COLECTIVE ACTIONS AND CONFLICTS IN BUENAVENTURA: CONCEPTUAL CONCIDERATIONS FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF A COMPLEX REALITY

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RESUMEN

Los movimientos sociales y los conflictos, que tienen como escenario a Buenaventura, constituyen el foco de la investigación realizada por un grupo de profesores y estudiantes del programa de Sociología, de la Universidad del Pacifico. El puerto más importante colombiano ha sido evaluado como un escenario donde se expresan las diferentes modalidades del conflicto colombiano, al mismo tiempo que las acciones colectivas de la sociedad están encaminadas a lograr condiciones menos excluyentes, buscando superar las desigualdades sociales. De otra parte, se expresa la fuerte tensión por el control y la dominación del territorio, de acuerdo con los intereses de los diferentes actores sociales. La investigación, aún inconclusa, comprende el periodo entre los años 2008 al 2012.

Palabras claves: conflicto, acciones colectivas, movimientos sociales, Estado, actor social, movilización y organización social.

ABSTRACT

The social movements and conflicts that place Buenaventura as the main scenery, constitutes the focus of the analysis concerning with the results of an investigation made by a group of professors and students from the Sociology Program and that was guided by Professor Gloria Montoya. The most important port in Colombia has been evaluated as the scenery where people manifest different types of conflict, as well as, the social collective action headed to achieve less excluding conditions and looking to overcome the social inequity. It also expresses the control and domination of the territory according with the social actor's interest. On the other hand, they manifest a strong tension for the control and domination of the territory. The research has been done between the periods of 2008 to 2012.

Key Words: conflict, collective actions, social movements, State, social actor, mobilization, social organization.

INTRODUCTION

All forms of social protest imply a broader manifestation of the collective actions, from which it is possible to visualize both the continuity of some social movements as well as the emergence of new ones. In Colombia, as in the rest of Latin-America, the emergence of new social movements has brought with it diverse expressions of the collective action which has increased in the last two decades. The Colombian south-west and, especially the Pacific Coast has been the scene of diverse expressions of social and political conflict, which has given way to the emergence ad consolidation of distinct forms of social organization and with them multiple collective actions which to a struggle of interests, at the same time as the correlation of integrated forces at a global, national and regional level are related to the economic crisis, the neoliberal model, the increase of exclusion and poverty [1]

On the other hand, in relation between state and society, in a national and regional context, stands out that, on one hand the state does not operate as a unification instance of social forces, which added to the lack of representation of large sector of society has lead to an increased decentralization and a crisis of governability. Likewise the existence of an illegal economy based principally on the cultivation of coca and the commercialization of the alkaloid that affects the different spheres of social life, as well as the control and territorial dispute on the part of the different armed groups has intensified the conflict and has exceeded it with different forms of violence.

According to numbers from the report Human Development for the Valle del Cauca (Desarrollo Humano para el Valle del Cauca),

Buenaventura is one of the most violent cities in Colombia, with a rate of 138 homicides for every 100 thousand inhabitants. In 2006, the city was rocked by 38 terrorist attacks, which took place in an environment of disputes over territorial control and intimidations towards the civilian population. The violence is fed by drug trafficking, whose common criminal agents, paramilitary groups and guerrillas fight for supremacy in the control of the routes used for the transportation of drugs.[2]

Related to these problems, the conflict is expressed moreover in demands for inclusion and labor justice, in denunciations of human rights violations and demands for its application, as well as the recognition of ethnic identities and gender, which goes hand in hand with actions that look for the protection and care of the natural resources and the defense of the environment. These expressions generate diverse forms of collective actions which, hypothetically, lead to the consolidation of social organizations and the emergence of new social movements or the continuation of the already existing ones.

This article shows a reflexive advance of the research "Collective Actions and Conflict in Buenaventura 2008 - 2012, from the systematic registration of information done by the research group about the emergence and the different collective actions that took place in Buenaventura, during the established period.

Next some conceptual considerations are presented about the social movements necessary to tackle the reality that confronts us and then a short exposition will be made of the social context of Buenaventura.

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1. In the case of theValle del Cauca look at: DE ROUX, Gustavo (Director), Hacia un Valle del Cauca Incluyente y Pacífico – Informe Regional de Desarrollo Humano, PNUD, 2008.
2. Desarrollo Humano para el Valle del Cauca. 2008. Buenaventura: un municipio de paradojas. Cali. Hechos del callejón. [en línea] [consultado el 01 de enero del 2009] disponible en <http://www.google.com.co/#hl=es&source=hp&q=Buenaventura%3A+un+municipio+de+paradojas&btnG=Buscar+con+Google&meta=&aq=f&oq=Buenaventura%3A+un+municipio+de+paradojas&fp=442038b30338386.

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SOME CONCEPTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

From the theory of conflict and social movements, the term collective action is central in that it allows for a follow-up of the deeds and events around the social protest integrated in the forms of expression of the conflict in Buenaventura.

In this sense, authors such as Charles Tilly, Alain Touraine, Alberto Melucci, Sindney Tarrow manifest the importance of action connected to the notion of social actor in dynamic of conflict, distinguishing the different dimensions and stages of the conflict. Likewise, the notion of conflict also operates as an essential part in research and interpretation, given that it allows for the placement of the diverse actors and their relationships in terms of the expression of their power and the strategies of contention expressed in the relationship between state and society. Another fundamental element for the comprehension of collective actions and social movements is that which refers to the systematic observation of the facts or events, and it is from these that the dynamic of the relationships between the actors, the field of conflict and its scope, can be described or established or, if wanted, the effects in the social relationships within a determined social space, in this case it is a question of the Port of Buenaventura, both in the urban and rural area.

As a reference is taken the concepts of collective action, social movement, conflict, and the debate of contemporary authors such as Tilly, Offe, Melucci, Touraine who serve as theoretic references for the realization of the research, clarifying the utility of these in terms of the definition of the object of investigation and the applicability of the concepts in the interpretation of an empiric regional reality.

Now then, Charles Tilly in his studies about social movements (Tilly, 2009, p. 189) highlights the process of democratization which led the British subjects and the North American colonists to confront their governors as expressions of collective action and the origin of social movements; throughout the XIX century, these flourished and prospered in the countries that advanced towards democratization and retreated in those which were governed by authoritarian regimes that limited democratic rights.

Social movements do not defend democracy; rather they are born out of an interest or of a concrete indignation and in the search for the revindication and in whose display of the creation of citizenship is created. This citizenship consists of a series of mutual rights and obligations that institutionalizes some relationships between the subjects and their governments. "citizenship supposes a step closer towards democracy" (Tilly, 2009, p. 211). It is in this way that social movements foment democratization with its specific forms of association -public meetings, manifestations and others - require measures of protection on the part of the state to avoid the risk of being suppressed en masse. It can be said that when regimes are distanced from democracy, the opportunity to put forth revindications of social movements is diminished.

According to the author, the social movements in the eastern zone have decisively impacted the beginning of the XXI century; for example, the process of articulation of people happens thanks to the resistance of a chemical manufacturing in the city of Xiamen in the south of China. Obviously, the government at that time denies from its position all forms of communicative expressions which legitimizes and gives reason to the resistance, rather, what the government does is establish a strategic deployment "... *going through the area with megaphones to deny the information that give assurances that the factory was going to be built..."* (Tilly, 2009, p.187).

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Effectively, a series of manifestations unleashes using digital and virtual communication (blogs, interviews and mobile phones etc.), revealing the inconformity and rejection of the project of the factory: *"with everything, on the 1st of June, tens of thousands of inhabitants of Xiamen march against the project and to denounce the contaminating history of the company in the region"*. (Tilly, 2009, p. 190)

It is necessary to keep in mind four elements: first, that social movements are the result of past changes and their respective social and political contexts, and not of the technological innovations as such. Second, they can protest, given the support that access to information technology provides, but at the same time exclusions are also generated from the media. These have an impact on the reduction of the costs of coordination between the activists that are connected amongst themselves. Third, social movements are still based in local, regional and national organizations that were active at the end of the XX century. And the last, is that which refers to the separation of globalization as an element to be criticized and the anti-globalization as a dominant element on the stage of social movement. (Tilly, 2009, p. 210).

From the perspective of Sindey Tarrow (2004), social movement can be talked about when there is the existence of collective actions that configure compact networks with connection structures that use agreed upon cultural markers directed towards action, which can maintain its opposition in the diverse conflicts. In this sense, collective action is redefined as a consideration of the challenges proposed by people who share common objectives and solidarities in an interaction maintained with the elite, opponents or the authorities.

In consequence, in accordance with that expressed by S. Tarrow, above, individuals participate in collective actions to respond to

changes in the guidelines of the political opportunities and restrictions, according to cycles of the protests. In this way, the movements, the same as the opportunities and restrictions, by changing within the state, give way to *"vacuums"* which favor the emergence of social action. These situations take place in the different historic contexts and depend on the systems of government.

As a counterpoint to the previous, the fundamental changes in collective action depend on large fluctuations in interests, opportunities and organization which go hand in hand with transformations in the states and capitalism. These changes emerge and determine the "cycles of collective action" (Tarrow, 2004, p. 197). In this century, the clashes happened around claim for bread, religious beliefs, revindication of land and death, and were characterized by the limitation of forms and objectives, which changes with the consolidation of national states and the expansion of the media and associativity.

S. Tarrow points out that in associations corporate and communal character were predominant which dedicated to the defense of the privileges in detriment to the acquisition of new rights. But it is not these associations that promote collective action, but rather informal social networks, which, being difficult to repress and control, acquire a predominant role in the diffusion of models of collective action.

In this framework, the formation of character outside of the local arena from the political discourses which the participants in the movement increase. The common objective is mobilization through organization. The counter discourses also take place. In the XIX century discourses and class revindication were predominant and coalitions were formed between different classes which gave more strength to the movement (unit); therefore, it

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constitutes a central part of the process of development of collective action.

Dealing with political opportunities and restrictions, these occur with the instability of the political alignments, divided elites, influential allies (can defend it through collective action) and the repression or facilitation of the cost of the collective action. If this is applied to the state, we find other aspects related to collective action: the power of the state, depending on this a conventional action (favorable policy) or violent (opposed policy) will be followed; the forms of repression that can stifle or elevate the cost and mobilization, the tolerance to non-violent action which is a "double edged weapon" (Tarrow, 2004, p. 211); the number of participants is increased and prioritizes the weapon of indignation. "The dynamic functions more or less like this: a movement organizes mass manifestations to claim their demands; the government allows and actually facilitates their continued expression; the numeric growth of those who support the cause provoke the election of candidates for public posts; from this moment, the movement becomes a party or is incorporated into an existing one to influence its program". (Tarrow, 2004, p. 210).

The existence of threats to an actual order constitutes a stimulus for collective action in that it integrates the counterpoint of interests, values, and it even puts into play the survival of the actors involved. In order for the social movement to be sustainable it needs three resources: the repertoire of collective action which the population employs to obtain support and impose its will on its opponents; organization, which is created from the frameworks of said action, leads to mobilization and is an axis of the base of the movement, and at the same time configures and strengthens it.

The real and symbolic power in a collective action requires the intervention of concrete agents to convert into frameworks of the collective action; the participants discover which values they share, which separate them and learn to configure their appeals in terms of the first ones. It tends to fail, but if there is success it can become a social movement. These collective actions express the mobilizations and the forms of how they deploy, for this reason we consider its structure. And now some fundamental elements in reference to mobilization will be shown.

Structure of Mobilization: in the most general sense, just as the author alludes, is the ability to unite the population. In this sense, the principal challenge in the movements is to create strong and flexible organizational models to structure relationships with the opponents and facilitate the informal connections that unite the actors and the networks in a coordinated and multiplied collective action. Heterogeneity and interdependency presently characterizes collective action. This panorama interrogates us about the character of instability which seems to condemn the social movements into disappearance, and therefore we recognize that this is only possible it is thought of in an isolated form, since when groupings are created the greatest success within the spiral of cycles of collective action is obtained.

The cycles of collective action, according to S. Tarrow, are in answer to the intensification of conflicts and the confrontation in the social system, which includes a rapid diffusion of the collective action from the sectors, more or less mobilized, as well as a rhythm of mobilization accelerated in the forms of confrontation, new or transformed frameworks for collective action, a combination of organized participation and some sequences of intensified interaction between disidents and authorities. The following phases are identified within the cycle:

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Phase of mobilization: the generalization of conflict is produced when political opportunities are opened for the participants, when demands are proposed that give way to objective or explicit coalitions between diverse actors and create or reinforce the instability of the elite. This phase of mobilization is composed of initial requirements that show the vulnerability of the authorities to collective action; inevitably question the interests of other groups, and points out the union between the discontents through the articulation of common features. Amongst these is manifested the conflicts and the diffusion and intensification of the same. The effects of the expansion trigger the extension, diffusion, imitation and reaction between groups; the creation of new forms of protest, that innovate; symbols are generated with different meanings and ideological content, old and new organizations, increase in information and interaction. It is important to highlight that in epochs of strong confrontation information is generated faster, political interest is heightened and the frequency and intensity of interaction increases, new centers of power emerge, and alliances change or new ones are created.

Phase of demobilization: this is constituted at the end of cycles represents: the exhaustion and decline of participation, as well as the fractioning that can lead to the division between moderates and radicals, all this in answer to the varied strategies employed by the government.

From the perspective of Claus Offe (Offe, 2007, p. 185) new social movements possess characteristics that are typical in terms not only of content and values, but also in their forms of action and actors that make it up. Similarly, the political content that this manifest is not the classical political content revindicated by the classical theory of the social movements, rather these new social groups are looking to politicize a set of contents not policies, but that affect the lives of large groups of humans. In these non-policy contents can be included the quality of life, defense of the environment, the right to sexual diversity, the rescue of life as a liberty and non alienation, among others.

The new social movements are governed appraisingly in terms of **autonomy and identity**, operate from the forms of action and non-conventional political participation such as protests, manifestations, strikes, that is to say, forms of action that are not institutional and often are not controlled by the very social movements. In these the actors do not necessarily behave like a social class. Offe tries to distinguish and characterize the different processes that have occurred in the new social movements that started to take form since the seventies. On this matter, he points out that all new movements are characterized by the increase in participative ideologies and attitudes, with a strong component of social solidarity, as well as for the increased use of non institutional forms of political action and finally by the emergence of political demands and revindications related to issued that used to be classified and considered as ethical, moral, social, economical and cultural topics, breaking the barriers of the politically institutionalized claims.

Thus, the citizens, through the articulation of new social movements seek to have direct and more immediate control over the political elite, putting into action resources that are incompatible with the maintenance of the institutional order of the politics in post/industrial capitalist societies. However, Offe also points out the difficulties that these new paradigms face and whose complexity cannot be ignored:

In the first place, the new social movements, insofar as they oppose both the state as the bureaucratic regulation of the social revindication, they can end up in a

strange coincidence with the neoconservative political-ideological intent. In this sense, as Offe himself points out, in order to emancipate from the state the civil society and its institutions would have to be politicized. Secondly, given that the acting of the new social movements are directed towards demands and non negotiable principles, the estrangement of the industrial working class and sectors more closely linked to the intellectual criticism is a consequence of the lack of an interpretation of the reality that establishes the conditions of the transformation and improvement of the same.

A risk would be found that the actors of which these movements are made up of, being made up mostly of the new middle class, elements of the old middle class and, especially, by people at the edge of the labor market or in a peripheral position with respect to it, shows us they do not have any specific interests, rather only variable and conjunctural revindications in function of the events that happen sporadically.

Lastly, A. Mirza in his text "Movimientos sociales sistemas políticos en América Latina", presents an comparative analysis between the different countries from a group of variables to study social movements in Latin America, amongst which the following are considered:

Degree of originality: it is possible to verify from the structure of the social movements (more or less formalized), if it has or not the respective organigram (written or not), the disposition of resources of all types (not just economic), the presence of authorities or recognized speakers, internal networks or existing groups that function ad hoc, rules and standards of practice; registering in a high, medium or low rank, according to the degree of organization.

Capacity for proposals: in reference to the proposals of a general and specific character, associated to the social movements that present publicly prepared and disseminated documents, with an amplitude of proposals (specific or partial revindications or general interests) and the results.

Capacity for convocation: dimension that shows the degree of support and legitimacy of social movements. The capacity for popular and street mobilization is a strong indicator, managed on a high, medium or low rank, according to the degree of organization.

Political discourse: allows for the appreciation of the construction of collective identities and their respective appeals, manifests societal projects and is also aware of specific goals and targets, as well as ideological elements that compose it. The discourses also illustrate about the type of interchange with the elite and other actors and social movements, as well as ties with the state apparatus.

Degree of autonomy: is determined by the strategic non-subordination of ends and orientations to the political parties. It should be noted that with respect to state autonomy, autonomy is conceived as one that allows the social movements to establish a dialogue - negotiator - from a point that is theirs and not manipulated by the elite of the bureaucratic power.

Rate of inflation: this indicator that registers the number of adherents to a movement can, frequently, due to diverse circumstances, not be illustrative of the support or adhesion to the movement.

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Based on the understanding of contentious collective action as "observable result of an action, initiated by four or more individuals or by the representative o representatives of a group, that pursue and objective, by non-routine means, in a relationship of conflict of a public character, in other words, of interest to third parties" (Guzmán, p. 11), a data collection guide is methodologically designed in which is established the variables, attributes and codification for the collection of the source document based on the press, highlighting the temporal-spatial dimension; the description of the actors; the topic and type of conflict; its degree of organization, negotiability and significance.

The aspects previously pointed out are expressed in the conflict in the port of Buenaventura when there is an inquiry in the dynamics of the collective action from the different social actors and the manners in which the population manifests, which is constituted in different forms of social protest. The delineation of the object of study, with the categories of defined analysis allowed for the collection and organization of the information from documentation and interviews, generating a data base of qualitative information, integrating added data to achieve a register of the kaleidoscopic phenomenology of the collective actions in Buenaventura, at the juncture of the end of the first decade of the XXI century.

BUENAVENTURA A COMPLEX REALITY:
some descriptive advances of collective actions

Contextual elements of the port

Keeping in mind the previous theoretical reflexions, it is important to point out the principal characteristics of the district of Buenaventura. Geographically, the municipality is located between the Pacific Ocean and the left side of the Western Mountain range on the pacific coast, with limits to the north with the department of Chocó, to south with Cauca, the east with the municipalities of Calima, Dagua, Cali and Jamundí, and to the west with the Pacific Ocean. It has 11 townships. The population is concentrated in the municipal capital and with an ethnic composition of predominantly African descendants, in a lesser proportion a mixed race population and the presence of indigenous communities that live on the coast and the basins of the various rivers of the region (Anchicayá, Bongo, Cajambre, Calima, Dagua, Guapi, Guapicito, La Sierpe, Mallorquín y Naya; among others). The municipal capital is divided in 12 communes and has approximately 177 neighborhoods.

In terms of its access roads, Buenaventura has 2 roads that communicate it with the interior of the country, Simón Bolívar Av., by way of Anchicayá, connects with Cali with a distance of 144 km. and Alejandro Cabal Pombo Av. which connects with Buga in the north and center of the country. By air with the airports Gerardo Tobar López in Buenaventura and the one in Juanchaco.

According to the numbers of the direction of Municipal Planning, in terms of some social indicators, the literacy rate in the population older than 15 is 17% in the urban area and 22% in the rural area, when the national average is 9%. The school dropout rate is 25% and 48% of children and youth of school going age are outside of the education system. 60% of the housing is in stratus 1 and 2, located largely in high risk areas and have on average 8 to 13 people per house. Drinking water coverage is available to 55% of homes, while 65% do not have sewerage and do not even basic sanitation. The housing deficit is 40 thousand units. The life expectancy at national level is 62.3 years, in Buenaventura it is 51. Medical coverage reaches 45.5% of the urban population,

with 2 doctors per 10 thousand inhabitants, but it is very deficient in the rural area.[3]

Given its strategic geographical location, in addition to its natural wealth, Buenaventura has become an epicenter of large megaprojects in the process of implementation. The constitution of the logistical, port and customs zone, the dredging of the access channel to the bay, the construction of freshwater ports, that of Bahía Málaga, the transport mega project Arquímedes, the penetration of the intensive crop of African palm; amongst many others, reflect the wide interests both national and international that converge in this area of the country, turning into a trigger of the conflict in which the armed groups intercede, who have intensified the expropriation of collective territories of Afrocolombian and indigenous communities, provoking mass displacements of the population from and to Buenaventura.

Economically, the municipality of Buenaventura, especially the urban sector, basically depends on port activities through which 60% of the countries sea lane goods pass. However, poverty in the city, unemployment and the diverse manifestations of violence are prevalent, with a strong relation to the relational dynamic imposed by the logic of drug trafficking; especially dealing with the stages of production and commercialization, fact that contributes to the intense participation of parastatal armed groups that are present in the Pacific region and with a significant incidence in the Colombian south-west.

Thus in Buenaventura, according to official reports, it is possible to detect the presence of guerrilla groups like FARC - especially its 30th front, who has a presence in the section Buenaventura-Lobo guerrero and the ELN in the section Lobo guerrero-Cali, which has

unleashed a series of violent acts, that extends from road blocks and confrontations with the army to kidnappings, presented especially along the route Buenaventura-Cali. This wave of violence intensifies with incursion of paramilitary groups since the year 2000, date of the first massacre on the Simón Bolívar Av. (Campo Hermoso), attributed to the actions of paramilitary groups belonging to the Calima and Pacífico fronts.

Since 1998 until 2003 a whole period of increased violence is unleashed, especially in the rural area of Buenaventura in the rivers: Naya, Yurumanguí, Cajambre, Sabaletas, Mallorquín, Raposo, Agua Clara, Anchicayá, Calima and part of San Juan; leaving as a result the death of more than 2 thousand people.[4] Between the years 2005 - 2007, just in the area of Buenaventura, more than 1520 murders were registered. In 2005, the port was the most violent city in the country, with 592 assassinated, according to Legal Medicine; in addition to an increasing number disappearances, which in 2006 reached 30. Until the first semester of 2007 there were 265 victims of violent death and 51 cases of forced disappearances were reported, by official organisms. Selective assassinations have reached such alarming dimensions that in Buenaventura firearm related incidents appear as the first cause of death, according to a report of 2004 from the Secretary of Municipal Health. At the moment, in the urban area, the presence of organized crime connected to groups such as "Rastrojos", "La Empresa" y "Los Urabeños" has increased, generating a wave of violence in the neighborhoods of the city, with selective crimes with great savagery. About this phenomena there still is not, in the process of investigation, with systemized information.

3. Renacientes, 2007.Buenaventura: Riqueza, Genocidio y Hambre. [en línea], [consultado 25 de marzo del 2009]
<http://www.dhcolombia.info/spip.php?article391 >.
4. López Alexander, 2007.Constancia sobre la situación de derechos humanos en Buenaventura. [en línea], [consultado el 15 mayo 2009]
<www.polodemocratico.net/Constancia-sobre-la-situacion-de- Buenaventura>.

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The previous elements allow for a social radiograph with general features of Buenaventura, and in this context the expression of conflict is given, in its wide dimension, which includes the different interests, tensions and actors in the political, social, economical environment; clearly visible in the manifestation of the collective actions conducted between 2008 and June of 2012.

Some descriptive advances of the collective actions 2008 - 2012

The conflict in Buenaventura originates in a variety of events, amongst which is found in the tensions derived from the defense of the territory on the part of the communities, opposed to the ambitions generated by this on the part of diverse actors and interests. Other factors contribute to the intensification of the conflict, such as the inefficiency of the local and national government to respond to the demands of attention to the citizens, along with the presence of armed groups who dispute the control of the territory and the logic of relationships with the illegal economy reproduced by drug trafficking. It is these determinants that trigger the diverse collective actions that show the discontent of civil society, new demands on the state and a repertoire that revindicates human rights and the citizens.

From the review of the press (El País, El Tiempo, El Espectador, la revista Semana)[5], is found that in general terms the more recurrent collective actions between 2008 - 2012 are mobilizations such as marches, roadblocks and labor strikes. Examining the information from a documental basis, collective actions can be distinguished and grouped.

In the first place, there are the collective actions originating from the labor strikes which have been expressed essentially in the land transport sector (the truckers´ strike 2009 and 2011) and maritime transport (fishing boat strike, 2011), followed by strikes in the education sector (teachers´ strike in high school, 2012). The strike of the hospital workers of Buenaventura is also highlighted (2011). All the aforementioned have in common a demand from the workers who claim better working conditions from the state and point our critical situations in health, education, maritime and land transport sectors, these last as axis of port economic activity.

These mobilization, which occurred essentially between 2008 and 2011, present a good participation from the precipitating actors (employees, sector unions, associations of the transporters, citizens in general) and the actors contenders such as the local and national governments, the directives of implicated institutions (the hospital, educational institutions) have generated agreements that achieved the demobilization of the citizens, with a relative control of the conflict, as a reactive and conjunctural answer to the collective actions. These collective actions, that revolve around a demand a labor order and rights in relation with work, show an organizational level with a capacity for negotiation in general terms.[6]

Secondly there is the expression of conflict in terms of t*he defense of human and citizen rights before the inefficiency and weakness of the Colombian State*, as a regulator of social relationships. Among these can be placed the collective actions such as "the march for water", with the participation of distinct organizations and citizens in general, whose demand is for permanent and optimal service of water in the urban area of the port, which took place in January of 2011.

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5. Since it is an ongoing research, the collecting of the local newspaper El Extra in printed files is only just starting.

6. This information is based on the press documental database of January 2008 - June 2012.

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The roadblocks of the principal road in Bendiciones, rural area of Buenaventura, can also be placed in demand of the fulfillment of the agreements on the part of the state, generated by the damages of the environmental tragedy of the avalanche that happened in 2007. The action was originated by the non-compliance, on the part of the local and national government, of attention of the basic services, and because of the precarious life conditions of the families directly affected by the environmental tragedy.

The collective actions mentioned are the most vast that have presented in the period and show widespread capacity for convening and organization on the part of precipitating actors, as well can be observed the capacity of negotiation, which to good extent is lead by the contending actors. The confluence of distinct social groups is highlighted, as are the Afro-descendant community councils, youth organizations, community action groups and NGO, among others.

In this same level of relationship, in respect to the character of the discourse and demand, the strongest contending actor is the State from the local, regional and national levels, ranking as a priority *the collective actions that are generated by the claim for human rights and are directly related to the armed conflict*. Among these, can be placed "the march for the defense of life" in which participated different organizations with a vast capacity for convening, amongst these the church, and the generalized support of the citizens after the explosion of the bomb on the 1st of April 2010. There are also other mobilizations such as marches and roadblocks between 2009 - 2011, which repertoire is given as the defense of life and denounces forced disappearances of citizens by different armed actors, for example the march of the 15 September 2009. Equally,

the march of the population in condititon of defense of life and denounces forced disappearances of citizens by different armed actors, for example the march of the 15 September 2009. Equally, the march of the population in condition of forced displacement can be added (march of the 27th of July 2009), which repertoire is given in the claim against the State due to the non-compliance of the attention to the displaced population that arrives at the port.[7]

The collective actions which are placed in the repertoire related to defense of rights, especially connected to DESC[8], and claims to the state in the fulfillment of actions that corresponds it from municipal administration to the national level, actions such as marches and roadblocks, at El Piñal bridge or the road ente-ring to Buenaventura. All of these have to do with the management of the roads and the maintenance of the roads inside the city. Others have a different character and discourse, as for example, the mobilization against violence against women, the march of community mothers linked to the ICBF, the march of the students of higher education against the reform of the Law 30 of education.

These collective actions manifest between 2009 and 2011, period in which the largest number of mobilizations is concentrated, as an indicator of the exacerbation of the conflicts and the answer of the citizenry by means of social mobilization, as an expression of conflict, and which allows for the generation of negotiations between the implicated social actors, in as much is said the search for solutions to the tensions and problems of the social sectors such as health, education, attention to the population in conditions of vulnerability, public services; in addition to the demand for better local governance, in the search for mutual benefit.

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7. Taken from newspaper documental data base of 2008 to 2012.
8. It refers to social, economic and cultural human rights, including environmental.

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The collective actions mentioned previously show a high capacity of internal convocation and organization to be held, but also points out fragmentation in the demands, in which is manifested and concentrated specific interests; uniting the collective interests as a city - port, given the inability of the state to resolve problems in the different areas of management, with adequate responses and in pro of its inhabitants.

It is necessary to delve into the different components of collective action in the cyclical period studied, to understand the dynamics of social conflict and civil society action in the main port on the Pacific coast. Therefore, there is a further more in depth investigation in the representative actions as to its local impact and level of organization, as well as the participation and degree of negotiability, such as: the truckers strike, the roadblock by the population of Bendiciones, the university students' strike, the hospital workers' strike, the march for water and the march for life, among the principal collective actions.

CONSIDERACIÓN PRELIMINAR

Buenaventura is a stage of different modalities of conflict in which the collective actions of society are expressed, on the one hand, fights for less excluding conditions, searches to overcome social inequalities, and on the other hand, manifests the strong tension for control and domination of the territory, in accordance with the interests of the different social actors.

For all the above, the confluence of the different problems and precariousness of the state in the face of the demands of the citizens in the port, it is necessary to approach in more detail and rigor the analysis of the information in respect to constitutive elements of the collective actions that are set in the port.

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