in political refugees. PBI continues to support a variety of HRDs living in exile in Costa Rica, including groups of farmers protesting against the building of a canal, LGBTQIA+ activists and those working to rebuild the social fabric that has been damaged through political repression.

Guatemala

A team of 13 PBI field volunteers from 9 different countries continue to respond to huge challenges, including new repressive laws that limit the freedom of HRDs and their organizations and a crackdown on anti-impunity activists.

Indonesia

Alongside our partner organization, ELSAM, PBI continues to support EHRDs via capacity building trainings and network strengthening activities. Despite struggles due to the pandemic, PBI ended 2021 with a Jakarta-based speaking tour with two HRDs and launched a peace building project in east Indonesia.

Kenya

2 local and 3 international staff provide support to a range of HRDs, including women working on gender-based violence and organizations dedicated to work in the urban settlements.

Nepal

Beginning in 2022, local organization Collective Campaign for Peace (COCAP) began running NepalMonitor on its own. The tool has proven useful in the monitoring and responding to violence in the country. PBI and COCAP have now initiated a new project focused on peer learning.

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As a young human rights defender, seeing other people believing in our own cause was such a motivation. And I still see PBI as a huge motivation personally. They were there in 2015 when we started, and they have been part of the journey.

STEPHEN MWANGI
Kenyan HRD

”



Creating Space for Peace



PBI carries out our first face-to-face healing workshop with the Red de Mujeres Sanadoras in Cahabón, Alta Verapaz, Guatemala after two years of meeting virtually.

"I am very grateful for the healing space between WHRDs facilitated by PBI. I feel it is very necessary because we suffer from many security incidents."

-María Guadalupe participant in healing meeting, Guatemala

The volatile contexts in which we work mean that PBI is constantly adapting to ensure continued protection and support for HRDs. When the global COVID-19 pandemic made much of our usual work impossible, PBI adapted, seeking out new ways to continue our accompaniment despite the challenging context. In Indonesia, PBI developed a language buddy program to enable Indonesian HRDs to improve their language skills and engage more effectively with the international community. We also supported Kenyan defenders painting murals in urban settlements of Nairobi to raise awareness about gender-based violence within the context of the pandemic. In Latin America, we made the most out of the physical limitations to encourage greater virtual exchange between projects and HRDs from different contexts who shared best practices in terms of psychosocial well-being in the context of the pandemic.



"The international community should advocate for legal frameworks to ensure violations of the rights of women human rights defenders are punished, including indigenous women, afrocommunities and sexually diverse."

-Jacob Ellis, Red de Mujeres Piñoleras, Nicaragua

Non-Partisan Approach



Mothers of police abuse victims tell their stories. In Nairobi, people are killed by police every week. Most victims are young men who live in the city's informal settlements, places where all of the public services that a state owes its citizens—water, electricity, security, education, healthcare—are denied and substituted instead with violent policing.

PBI respects the autonomy and the right to self-determination of all people and sees its services as a complementary contribution to their own peace-building efforts. We do not interfere with the work of the defenders we accompany, nor do we project our own ideas or experiences onto them. Non-partisanship does not mean indifference, neutrality or passivity towards injustice or

towards violation of human rights, personal dignity and individual freedom. On the contrary: PBI is fully committed to these values and struggles against violence – physical or structural – as a means of establishing enduring peace. However, we maintain our non-partisanship approach to ensure we can undertake our work as effectively and efficiently as possible.



PBI Mexico accompanied the march against gender violence in Mexico City in 2021 and stood in solidarity with the women who are fighting against impunity for patriarchal aggressions.



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Your support is a critical part of our work to protect threatened human rights defenders and help create space for peace.

Together, we can provide life-giving support to communities and human rights defenders whose lives and work are threatened by violence because of the important work they do.

Visit [PBI-USA.org](https://www.pbiousa.org) today to make a contribution and get involved.

Front Cover Photo: PBI Honduras accompanies Asociación LGTB Arcoiris on a walk in defense of the rights of the LGTBI+ community. Back Cover Photo: PBI Colombia accompanies the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, to provide protection while they carry out their agricultural and community work.