



Ambassador Antonio José Ardila
Embassy of Colombia
3 Hans Crescent, London, SW1X 0LN

12 May 2021

Violence against protesters in Colombia

Your Excellency,

Since demonstrations began in Colombia on 28 April, there have been numerous examples of police violence towards protesters.

According to the National Ombudsman, at least 18 people have been killed and many more injured. There are reports of police targeting people in the face with projectiles, causing permanent eye injuries, as well as at least 9 cases of sexual violence. There are also worrying reports of mass arrests, with numerous people still unaccounted for after being detained.

On 3 May, the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Association and Peaceful Assembly expressed his alarm at reports from Colombia and called on the Colombian security forces to stop using excessive force. A day later, the UNOHCHR similarly expressed alarm after police used live ammunition against protesters in Cali.

The recent deaths follow at least 10 people who were killed in September at demonstrations against police violence.

The right to protest is a fundamental part of any democracy.

We therefore call on your government to ensure its citizens are able exercise their democratic freedoms, and that human rights abuses by the security forces are properly investigated at all levels.

The United Kingdom has played an important role in supporting the Colombian peace agreement, particularly as penholder at UN Security Council.

We hope this track record will continue, helping Colombia fulfil its potential as a prosperous and peaceful country for all.

Yours Sincerely,

Baroness Christine Blower

Lord John Monks

Baroness Jean Coussins

Lord John Alderdice

Lord Des Browne

Lord John Hendy

Baroness Mary Goudie