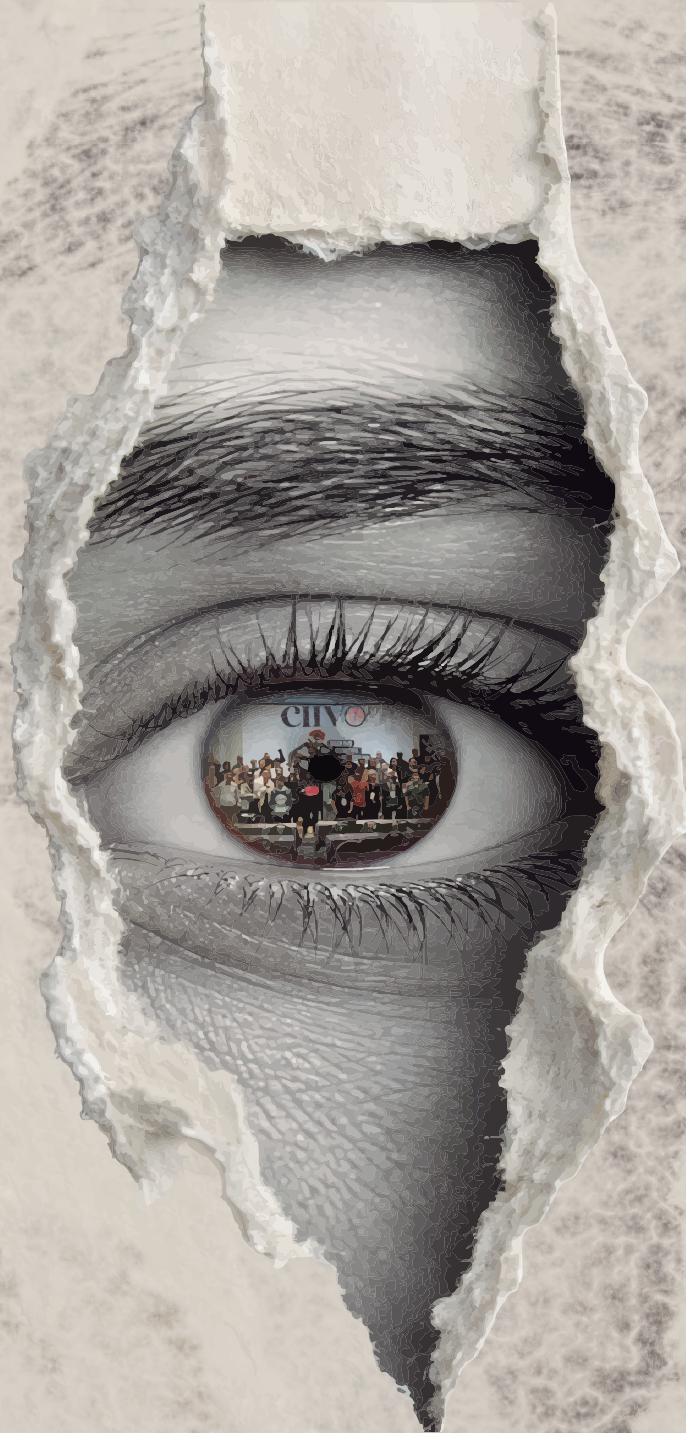


WE SAW,
WE LIVED,
WE REMEMBER



CENTRO DE INVESTIGACIÓN
INTERNACIONAL DE VIOLENCIA OCULAR



WE SAW
WE LIVED
WE REMEMBER

INTRODUCCIÓN



We saw, we lived, we remember illustrates the advocacy work carried out by the International Research Center on Ocular Violence (CIIVO) – the first survivor-led center of expertise on the use of force – since its foundation in 2025. CIIVO's work seeks to shed light on the causes and consequences of ocular violence, a systematic pattern of mutilation that has been widely documented in international contexts and for which urgent measures of redress, rehabilitation and non-repetition are necessary.

Behind each image in this collection lies a story that deserves to be told, a moment, an act of remembrance, and the tireless work of those who have survivors alongside allied organisations and experts. Research at CIIVO has contextualized the prevalence of ocular violence cases within the broader landscape of the less-lethal weapons market, their underlying design principles, and state doctrines that have legitimised their use in particular contexts. Furthermore, through research processes that center survivors' voices, CIIVO has made progress in characterising the post-traumatic impacts of ocular violence. CIIVO has disseminated these findings in academic, community, cultural and international cooperation platforms, as well as in knowledge exchanges with survivors' organisations around the world. Crucially, CIIVO facilitated the consolidation of the International Network of Survivors of Ocular Violence and continues to support their activities, which include mutual aid and coordination of local and global campaigning.

Thus, the work presented here brings together CIIVO's various lines of action to denounce ocular violence as a systematic act of torture while centering survivors' voices. The images of these activities not only set a precedent regarding the importance of survivors' leadership in human rights practice and research; they also serve as a reminder of the paths taken to transform the violence that has been seen and the pain that has been endured into a collective struggle.

Because remembering is also a form of resistance.

Because witnessing these stories means taking on the responsibility to not forget.

We saw, we lived, we remember.



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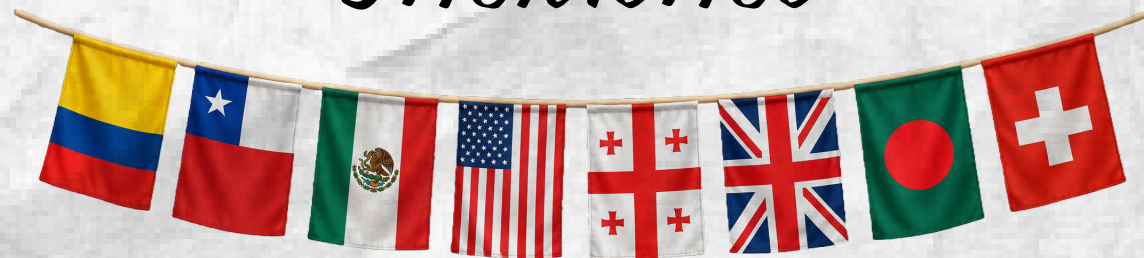
Bogotá, Colombia.
2026

Organizations that supported the photobook

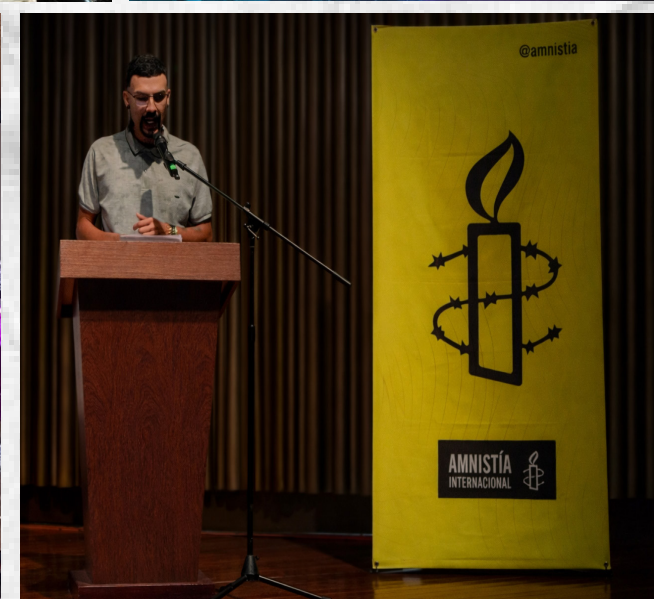




Incidence



Eight countries, one shared history.



Meetings were held in key political spaces, such as the International Forum on Police Reform in Colombia. The organization also participated in meetings with the Special Rapporteurship on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, addressing the ongoing challenges faced by survivors of ocular violence.

This phenomenon was framed as a form of torture in the different panel discussions. Furthermore, report launches were conducted — such as “Represión en la mira” (Repression in the Crosshairs)— alongside participation in report launches by allied organizations like Amnesty International, strengthening joint efforts among human rights defense organizations.

The award for Best Written Journalism was obtained at the Encuadre Awards.



CIIVO participated in the creation and consolidation of the Ad Hoc Committee for the Clarification of Human Rights Violations that occurred in the social uprising. Likewise, it joined panel discussions on memory and torture held at the Congress of the Republic—spaces oriented toward reflection and the recognition of the experiences of victims of state violence.



**Función Pública**

Decreto 1231 de 2024 Sector Administrativo de Defensa

Los datos publicados tienen propósitos exclusivamente informativos. El Departamento Administrativo de la Función Pública no se hace responsable de la vigencia de la presente norma. Nos encontramos en un proceso permanente de actualización de los contenidos.

DECRETO 1231 DE 2024

(Octubre 03)

Por el cual se adiciona el Título 14 a la Parte 5 del Libro 2 del Decreto 1070 del 2015, Decreto Único Reglamentario del Sector Administrativo de Defensa, por medio del cual se reglamenta el uso diferenciado y proporcional de la fuerza por parte de la Policía Nacional.

EL PRESIDENTE DE LA REPÚBLICA DE COLOMBIA

En ejercicio de las facultades que le otorga el numeral 11 del artículo 189 de la Constitución Política, y el artículo 17 de la Ley 1801 de 2016, y

CONSIDERANDO

**MINISTERIO DE DEFENSA NACIONAL**
POLICÍA NACIONAL
DIRECCIÓN GENERAL

RESOLUCIÓN NÚMERO **01840** DEL 20 JUN 2025

"Por la cual se expide el Manual para el Empleo de Armas, Municiones, Elementos y Dispositivos Menos Letales (AML) y su clasificación técnica para la Policía Nacional".

EL DIRECTOR GENERAL DE LA POLICÍA NACIONAL DE COLOMBIA

En uso de sus facultades legales, y en especial las conferidas por el artículo 2°, numeral 3 del Decreto 113 de 2022 y el artículo 2.5.14.5.2. del Decreto 1231 de 2024 y

CONSIDERANDO:

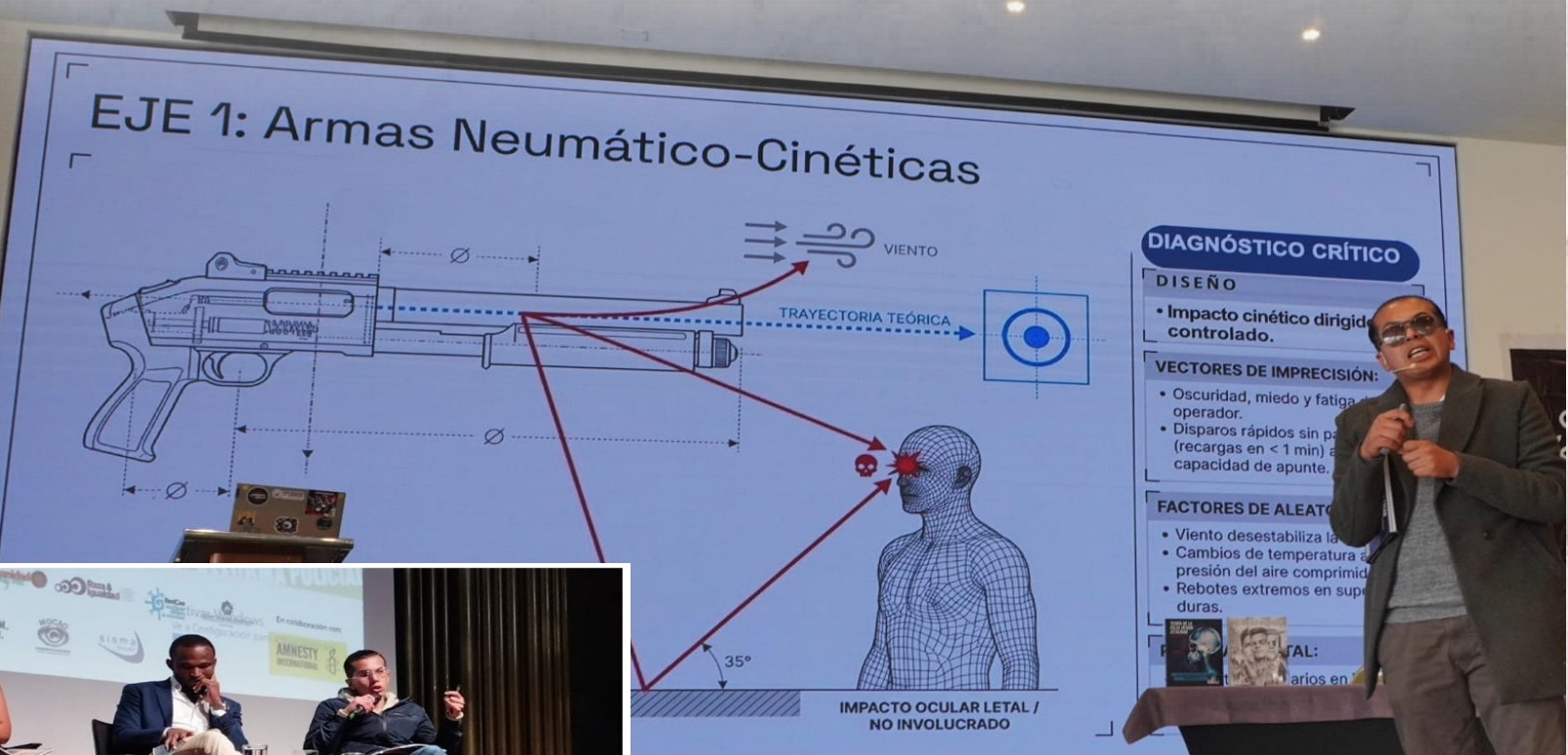
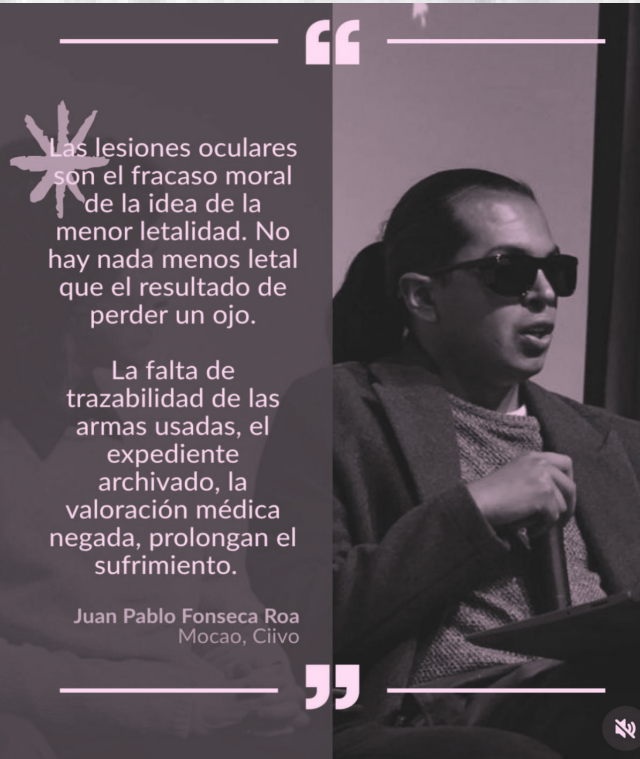
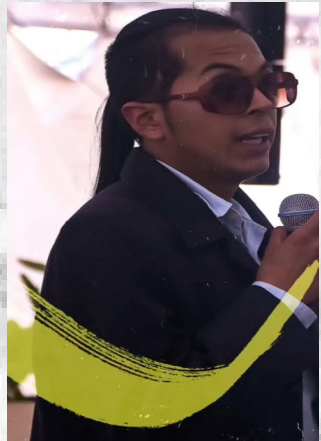
CIIVO has created spaces for dialogue with legal collectives across Latin America, addressing the legal proceedings of numerous survivors. Advocacy efforts influenced national jurisprudence regarding Decree 1231 and Resolution 01840, aimed at regulating and prohibiting less-lethal weaponry in contexts of social protest. This advocacy was made possible through the political background of CIIVO’s director, Juan Pablo Fonseca, who, drawing on his experience in human rights defense, successfully championed the elimination of rubber bullets in Colombia



The Movement in Resistance Against ESMAD's Ocular Aggressions (MOCAO) was founded on April 9, 2021; since its inception, it has managed to influence the eradication of ocular violence in multiple ways through various public policies, artistic actions, and scientific research.

Juan Pablo Fonseca Roa, is the director of CIIVO. On May 1, 2021, Juan Pablo survived severe ocular trauma after being shot in the face by an ESMAD officer with a grenade launcher. The impact caused more than 30 fractures and the total loss of his right eye.

In the wake of this violence, he became a human rights defender and actively participates in research and analysis projects on police reform, the use of force, and less-lethal weaponry, primarily in the Global South.



Chile



CIIVO met with Fabiola Campillay, a senator and survivor of ocular violence, to discuss developing support systems that genuinely accompany those left with these injuries. Likewise, CIIVO learned from initiatives such as the PIRO program (Programa Integral de Reparación Ocular) and participated in spaces dedicated to keeping alive the stories and memories of survivors.

Throughout this journey, CIIVO reaffirmed the importance of connection and mutual recognition among survivors, understanding that, in many instances, meeting someone who has endured a similar experience can be the first step toward feeling supported. Additionally, CIIVO engaged with Terricidio, a photobook chronicling the destruction of life and nature, authored by survivor and human rights defender Nikole Krahm



Georgia



Georgia allowed us to gain firsthand insight into the work of the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims and discuss our experiences. We shared research, addressed the lasting impacts of violence, and began exploring new joint initiatives. We left with new questions, fresh connections, and the conviction that there is still much to build.



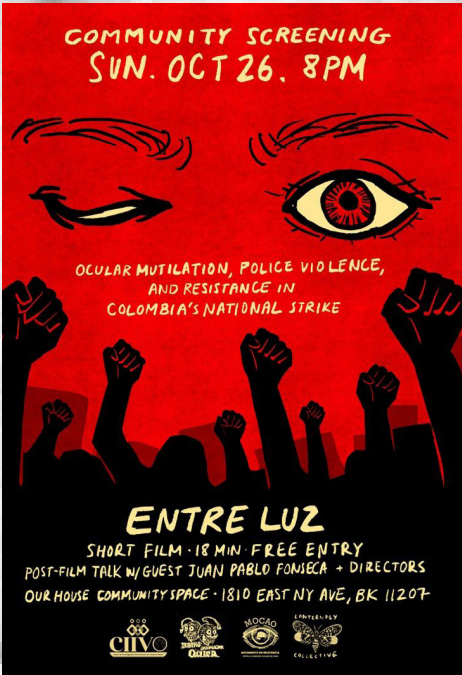


The visit to Geneva enabled the presentation of two reports produced by CIIVO. The first one focused on the post-traumatic impacts suffered by survivors of ocular violence, while the second addressed the use of more lethal weaponry in contexts of social protest. This complaint was submitted before the United Nations Committee Against Torture, with the support of the World Organization Against Torture (OMCT).

One of the most significant aspects of this visit was framing ocular violence as an act of torture and exemplary punishment—understood as shooting directly at protesters’ bodies to discipline civil society, thereby directly impacting social mobilization and, consequently, protest as a fundamental pillar of democracy.



The arrival in New York opened new avenues to share CIIVO’s work and engage with representatives from academia, international organizations, and global movements. The documentary *Entre Luz*, produced by human rights defender Adelaida Tamayo, was screened. The film examines key issues surrounding ocular violence, police repression, militarization, and the deployment of less-lethal weapons. Furthermore, CIIVO participated in various academic, cultural, and audiovisual forums.



Bangladesh



CIIVO's visit to Bangladesh was conducted as part of an international advocacy mission aimed at understanding the consequences of state repression during the so-called "July Revolution" of 2024 and sharing experiences with survivors and local organizations.

Drawing from the experience of CIIVO, CAPS, and MOCAO in Colombia, key topics such as ocular violence, false less-lethality, victim organization, human rights documentation, and medical care were addressed through workshops, assemblies, and spaces for dialogue.

The mission strengthened cooperation among organizations across the Global South. In this regard, CIIVO promoted the exchange of knowledge and strategies to bolster survivor networks, medical and psychosocial care, evidence preservation, strategic litigation, and collective processes centered on memory, reparation, and demands for justice.

United Kingdom



CIIVO participated in two academic panel discussions at the Universities of Manchester and Exeter, aimed at positioning ocular violence as a form of state control within the academic sphere and strengthening CIIVO's research processes through the insights gained in such spaces, including panel discussions and summer schools. CIIVO served as a panelist, sharing its accumulated expertise and the findings of its research reports.



México



CIIVO participated in the Summer School on Necropolitics, Migration, Social Justice, and Reparation, a vital space for strengthening international alliances through the academic sociology network of which it is a part. This participation enabled a broader dissemination of CIIVO's work among professors and researchers from various countries, while also strengthening academic and organizational ties aimed at identifying and connecting with new survivors of ocular violence



Throughout this national and international journey, CIIVO has consolidated its role as a key actor in human rights advocacy. Visits and meetings with academics, legal professionals, and social movements across different countries remain essential to strengthening the message surrounding the eradication of ocular violence.

The collaborative networks built through these engagements are vital to enhancing multilateral advocacy. Engaging directly with survivor organizations to hear their stories firsthand, while drawing upon the expertise of university professors and academic scholars, enriches and strengthens CIIVO's research.

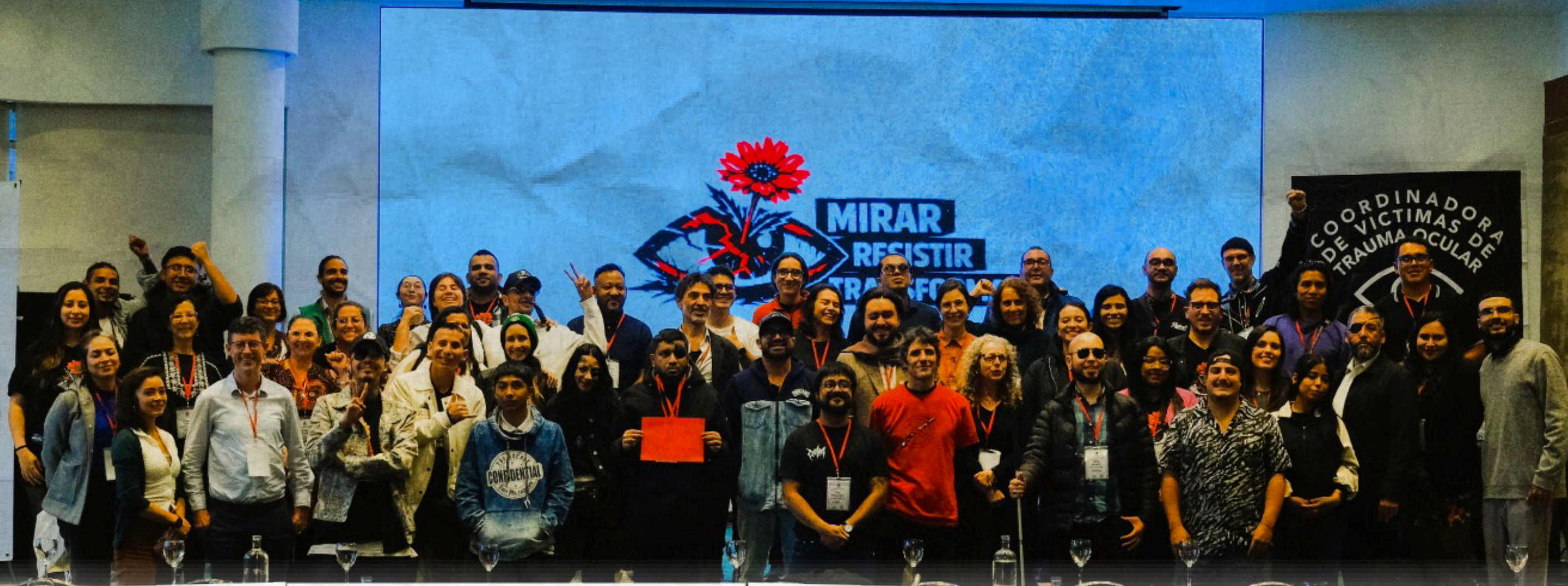
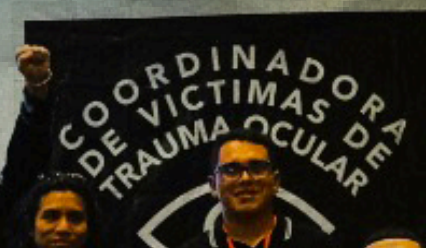
Every space visited reaffirmed that ocular violence is not merely a physical injury, but a life-altering experience for survivors, their families, and their communities. For this reason, CIIVO will continue working toward the comprehensive recognition of victims, the construction of memory, reparation, the establishment of truth, and the creation of guarantees of non-repetition.



1st

*International
gathering of survivors
of ocular violence*





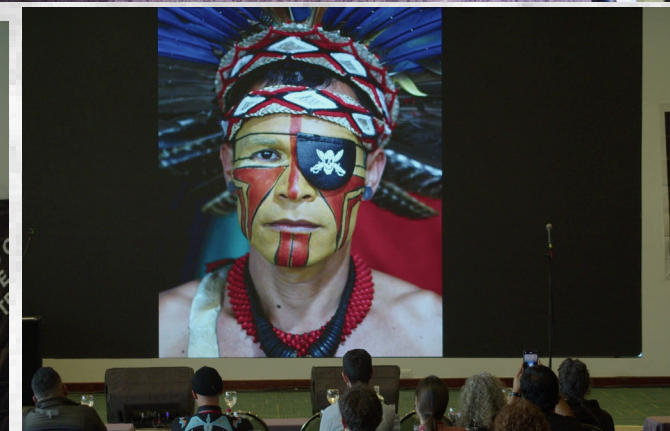
Primer Encuentro Internacional de Sobrevivientes de Violencia Ocular



Being a human rights defender is a long journey; one does not always possess the necessary temperance, and, on many occasions, the path is far from easy. Defending human rights entails sacrificing personal projects or setting aside individual aspirations to reach collective ones. Nevertheless, those who embrace this commitment continue forward step by step, accompanied by remarkable individuals who inspire them to persevere, offer them strength, and sustain them through difficult times.

Along this path, CIIVO, together with human rights defenders, reaffirms its profound commitment to defending survivors of ocular violence and safeguarding social protest in order to build a world that respects life in all its dimensions. This work is grounded in the conviction that it is possible to lay solid foundations for a more just, empathetic, and supportive society.



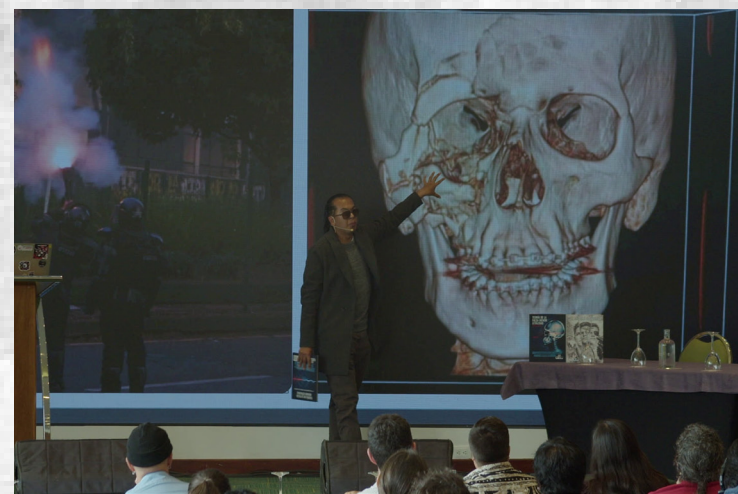
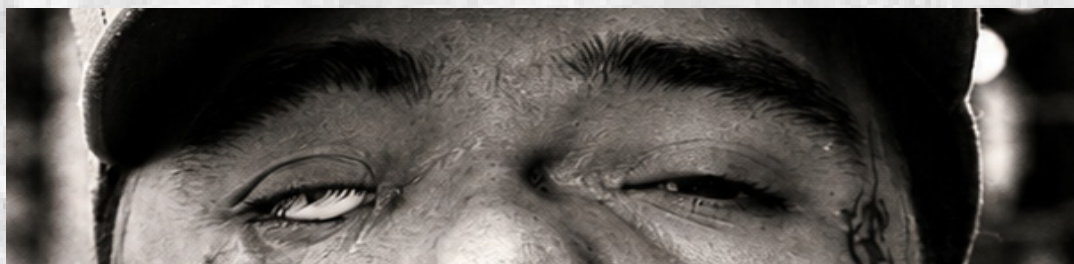


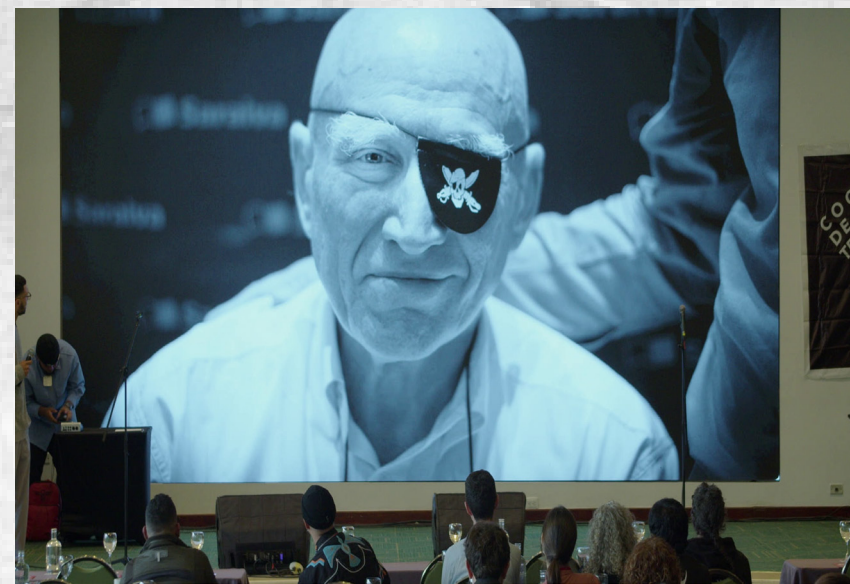


STOP BALAS DE GOMA!



SBG stands for Stop Balas de Goma (Stop Rubber Bullets), an organization that Roger, Nicola, Angeru, and Ester are part of. The expressions “Bales de goma a judici” (“Rubber Bullets on Trial”) and “cas Roger” (“the Roger Case”) refer to the trial to be held on September 16, 17, 30, and October 1 against the officer who shot Roger and against his direct superiors during the operation. This legal proceeding holds particular significance due to the paradox that, while this type of ammunition is prohibited in Catalonia for the regional police force, the ban does not apply to operations by the National Police and the Civil Guard—police forces operating under state jurisdiction.









This journey has enabled the strengthening of research, the expansion of collaborative networks, and advocacy across political, academic, legal, and social spheres to frame ocular violence as a severe expression of state violence. The coordination built with organizations and survivors from various territories of the Global South has demonstrated the importance of sharing experiences, knowledge, and strategies in the face of forms of repression that, while acquiring specific characteristics in each country, stem from structural issues that transcend national borders.

In this process, recognizing local contexts is essential. The experiences of those who have survived ocular violence and the specificities of each territory constitute fundamental elements for building collectively crafted responses. The International Gathering serves to strengthen organizational capacities, generating new support tools and building common agendas grounded in the unique realities of communities.

In turn, multilateralism becomes a vital tool to elevate these local experiences to international arenas, where they can be translated into recommendations, standards, and human rights protection mechanisms. Multilateralism is fundamental to materializing local action while engaging in international advocacy; as such, multilateralism prevents the inaction of social movements by strengthening their collectivities.

Therefore, this journey does not represent a final destination, but rather a new phase. CIIVO will continue researching, documenting, accompanying, and conducting advocacy from Colombia and in coordination with organizations across the Global South, convinced that the defense of human rights is strengthened when local struggles converge, engage in dialogue, and build common agendas in national and international forums.

LIFE IS MEANT TO BE LIVED, NOT MERELY SURVIVED.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our gratitude goes to the civil society organizations and victims' movements that have accompanied us on this journey, built alongside CIIVO, and made it possible for these stories to continue finding spaces to be heard.

Thank you for sharing your experiences and struggles, for opening doors, and for sustaining conversations that advance the pursuit of truth, justice, reparation, and guarantees of non-repetition.

Every encounter, every collaboration, and every shared space has contributed to strengthening a cross-border network that recognizes human rights defense as a collective endeavor.

This journey would not have been possible without those who believed in the importance of bringing visibility to, documenting, and accompanying survivors of ocular violence.

To all the organizations and individuals who have been part of this path: thank you for building with CIIVO, for upholding memory, and for continuing to believe in the strength of truth and dignity.

WE SAW, WE LIVED, WE REMEMBER

Rather than describing the arc of a projectile before striking a protester's eye, this photobook illustrates the trajectory of the International Centre for Research on Ocular Violence (CIIVO) and its impact on the global landscape of human rights research and the regulation of the use of force. Founded and led by survivors of eye trauma inflicted by state forces, CIIVO has raised awareness of ocular violence within community, academic, and policy-making circles to demand rehabilitation, redress, and non-repetition.

Among these activities, the first international gathering of survivors of ocular violence - See, Resist, Transform - stands out. Beyond the presentations, reports, and expert opinions discussed over three days in Bogotá, this gathering provided a space for us survivors to recognise one another in our silences, words, and scars; and in our need to remember, and to see and be seen through our wounded eyes.

Amidst the distances and proximities in our stories, we found a narrative that brings us together and deserves to be brought to light. Together, we continue to build our vision for a fairer future.

We saw, we lived, we
remember is an invitation
to hold our gaze.

