

Colombians carry out third national strike in less than two weeks



Bogota, December 4 (RHC)-- Thousands of Colombians Wednesday took to the streets to reject President Ivan Duque and carry out their third nationwide strike in the last 14 days, which sets an unprecedented record in Latin America.

In Bogota, Medellin, Cali, Nieva, Bucaramanga, Barranquilla, Cartagena and dozens of cities in the interior, rallies and demonstrations led by workers, students, teachers, environmental activists and human rights defenders have taken place.

More organizations joined the protests, after the conservative government accepted a brief dialogue with social organizations but did not yield its positions at all.

Among the petitions that the Colombian government did not accept was the request that the Mobile Riot Squadron (Esmad) was not deployed to the streets to avoid further incidents of police brutality. Nor did the Duque administration accept requests related to the dissolution of Esmad, the depuration of the National Police, and the increase of pensions, among other things.

"We are against tax reform and increases in public services fares. We continue to fight for the right to a healthy environment, decent health care services, and increases in the education budget," the Colombian Federation of Education Workers (Fecode) recalled.

"We reject selective murders of social leaders, human rights defenders, environmental activists and former rebel fighters. We demand the consolidation of the peace process."

The Central Union of Workers (CUT) President Diogenes Orjuela reported that they will again call on the Duque administration to resume dialogue in order to find solutions to the country's crisis. "We want conversations and negotiations that generate agreements on what citizens have been requesting since the nationwide strike held on November 21," Orjuela said.

As long as that does not happen, however, social and political organizations will continue to demonstrate until December 10th. Subsequently, other decisions will be taken.

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