

At least 83 killed in Colombia so far during National Strike



Independent tallies from human rights organizations raise the number of deaths at the hands of state repression in Colombia to nearly one hundred. | Photo: Twitter: Defend Freedom Campaign

Bogota, June 24 (RHC)-- Colombia's Defend Freedom Campaign reports that after 55 days of social protest, mostly peaceful, in the context of the "Paro Nacional" -- or the National Strike -- there have been "serious violations" of human rights since April 28th, with a preliminary balance of 83 murders.

According to the tally of such campaign, 83 homicides of civilians have been registered, of which 27 are attributable to the security forces, another seven are attributable to private "civilians," and in 43 cases the aggressor has not been identified.

As the National Strike enters its second month of protests and mobilizations against the neoliberal policies of the government of Iván Duque, the balance is 1,677 people injured by the disproportionate actions of the National Police, the Mobile Anti-Riot Squad (ESMAD) and unidentified armed civilians. There have also been 80 cases of eye injuries and 114 cases of people injured by firearms.

On the other hand, the Colombian government only recognizes to date that "there are 24 people who died, but 19 did not die because of the strike and 11 are under investigation", said Alicia Arango, Colombian ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva.

Arango was responding to the report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights which indicated that 56 deaths (54 civilians and two policemen) have been confirmed during the protests against the government of Iván Duque, a lower number than that registered by independent Colombian organizations.

The Defend Freedom Campaign denounces that "many injured people refuse to initiate the corresponding criminal complaint or to simply share their personal data", due to the fear of suffering reprisals, such as being involved in a judicial process and being stigmatized for exercising the right to social protest.

The count reports that 788 women have been victims of police violence, of which 4 were killed by the actions of the security forces, as well as 85 women human rights defenders have been assaulted.

The Campaign, which made these data public, in its most recent bulletin, shows "great concern that despite the fact that the mobilizations in the framework of the National Strike have decreased, the activities of peaceful social mobilization continue and thus, the violations of human rights in the country have not ended."

In Bogota, they denounce that "the situation in Portal Resistencia (formerly Portal Americas) is worrying, where human rights violations occur almost daily, putting at risk the life and integrity of the demonstrators and the inhabitants in the vicinity of these sectors."

Finally, the campaign demands the government of Iván Duque to provide security guarantees to the entire population to exercise their fundamental right to protest, as well as to exercise the right to defend human rights and the provision of primary health care to protesters who have been attacked by the public forces.

<https://www.radiohc.cu/en/noticias/internacionales/261728-at-least-83-killed-in-colombia-so-far-during-national-strike>



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