

Bogotá, June 28, 2021

Communication to the public and the international community regarding the acts of violence committed by the Colombian Public Force in the context of the mobilizations for the National Strike

Today marks two months since the start of the mobilizations summoned within the framework of Colombia's National Strike. From the beginning, our organization has been focused on registering and documenting practices of police violence through our GRITA platform, as well providing free legal services for victims of violence through Policarpa, our ambulatory justice clinic. After the verification of complaints and triangulation of information received through our channels, it was possible to establish that between April 28, 2021 and June 26, 2021, at least 4,687 cases of violent acts (not including cases of disappearance¹) on the part of the Public Force. Within such cases, it was possible to identify:

- 44 homicides of whose alleged offender is a member of the Public Force.
- Another 29 homicides currently undergoing a verification process in which
 - 13 are in a clarification process to determine whether the alleged offender belonged to the Public Force
 - 4 are attributable to armed civilians in whom there are indications of possible involvement of members from the Public Force.
 - 9 are in a verification process for the setting and context of events
 - 3 are in a complaint verification process
- 1,617 victims of physical violence
- 82 victims of eye assaults and injuries
- 228 gunshot victims
- 28 victims of sexual violence
- 9 victims of gender based violence
- 2,005 arbitrary detentions against demonstrators
- 784 violent interventions in the context of peaceful protests
- 35 cases of venom weapons use on the part of Esmad
 - 48 cases of respiratory ailments due to the release of tear gas

Following these two months of mobilizations crossed by systematic violations of human rights, the Temblores NGO

- a. Demands that access to justice for all victims and their families be guaranteed without any distinctions whatsoever. It is essential that the investigations opened for criminal and disciplinary proceedings move forward in an agile, rigorous, and transparent manner, regardless of the victims or alleged offenders.

¹ Up until June 22, 77 Urgent Search mechanisms remained active.

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- b. Expresses concern about the allegations of judicial set-ups that we have received. These should not be permitted under any circumstances and must be investigated by the pertinent authorities in order to guarantee the right to the presumption of innocence and due process of rights.
- c. Rejects any type of threat or harassment against victims, their family members, and close circles. These revictimization practices are meant to instill fear in people to impede, stop, or hinder access to the justice processes.
- d. Alerts and calls upon the competent state institutions to investigate the articulations between state and parastatal forces of the commission, omission, and cover-up of human rights violations within the context of the national strike.
- e. Invites the traditional means of communication, the National Government, local governments, public figures, and other disseminators of information not to stigmatize the protest. This stigmatization legitimizes the Public Force's violence and force against the civilian population exercising their constitutional right to protest. The Public Force does not know or understand the reasons and demands for which citizens mobilize in the streets.
- f. Reiterates that our labor of registration and documentation of police violence cases, from which the figures we have presented are derived, are the result of a rigorous process of investigation, triangulation, and comparison of the information for each case. Therefore, we categorically reject any statement or effort to delegitimize or disqualify our work and the figures presented. As an organization, we believe that the documentation of every act of police violence is one of the first and necessary steps for #PoliceReformNow. It allows us to measure the true magnitude and complexity of the structural problem of police violence. In this sense, we invite state control entities to fulfill and comply with their work in the registration and investigation of these events which have occurred during the last two months of protest.
- g. Expresses our concern for the escalation of violent acts committed by civilians in recent days. We lament the passing of Camilo Vélez Martínez, whose death was caused by a collision with a crossed cable on Ciudad de Cali Avenue on June 25. As an organization, we reject any violation of human rights. Additionally, we recognize the rights of all civilians (demonstrators, front liners, people who circulate and inhabit the public space), and fight for the guarantee of those rights. Consequently, we make an emphatic call to continue advocating for the concerted solution to the tensions that persist in the country, with the objective of de-escalating violence and violations of human rights.