

17 social leaders assassinated so far this year in Colombia



Bogota, January 15 (RHC)-- In the first two weeks of 2020, 17 social leaders have been assassinated in Colombia, the Co-President of the Senate Peace Commission Ivan Cepeda has reported. Cepeda published the official figures on his Twitter account, at a time when frequent violent acts have been reported almost daily in the country.

He denounced the assassination of Benjamin Banguera, a signatory to the 2016 Peace Agreement between the Colombian State and the former Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia People's Army (FARC-EP) rebels.

One of the latest violent acts was condemned by the Catatumbo Small Farmers' Association. Social leader Tulio Sandoval, who was participating in the program to replace illegal crops was killed by armed individuals who broke into his house, dragged him out and shot him repeatedly in front of his family.

This comes three years after the signing of the Peace Agreement and 17 months since Ivan Duque took office as Colombia's president. Since the peace accord, the United Nations' High Commissioner Office for Peace in Colombia has counted "303 assassinations of human rights leaders."

A total of 10,468 homicides have been officially recorded in Colombia between January and November 2019 according to the Foundation Peace and Reconciliation.

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