



PERSONAL INTEGRITY, A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT

Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and article 1 of the American Declaration of Rights enshrine this as a fundamental right.

Within the guarantees covered by the personal integrity right, physical and moral torture are prohibited since the priority is to ensure the well-being of persons and not to discriminate against or to disregard them. In Colombia, article 12 of the Political Constitution upholds this rule and also prohibits forced disappearance, an act which is condemned as a crime against humanity; however, although fundamental rights should be a guarantee, its violation by third parties is evident even though they are declared inalienable for all.

In the same way, personal integrity should be a right of absolute compliance for every inhabitant of any country, since everyone deserves respect and acceptance by their environment, regardless of differences between thoughts, beliefs, tastes and so on. No one should be despised or rejected, on the contrary: to ensure healthy coexistence, it is important that cultural exchanges and spaces enrich diversity; however, it is public knowledge that there is no full compliance with this right, as many people, even in households, are not considered since they have ideas contrary to those established in family customs. Unfortunately, one of the most aggressive ways in which this rule has been broken is through actions committed within the armed conflicts that have occurred in Colombia.

Torture, fear, uncertainty, enforced disappearance, genocide and many other acts have been events that the inhabitants of Huila have dealt with between the 80s and 90s. Their rights were violated and there was no authority to ensure it; they were indeed direct victims of diverse clashes between groups such as the FARC, M-19, UP party and the Colombian National Army; and although these armies included goals in their speech to change the country, making arrangements and improvements, and even protecting people, they overlooked the fact that armed confrontations and hatred between them put the lives of civilians at risk, obliging them to prepare food if they demanded it, stealing their belongings from them, and so on. Undoubtedly, these situations were, of course, misinterpreted and put the integrity of these citizens at risk, as they considered them 'allied' to one side or the other.

The groups involved in these confrontations are great criminals who are attacking this and many other fundamental rights; in this sense, it is evident that the law does not ensure compliance and, for many years, its principles, which are supposed to be essential for developing a dignified life that all Colombians deserve, have been disrespected. **R**



Por: Camila Herrera



Dayanna Velandía