

Gun deaths: The other pandemic in the United States



File photo shows firearms on display at a Walmart store. (Photo: Internet)

by María Josefina Arce Alvarez

In the United States, more than 30,000 people die annually in incidents related to firearms, from suicides to mass shootings. An alarming figure that, far from decreasing, continue to increase, coupled with the rise in the sales of weapons in the U.S.

In fact, Americans have the largest number of these weapons per person in the world. According to studies, four out of every ten citizens own a gun or live in a house with one or more weapons.

Gun violence in the United States is, as U.S. President Joe Biden had to admit, a pandemic. The reality is that not even the COVID 19 health emergency, which led to the lockdown, put a halt to these horrid

events.

From January to April this year, more than 150 mass shootings were registered in the United States, and this has unfortunately become part of the nation's daily routine.

Last year, in June alone, one of the most critical months of COVID 19 in the United States, two million 500,000 firearms were sold, a record number, according to The Washington Post.

And even in the midst of this grim scenario, the controversial Second Amendment to the Constitution, which guarantees the right of citizens to bear arms, is used to give the green light to the trade of weapons. A federal judge has just declared unconstitutional the ban on the purchase of assault weapons in California, a provision that has been in force for 32 years and that is constantly updated to control the sale of this type of device.

This decision has sparked controversy and rejection by state authorities, as it moots the possibility of carrying rifles, including the AR-15, a war weapon, and it also comes at a time when President Biden recently called on Congress to make a greater commitment to ban assault weapons.

So far, however, it has been an impossible task in the United States to curb gun violence. Gun control is not a priority for U.S. politicians, many of them linked to the influential National Rifle Association.

Former President Barack Obama ran up against congressional resistance to tougher gun control provisions. He then had to resort to presidential decrees.

But then Donald Trump came to the White House and repealed, for example, in 2017 a regulation adopted by Obama aimed at keeping firearms away from some people with serious mental illnesses.

Every day in the United States, the number of fatalities from gun violence, which has already been labeled a public sanitary crisis, is increasing. However, there is no action from politicians, because there are many interests behind, apparently much more important to some than human life.

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