

Two social leaders murdered in Meta and Arauca, Colombia

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With Hermán Naranjo Quintero and Jaun Carlos Nieto, 17 social leaders have been killed in 2022.
| Photo: Twitter @addiel_ps

Bogotá, February 3 (RHC)-- The Institute for Development and Peace Studies (Indepaz) registered on Wednesday the murder of Hermán Naranjo Quintero in Arauca and Juan Carlos Nieto in San Miguel de Guarupay, making 17 social leaders killed so far this year in Colombia.

Hermán was a social leader of the Community Action Board of Corocito in Tame, Arauca. According to the Indepaz report, he was kidnapped on February 1, the Senate Peace Commission went to Arauca to demand his release, but his body was found on Wednesday in the rural area of the municipality.

Juan Carlos Nieto was president of the Junta de Acción Comunal (JAC) in Cabuyaro, Meta. The Cabuyaro Mayor's Office regretted his death and expressed its condolences to his wife, Orlandi Yepes,

his children and brother, who is an official of the municipal mayor's office.

"The mayor, Diana Evelai Mendoza Espinel, condemns and repudiates the crime and demands that the rigor of justice and the weight of the law be brought to bear on those responsible," the Cabuyaro mayor's office said in a statement.

Nieto was elected as the head of the JAC on February 1st, work that he attended with dedication and died at the hands of violence against social leaders on Wednesday. The Ombudsman's Office issued the Early Alert AT 029/19 for the municipalities Arauquita, Fortul, Saravena and Tame, which foresees a follow-up risk update published in December 2020, pointing out that the measures adopted to protect the rights of the communities and their leaders are insufficient.

In addition, the Ombudsman's Office points out that the measures do not obey territorial singularities, so regional social leaders have reaffirmed that the perception of insecurity has only increased over time.

Indepaz reports that armed groups of the National Liberation Army (ELN), the 10th Martin Villa Front and sporadic incursions of Venezuelan gangs are active in the area belonging to the second division of the Colombian army.

The entity already counts 17 leaders and human rights defenders murdered in 2022 and 1,302 after the signing of the Peace Agreement.

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