

Mike Pompeo says U.S. fully supports Colombian government during protests



Washington, November 27 (RHC)-- U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo expressed "steadfast support" to Colombia's right-wing government as it faces public protests and marches against economic austerity plans, corruption and police violence, President Ivan Duque in a phone call on Wednesday, according to a State Department spokeswoman.

"Secretary Pompeo reaffirmed the United States' steadfast support for the government of Colombia in its efforts to facilitate peaceful democratic expression," said State Department spokeswoman Morgan Ortagus in a statement. Ortagus also said Pompeo had "welcomed the national conversation that President Duque has convened in Colombia in response to recent demonstrations, recognizing it as an opportunity for the Colombian people to work together to advance peace, security, and prosperity."

Demonstrators are rallying against economic plans -- such as a rise in the pension age and a cut to the minimum wage for young people -- as well what they say is a lack of government action to stop corruption and the murder of hundreds of human rights activists.

Although the police repression continues, Colombian workers, farmers, and students are in the streets to demand compliance with 13 proposals that the Nation Strike Committee delivered to Duque. Among them is the repeal of laws and decrees related to tax reforms, changes to the pension system and loss of labor rights.

Colombians also request the dissolution of ESMAD, cleaning up the National Police, and punishment of those responsible for the killing of young activist Dilan Cruz. Cruz, who had been in the intensive care unit since Saturday, died on Tuesday night. The news of his death immediately invaded social media.

Workers demand that the government does not carry out any process of privatization of public goods and that authorities comply with the agreements reached with professors and students. One of the citizens' most desired goals is that the government fully complies with the 2016 Peace Agreements.

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