

TEMBLORES

Bogotá, May 18, 2021

Statement to the public opinion and international community in view of the acts of physical and murderous violence perpetrated by the National Police of Colombia in the context of the National Strike demonstrations.

It is now 21 days since the demonstrations of the National Strike of 2021 began. To this date, we, Temblores NGO, have continued receiving reports of police violence in our platforms and in our communication channels. Likewise, we have continued our thorough job triangulating and verifying the information that we have received. The last reports have been mainly from Yumbo, Valle del Cauca.

After said processes of verification, we inform to the general public, the media, and Human Rights national and international organizations that our GRITA platform registered nationwide, from 6:00 AM of 28 of April until 12:00 AM of 17 of May of 2021, at least, **2,387** cases of violence by the law enforcement (without including missing people), within these cases, we identified:

- ❖ 384 victims of physical violence
- ❖ 43 murders allegedly perpetrated by the Police Force¹
- ❖ 1,139 demonstrators arbitrarily arrested
- ❖ 472 violent engagements in the context of nonviolent demonstration
- ❖ 33 victims of ocular damage
- ❖ 146 cases of fire weapon victims
- ❖ 18 victims of sexual assault
- ❖ 5 victims of gender violence

Besides the wide record of violences that demonstrates the systematicity of this issue, we manifest our concern about the series of violent practices that have also been reported. For instance, the use of tear gas in residential neighborhoods where older adults and children live, or the inappropriate use of the Venom projectile shooters from the ground and outside of the ESMAD vehicles. In addition, taking into account the curfew in many municipalities due to the COVID-19 prevention measurements, we are worried about the frequency of police violence cases during night hours; it's important to evaluate if these measurements are favoring Police Force wrongdoings and commission of crimes.

This is why, after president Duque's 17 of May of 2021² announcement, which states that the law enforcement will be deployed nationwide at its maximum power, we warn the national and international community and the media about the severe Human Rights violations that are taking place in the country. Despite in said announcement it is explained that they will proceed according to the due process and "within the strict compliance of the Human Rights and civilian protection", the nonstop increase of police violence cases leads us to alert that this deployment can lead to the aggravation of police violences and raises the threats of those who exercise their right to protest. Also, due to the fact that these police violences have not been publicly acknowledged nor their victims, it is evident that the government

¹ Our organization is collecting information about another 8 murderous violence reports that possibly involve the Police Force.

² <https://twitter.com/IvanDuque/status/1394460727994368000>

lacks the will to approach this issue, something that goes beyond the process of applying sanctions at *rare instances*.

As said in previous pronouncements, due to the severeness of these practices that we have documented in the last days and due to the lack of intentions from the state institutions to guarantee the respect of the rights of those that protest, we are forced again to:

1. Suggest that the citizens that are protesting arrive at their houses or search for a place to shelter after 6:00 PM.
2. Suggest that the citizens follow our guides to document cases of police violence and, likewise, do this process in a safe place, without risking their lives or physical integrity.
3. Suggest that the citizens use our means to report said cases and to seek legal advice.
 - a. GRITA: <https://www.temblores.org/grita>
 - b. Policarpa: <https://www.temblores.org/policarpa>
 - c. WhatsApp: 313 677 9720
 - d. Correo: info@temblores.org

Translation by: Undergraduate Students - Department of Foreign Languages - School of Human Sciences - Universidad Nacional de Colombia