

They don't seem to listen in Colombia

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The brutal government response to protests and mobilizations in Colombia goes unanswered

by Roberto Morejón

The brutal governmental response to protests and mobilizations in Colombia exposed to the world a militarized country, with uniformed soldiers and hired killers.

Human rights organizations talk about 50 people killed and thousands injured, mainly due to the excesses committed by the police and shady gangs.

As the government considers any who disagrees with their ideas a criminal or a terrorist, the Anti-Disturbances Squad -- ESMAD -- has the green light for intimidation and extermination.

Social networks display several examples of police brutality, an instrument of the Ministry of Defense, which is why Colombians consider it a military structure, since together with the paramilitary groups are responsible for disappearances, torture and even the creation of mass graves.

Between April 28 and May 18, the Urgent Search Mechanism in Colombia, USM, reported 548 people missing, of which only 261 were located.

Several entities published a record denouncing places that were used for detentions, torture and even enforced disappearances of demonstrators in Cali, one of the most troubled cities.

Cali is not the only state where extremism thrives, also in Buenaventura, the main exit to the Pacific, where 40% of the national trade and part of the cocaine sent to Central America moves. This city is mostly populated by Afro-descendants, and 44 homicides, 8,000 displaced persons and 13 forced disappearances have been officially documented in 2021.

Moved by this wave of terror in Colombia, the international community called for a rapid and impartial investigation, but the government and justice agencies at its service act as if everything was the work of terrorists, manipulated by opposition leaders or from abroad.

As if a single person could mobilize tens of thousands of Colombians for so many weeks in the midst of historic clashes.

Just as President Ivan Duque and his mentor Alvaro Uribe ignored and boycotted the peace agreement with the dissolved Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, they prefer today to ignore the just demands of their citizens, among them the cessation of physical attacks.

In this regard, it's worth recalling what the Colombian singer Adriana Lucia says: "This is a country that does not listen."

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