

Marielle Franco murder to be investigated again in Brazil



A mural in honor of Marielle Franco. | Photo: Twitter/ @EricBattistelli

Brasilia, February 23 (RHC)-- Brazil's Justice Minister Flavio Dino has ordered the Federal Police to open a new investigation to detect the masterminds of the murder of councilwoman Marielle Franco that took place in Rio de Janeiro on March 18, 2018.

The administration of President Lula da Silva will collaborate extensively with subnational authorities in investigations into a political crime that could not be clarified during the presidency of far-right politician Jair Bolsonaro.

On February 15th, during a meeting with the Rio de Janeiro's Attorney General, Luciano Mattos, Dino announced the creation of a working group to guarantee the progress of the investigations. "Solving the Franco Case is a matter of honor," he said upon taking office in early January, when Dino vowed to get to the bottom of the crime against the human rights defender.

Former police officers Ronnie Lessa and Elcio Vieira de Queiroz, who were charged as the material authors of the murder, have been in pretrial detention since 2019. Lessa was accused of firing the shots,

while Queiroz was accused of driving the vehicle that followed Marielle.

Previous investigations detected that these criminals were part of Rio de Janeiro far-right militias, with which the Bolsonaro clan kept contact. Coincidentally, the former Brazilian president dismissed several investigators and prosecutors who were making progress in the investigation of this political assassination.

Besides being a member of the Socialism and Freedom Party (PSOL), Marielle Franco was a grassroots activist who repeatedly denounced police and parapolice violence against the poor. Currently, her sister, Anielle, is Minister of Racial Equality.

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