

Violence in Colombia results in another indigenous leader killed



Political violence in Colombia is resulting in several collective killings each week and at least three more murdered leaders. | Photo: Twitter: Indepaz

Bogota, February 18 (RHC)-- The political violence does not stop in Colombia where the crossfire between the army and an armed paramilitary group killed a young indigenous man, according to complaints from social organizations.

Orlando Manuel Chimá was a member of the Los Almendros indigenous reservation of the Piamonte village in the municipality of Cáceres (600 km northwest of Bogotá).

According to preliminary information, the young man was hit by a gunshot while he was working in a mine very close to the place where there was a battle between army soldiers and an armed paramilitary group.

Yesid Zapata, spokesman for the indigenous community, denounced that "the indigenous leader was in the mine working in this area when he heard the shots of the battle and was hit by bullets and unfortunately died. This shows that the armed groups are not respecting human rights when the civilian population is in the middle of this crossfire".

The defenders add that Orlando, in addition to being a leader in his community, was preparing to join the indigenous guard. That generates concern among human rights defenders, as they consider that this act does not respect the civilian population and could be a violation of international humanitarian law.

Indepaz, an NGO that keeps the record of compliance with the peace agreements, denounces that with Orlando Manuel Chimá, there would be 23 leaders and Human Rights defenders murdered in 2021 and 1,139 since the signing of the peace agreement between the Colombian State and the then FARC-EP guerrillas in 2016.

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