

Colombian government and Strike Committee meets in Bogota



Representatives of the National Strike Committee will present a list of demands to the Government to advance in the negotiations. | Photo: @fabioariascut

Bogota, May 17 (RHC)-- The meeting between the Colombian Government and the National Strike Committee (CNP) resumed on Monday in the capital Bogota. The government representatives decided to suspend the meeting that lasted for more than three hours to analyze the proposals presented demands made by the Strike Committee this Sunday.

With this new meeting, the parties seek to establish negotiations with the objective of putting an end to the social protests against President Iván Duque that have been going on for 19 days.

The government delegation is made up of the ministers of Housing, Jonathan Malagón, Labor, Ángel Custodio Cabrera, and Interior, Daniel Palacios. Also present were Amapro García, Deputy Director of Planning, Nancy Patricia Gutiérrez, and the Peace Commissioner, Miguel Ceballos, as coordinator.

On the Committee's side were delegates from the 26 social sectors that are part of this collective. Prior to the meeting, the labor federations announced a new call for demonstrations for next Wednesday, May 19.

At the beginning of the meeting, the CNP put on the table a document called 'Guarantees for the exercise of protest'. There are 19 points which they consider that the Government has to answer before moving on to the negotiation phase.

"Today the organizations that are part of the National Strike Committee have presented a document that has two fundamental parts: one that refers to the guarantees for the exercise of the protest and another one of guarantees for the negotiation tables", expressed the High Commissioner for Peace, Miguel Ceballos.

In the document presented by the CNP, it requests the Government "to abstain from adopting any measure that would treat as public order the exercise of the right to social protest, among them the declaration of a State of Internal Commotion".

It also requested that the Army and the Mobile Anti-Riot Squadron (Esmad) be withdrawn from the control of protests and urged that the Police be ordered not to use firearms to repress the demonstrations.

It also requested President Duque to condemn "explicitly and forcefully" the abuses of the Police, in addition to recognizing "that there is responsibility of the public force in the violation of the rights to life, personal integrity, freedom, assembly and public demonstration."

Another request is that the Government accepts "the request of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) to carry out a working visit to Colombia to observe on the ground the human rights situation in the context of the social protests".

The protests against Iván Duque, which began last April 28, have claimed 42 fatalities, as reported to the Ombudsman's Office.

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