

Protests intensify in Colombia after young man shot dead



Bogota, November 27 (RHC)-- Colombian citizens took to the streets on Wednesday to participate in a national strike where expressions of outrage over the death of 18-year-old young Dilan Cruz abound.

Through social networks, Colombians were able to watch the precise moment in which an officer of the Mobile Anti-Disturbances Squadron (ESMAD) shot Dilan, who was running to avoid repression. The scenes show that the police do not follow the proper protocols for the progressive use of force. The human rights violation case is so obvious that even personalities from other countries have commented on it.

“Deeply saddened by the killing of Dilan Cruz in Colombia protests. An immediate investigation is needed and measures must be put in place to ensure this does not occur again,” the U.S. lawmaker Eliot Engel tweeted.

Dilan Cruz, who had been in the intensive care unit since Saturday, died on Tuesday night. The news of his death invaded immediately social media. “Pain, disdain, indignation. And there is so much anger that now it could explode in a climate of already very strong tension,” Italian outlet La Repubblica commented.

“Along with other boys and girls, Dilan took part in a completely peaceful pot-banging march... An unusual form of protest in Colombia.” “War crimes: watch the red circle in the video. A Colombian police officer

fires a tear-gas bomb at the head of young Dilan Cruz, killing him."

"At the national strike against Duque's administration, along with thousands of young people, Dilan was demanding access to higher education and the State sent him to intensive care until... the day he graduated from high school," Colombian journalist Sinar Alvarado wrote at a New York Times article.

Citizens' outrage also increased when two police officers posted a video in which they make fun of students who demand more money for education. "I can't study, I can't study," says a Colombian policeman who imitates a student and pretends to cry while drying his alleged tears with bills. His partner films the scene and laughs out loud.

There are no definitive pronouncements on this police brutality case so far. Authorities have not even explained the type of ammunition that killed Dilan, as local outlet Semana reported. "Pain and outrage invading us over Dilan's death motivate our protest today," the Central Union of Workers (CUT) spokesperson Fabio Arias said. "We must go out in defense of life and peace."

"Human Miseries. Colombia. Police officers mock the struggle undertaken by Colombians to have access to their basic rights. Where young Dilan lost his life, is that a reason for mockery? Honor Dilan. Nationwide Strike on November 26."

Although the police repression continues, Colombian workers, farmers, and students are on the streets to demand compliance with 13 proposals that the Nation Strike Committee delivered to Duque. Among them is the repeal of laws and decrees related to tax reforms, changes to the pension system and loss of labor rights.

Colombians also request the dissolution of ESMAD, cleaning up the National Police, and punishment of those responsible for the killing of Dilan Cruz.

Workers demand that the government does not carry out any process of privatization of public goods and that authorities comply with the agreements reached with professors and students. One of the citizens' most desired goals is that the government fully complies with the 2016 Peace Agreements.

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