

A deadly year for the United States

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By María Josefina Arce

For the United States, the year that is about to conclude has been the deadliest year for incidents associated with firearms in the last decade. According to the Gun Violence Archive, the number of deaths surpassed by 1,516 the number registered in 2020.

The entity, which keeps the statistics of this type of cases, revealed that only between January and November last year, more than 43,000 people lost their lives due to these devices.

Alarming is also the number of mass shootings that have taken place in 2021, about 690. A figure that analysts warn is on the rise since 2014.

Precisely in the last hours in Denver, Colorado, several shootings were recorded. Five people, including the attacker, were killed and several injured.

At least 16 U.S. cities set new records in the homicide rate. These included New York, Atlanta, Indianapolis and Philadelphia.

Investigations established that handguns were the weapon most commonly used to commit these violent acts.

The possession of firearms, guaranteed by the Second Amendment to the Constitution, has become a real problem in the North American country. And although it is not the only one, it is one of the factors that strongly influence this spiral of deaths and violence.

According to statistics, there are 120 firearms for every one hundred inhabitants in the United States, a unique case in the world.

Opinion polls reveal that 48% of Americans believe that gun violence is a very big problem in the country, while 53% want to see tougher gun laws.

But Congress has consistently held up legislation to limit access to different types of weapons. There is strong pressure from the National Rifle Association and gun manufacturers.

Under his presidency from January 2009 to January 2017, Barack Obama tried to curb such violence. He presented a plan, which, although insufficient, imposed restrictions on the sale and purchase and included a dozen separate measures on the subject, without legislative approval.

But Donald Trump's 2017 arrival in the White House changed everything. His hateful, xenophobic speech and the proliferation of white supremacist groups incentivized gun violence.

To make matters worse, not even in the midst of the pandemic in 2020, gun stores were closed, as the president declared them essential businesses such as pharmacies and markets. As a result, the sale of these devices skyrocketed.

Now the problem is in the hands of President Joe Biden. In recent days, anti-gun violence groups have demanded more action from the administration to control gun incidents, which have become the other pandemic in the United States.

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