

# *More than 10,000 killed in Colombia during 2019*

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Bogota, January 1 (RHC)-- A total of 10,468 homicides have been officially recorded in Colombia between January and November 2019 according to the Foundation Peace and Reconciliation, corresponding to a rise of 2.34 percent compared with the previous year.

The Foundation's Director Ariel Avila highlighted the failure of the conservative government's "tough" approach against crime in the country in an interview with EFE.

The violence and the murders mostly occur in zones of post-conflict with higher illegal activities like drug-dealing and mining, according to Avila. Young men between 20 and 30 years old are the most affected.

The latest crime targeting a social leader was Lucy Villarreal, shot dead by a hitman the day before Christmas in Tumaco, province of Nariño, after a workshop she was giving to children.

According to the United Nations' Office for Human Rights in Colombia, at least 86 social leaders have been reported assassinated during the same period, while the ex-guerrilla group FARC denounced the murders of 60 members of the party - a total of 180 since the peace agreement was signed in November 2016.

However, other organizations have registered more homicide of social leaders, like the Institute Indepaz, which found 234 assassinations between January and Dec. 17, while the Foundation "Somos Defensores" counted 120 during the same period of time.

Last week, Colombia's Attorney General Fernando Carrillo urged Ivan Duque's government to stop the systematic murder of social leaders in that country. The official demanded to convene the National Security Guarantees Commission "immediately and ensure its operation."

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