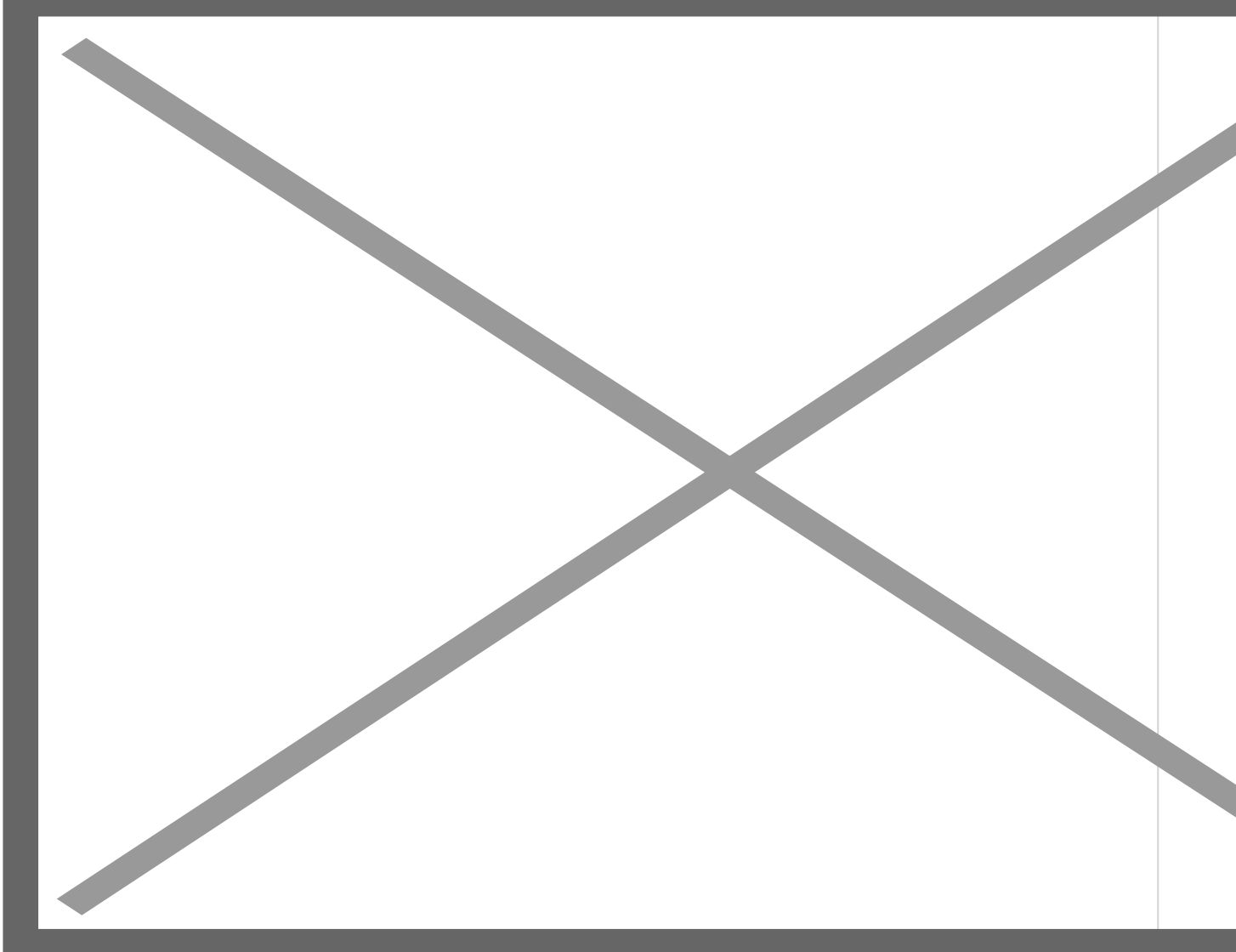


# *Colombia's president withdrawing tax reforms after mass protests*

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**Demonstrators take part in a protest against the tax reform of President Ivan Duque's government in Bogota, Colombia, May 1, 2021 [Luisa Gonzalez/Reuters]**

Bogota, May 3 (RHC)-- Colombian President Ivan Duque has said he is withdrawing a contentious tax reform proposal after thousands of protesters took to the streets across the South American nation for several days to denounce the measures.

On Sunday, Duque said he would ask Congress “to withdraw the law proposed by the finance ministry and urgently process a new law that is the fruit of consensus, in order to avoid financial uncertainty.”

The proposed reforms, which the right-wing government had insisted were vital to stabilising Colombia’s finances, maintaining its credit rating and funding social program, had drawn widespread public anger and protests.

The plan included new or expanded taxes on citizens and business owners, as well as the levelling of sales tax on utilities and some food items.

“We’re here to say ‘no’ to the tax reforms,” Sol Martinez, a teacher, told reporters during a protest in the capital, Bogota. “They’re robbing us poor people, while they give everything to the rich.”

Human Rights Watch said it had confirmed six deaths related to the protests. “I reiterate my urgent call for the protest to be peaceful and for the security forces to respect human rights,” Jose Miguel Vivanco, executive director of HRW’s Americas division, said in a tweet.

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