

First Colombian social activist killed in 2020



Bogota, January 9 (RHC)-- Colombia's first political assassination of this year occurred in the Putumayo Department when hitmen murdered Gloria Ocampo, the Estrella Community Action Board (JAC) Secretary. "Two men arrived at Gloria's house and asked about her. She identified herself and they shot her repeatedly," local outlet El Tiempo reported.

Gloria Ocampo stood out in her community because she promoted the voluntary substitution of illicit crops, a proposal that seeks to offer farmers who grow coca other job opportunities. "All social leaders supporting the coca substitution program began to be threatened with death. She is the first to be killed, which fills us with deep anxiety," a local resident told reporters.

United Nations and IACHR points out that Colombia is the country in the region where social leaders are most murdered. Both agencies warn of threats, harassment, and intimidation that directly impact the work of the country's leaders.

Previously, the last murder of a social leader occurred on Christmas eve when a hitman shot culture manager Lucy Villarreal when she was leaving a workshop with children in Tumaco.

Intimidatory actions against social leaders have also caused tension in Bojaya, in the Department of Choco, where human rights defender Leyner Palacios was threatened with death last week by illegal

groups, which gave him 24 hours to leave his town.

Colombia's High Commissioner for Peace Miguel Ceballos said he will meet with President Ivan Duque to expose the serious situation of human rights defenders in the country.

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