



Colombian Peace Process: IOM Weekly Report

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1. Background

On September 4, 2012, President Santos announced the signing of a General Agreement for the Termination of the Conflict between the Government of Colombia and the FARC, initiating the fourth official peace talks with this group. The agenda includes: 1) integrated rural reform; 2) guarantees for political opposition and civic participation; 3) the end of the conflict (laying down arms and reintegration into civilian life); 4) illegal drugs; and 5) victims' rights. Preparatory talks started in Oslo on October 17, 2012 and substantive dialogues in Havana, on November 19, 2012. Three agreements have been reached: one on the first agenda point, integrated rural reform, on May 26, 2013; the second on the next point, political participation, on November 6, 2013; and another on the fourth agenda point, illegal drugs, on May 16, 2014.

On June 10, 2014, the GOC announced that exploratory talks with the ELN were taking place to define an agenda for peace talks. These initial meetings have been held since January 2014, and the issues of victims and societal participation are the first two agenda points. The GOC and ELN will release information on the progress of the exploratory talks as they continue.

2. GOC – FARC Key Developments from February 25th – March 3rd

Bernard Aronson arrives in Cuba to meet with dialogue teams

The US' new Special Envoy to the GOC-FARC peace talks, Bernard Aronson, arrived in Cuba to begin meetings with the dialogue teams.¹ He met with the FARC on Sunday, but the content of the meeting has been kept secret at the request of the GOC.² Aronson travelled to Cuba from Colombia, where he met with President Santos last week to discuss progress in the peace talks.³ Meanwhile, US Secretary of State John Kerry affirmed that the US will not suffer international political consequences for sending Aronson to Cuba, as he will not be sitting at the dialogue table and the US is therefore not intervening directly in the talks.⁴

Active members of military to participate in talks

Five active members of the military went to Cuba to participate in talks on ceasefire and DDR. They are: General Álvaro Pico, commander of police units that cover five conflict-affected departments, and former director of Interpol Colombia; Brigadier General Oswaldo Rivera, Chief of Security and Defense in the National Air Force; General Alfonso Rojas, who has a long military career; General Martín Fernando Nieto, a high-level military intelligence official; and Almirante

¹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/bernard-aronson-enviado-especial-de-ee-uu-llega-a-cuba/15323937>

² www.eltiempo.com/mundo/ee-uu-y-canada/proceso-de-paz-enviado-especial-de-ee-uu-a-proceso-se-reunio-con-las-farc/15327737

³ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/reunion-juan-manuel-santos-con-bernard-aronson/15306575>

⁴ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/enviado-paz-colombia-no-tendra-impacto-negativo-eeuu-articulo-546184>

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Orlando Romero, Chief of the Omega Joint Task Forces.⁵ GOC dialogue team leader Humberto de la Calle and Minister of Defense Juan Carlos Pinzón highlighted the combat and intelligence experience of the group, and said their presence should reassure Colombians.⁶

FARC continues to deny possibility of jail time

The FARC continue to reject the idea that a final peace agreement could include jail time for their leaders, and insist that judicial alternatives be agreed. This statement comes amid various statements by international leaders that the balance between peace and justice must be found in order to establish stable peace.⁷ Meanwhile, retired police General Oscar Naranjo stated that processing through the ordinary justice system would create judicial overload and fail to fulfill the rights of the victims, thereby necessitating alternative measures.⁸

3. GOC – ELN Key Developments from February 25th – March 3rd

ELN ready to make talks official

ELN high commander ‘El Gabino’ stated that the guerrilla group has been ready to begin formal talks for the past year, and that the GOC is the party who presents more obstacles to making the dialogues official. He also highlighted that the GOC should take measures to ensure opposition guarantees and democracy in order to protect peace.⁹

4. International

Santos speaks at forum during official visit to Spain

In a Madrid forum on peace in Colombia, President Santos stated that a final agreement will probably cause controversy, but must be accepted in order to overcome the violence.¹⁰ He also discussed negotiating with the US to avoid extradition requests for FARC leaders (something that analysts doubt will be a possibility¹¹).¹² Ex-President Cesar Gaviria opened the forum by stating that Colombia has the freedom to interpret international law in a way that serves the country’s post-conflict interests, and that international courts will not impede the transition to peace.¹³ Various members of Colombia’s private sector spoke about how peace will benefit the economy,

⁵ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/justicia/proceso-de-paz-biografia-generales-activos-que-viajan-a-cuba-/15324175>

⁶ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/generales-colombianos-en-la-habana-humberto-de-la-calle/15323937> and

<http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/los-generales-van-habana-no-se-van-dejar-meter-goles-mi-articulo-547047>

⁷ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/farc-no-aceptaran-acuerdo-contemple-carcel-ejercer-dere-articulo-547196>

⁸ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/carcel-no-igual-justicia-naranjo-articulo-547142>

⁹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/negociaciones-de-paz-con-el-eln/15309697>

¹⁰ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/presidente-santos-anuncia-visita-de-generales-a-la-habana-/15323435>

¹¹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/mundo/ee-uu-y-canada/proceso-de-paz-extradicion-de-miembros-de-farc/15326780>

¹² <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/santos-habla-del-proceso-de-paz-con-las-farc/15319335>

¹³ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/cesar-gaviria-habla-en-foro-de-paz-en-colombia/15323415>

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and encouraged investment.¹⁴ In a separate event, Santos reassured Spain's private sector that peace will not negatively affect investments in Colombia.¹⁵

Kofi Annan discusses peace with dialogue teams

Ex-Secretary General of the UN Kofi Annan arrived in Cuba to discuss peace with the GOC and FARC dialogue teams. He praised the progress made in the dialogues, and highlighted the need for "civic education" to inform the Colombian population about what is being discussed and agreed.¹⁶ The leader clarified that if the final peace agreement does not incorporate sufficient justice measures to address the harm inflicted during the conflict, the International Criminal Court could intervene.¹⁷ Last week Annan also emphasized the importance of cooperation between ex-President Uribe and President Santos, and their two camps.¹⁸ GOC dialogue leader Humberto de la Calle supported this suggestion, and invited the opposition to discuss peace.¹⁹

5. Other Voices

Inspector General criticizes peace process in US

Inspector General Alejandro Ordóñez was in the US, where he criticized the GOC-FARC peace talks. In meetings with high-level representatives, Ordóñez worried that alternative sentences could be limited to community service, and crimes covered by transitional justice could include drugs trafficking.²⁰ Later on, Ordóñez reiterated that the FARC's rejection of jail sentences cannot become reality, due to Colombia's international legal commitments.²¹

6. Emerging Challenges and Responses

Semana forum addresses truth commissions and peace

Semana held the forum "Truth Commissions and Peace Processes" with national and international panelists, who discussed truth in transitional justice measures. Speakers included: Kofi Annan, who emphasized clear conditions for a truth commission (TC) and a balance between peace and justice; President Santos²², who stated that the dialogue teams aim to honor victims' rights and avoid signing a peace agreement that will be rejected by international courts; and High Commissioner for Peace Sergio Jaramillo²³, who highlighted the value that a TC would have in terms of recognizing the victims. Other speakers included Marcie Mersky, who was part of the TC in

¹⁴ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/el-empresariado-tiene-hacer-pedagogia-paz-articulo-547018>

¹⁵ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/reunion-santos-y-empresarios-espanoles-sobre-proceso-de-paz-/15329716>

¹⁶ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/proceso-de-paz-kofi-annan-reconoce-avances-en-dialogos/15313915>

¹⁷ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/proceso-de-paz-kofi-annan-en-cuba/15313258>

¹⁸ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/kofi-annan-dice-que-santos-y-uribe-deben-hablar-por-la-paz/15301702>

¹⁹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/de-la-calle-pide-a-la-oposicion-para-hablar-de-paz/15311496>

²⁰ <http://www.eltiempo.com/mundo/ee-uu-y-canada/gira-del-procurador-ordonez-en-estados-unidos/15305736>

²¹ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/judicial/propuesta-de-cero-carcel-planteada-farc-insostenible-pro-articulo-546965>

²² <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/santos-habla-de-justicia-transicional-/15303077> and <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/proceso-de-paz-juan-manuel-santos-habla-de-justicia-transicional/15300135>

²³ www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/alto-comisionado-de-paz-sergio-jaramillo-habla-sobre-el-proceso-de-paz-/15322595

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Guatemala, Priscilla Hayner, an expert in TCs, and Pablo de Greiff, the UN representative for promotion of truth, justice, reparations, and non-repetition.

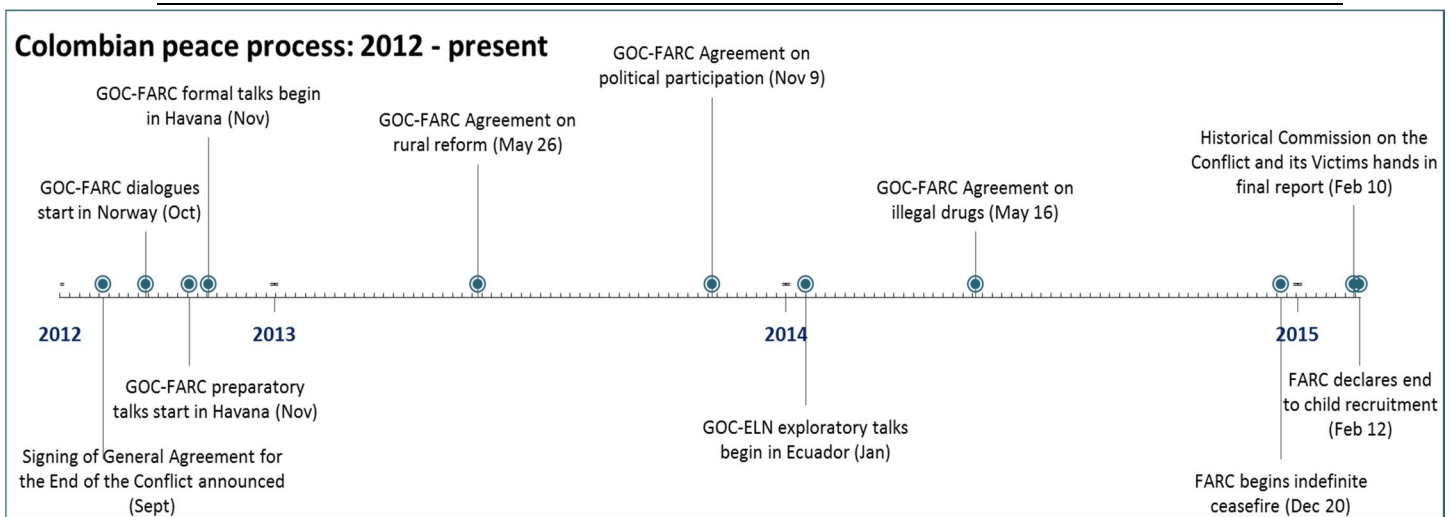
Governors' post-conflict responsibilities more defined

Minister of the Interior Juan Fernando Cristo announced measures that define the post-conflict responsibility of departmental governors as part of the National Development Plan. The first is an inter-institutional committee to coordinate national entities with department governments, and ensure that support is used efficiently by the departments. The second gradually decentralizes management and application of regional public security policy.²⁴

10,000 soldiers to be trained in de-mining

The GOC announced that 10,000 soldiers are being made available for de-mining training in preparation for the post-conflict phase. There are currently 500 soldiers trained in this area, so this new effort will strengthen de-mining initiatives after the signature of a peace agreement.²⁵

7. Timeline



8. Further Reading

Santos interviewed by El País

While in Spain last week, President Santos was interviewed by newspaper El País. He discussed the challenge of finding the balance between peace and justice, the possibility of US extradition of

²⁴ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/gobierno/cumbre-de-gobernadores-en-puerto-inirida/15306135>

²⁵ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/gobierno/proceso-de-paz-alistan-a-10000-soldados-para-que-se-encarguen-del-desminado/15328364>



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FARC leaders after a peace agreement, and alternative sentences for FARC members ultimately responsible for crimes against humanity.²⁶

Conflict reduced intensity in 2014: Fundación Paz y Reconciliación

Fundación Paz y Reconciliación published a report finding that the FARC reduced violent actions by 40% in 2014 compared to 2013. The document attributes this reduction to the unilateral ceasefires implemented by the group throughout the year. Other conclusions find that the FARC are now concentrating on general preparations for the post-conflict phase.²⁷

HRW representative to visit Colombia

Joel Motley of Human Rights Watch will visit Colombia next week. In interview with El Tiempo, Motley discussed ex-President Cesar Gaviria's proposal that transitional justice should apply to all actors in the conflict and announced a report on Buenaventura, recommending that the GOC intervene there given the city's high levels of violence.²⁸

Kofi Annan interviewed by Semana

Kofi Annan was interviewed by Semana. He addressed the possibility that the International Criminal Court will intervene in Colombia, the balance between peace and justice, the lack of internal consensus about the peace process in Colombia, and the UN's post-conflict role.²⁹

²⁶ http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2015/02/28/actualidad/1425158156_968471.html

²⁷ <http://www.pares.com.co/carrusel/lo-que-hemos-ganado/>

²⁸ <http://www.eltiempo.com/mundo/ee-uu-y-canada/joe-motley-de-human-rights-watch-en-colombia/15322597>

²⁹ <http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/los-maximos-responsables-deben-rendir-cuentas/419363-3>

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2. GOC – FARC Key Developments from March 4th – March 10th

GOC and FARC reach agreement on de-mining

The GOC and FARC announced an agreement to begin de-mining as part of current efforts to de-escalate the conflict. The de-mining will be supported by Norway, and implemented jointly by members of the military and the FARC, as well as communities affected by mines. Members of the FARC will not be armed or uniformed, and orders for their arrest will be suspended.³⁰ Steps to be taken include: identification of areas to be de-mined; data matching between FARC, GOC, and independent sources; de-mining; verification by the Norwegian support team.³¹

President Santos praised the agreement as a big step towards peace, and hoped that Colombia will be free of mines by 2025.³² General Rafael Colón, Director of the GOC's De-mining Action Program, stated that the GOC is ready to form a technical working group and begin identification of the areas to be de-mined.³³ Analysts for La Silla Vacía highlighted that this will be the first initiative

³⁰ www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/proceso-de-paz-gobierno-y-farc-anuncian-acuerdo-para-desminado/15356195

³¹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/acuerdo-para-desminado-entre-gobierno-y-farc-15357575>

³² <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/desminado-con-las-farc-santos-jaramillo-y-naranja/15363015>

³³ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/gobierno-esta-listo-comenzar-desminado-general-rafael-c-articulo-548253>



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stemming from the peace talks to have direct impact on conflict-affected populations, meaning that it contributes to the legitimacy and credibility of the peace process.³⁴

Current studies show that approximately 688 municipalities in Colombia – 63% of the national territory – have some level of risk of the presence of mines. Some estimates state that it will take ten years and more than US\$200 million to de-mine the country.³⁵

Historic presence of military generals in Havana

A group of military generals went to Cuba to meet with FARC high commanders in the first such meeting to take place. Future meetings will include experts to discuss international experiences of DDR and ceasefire, the main topics to be considered in the meetings.³⁶

3. GOC – ELN Key Developments from March 4th – March 10th

ELN asks USA to take responsibility for conflict

In a communiqué last week, the ELN praised the USA's decision to send Special Envoy Bernard Aronson to Havana to observe the GOC-FARC dialogues, but stressed the need for the US to take responsibility for its role in the Colombian conflict. The statement said that the US had designed the low-intensity conflict strategy for Colombia, and is responsible for much of the victimization that occurred in the violence.³⁷

4. International

Colombia can learn from El Salvador's mistakes: Mauricio Vargas

Mauricio Vargas was a high-level member of the Salvadoran military and had a central role in negotiations with the FMLN guerrilla group. In interview with El Tiempo, Vargas discussed errors that were made in El Salvador and could lend useful lessons to Colombia, for example the withdrawal of the Salvadoran military from parts of the territory, which resulted in a loss of state territorial control. He also opined that the FARC must hand over weapons in order to establish true peace.³⁸

³⁴ <http://lasillavacia.com/historia/el-desminado-sera-el-primer-aterrijaje-real-de-la-habana-49713>

³⁵ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/desminar-colombia-costaria-us-200-millones/15361216>

³⁶ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/seis-generales-en-la-habana-analisis/15357582>

³⁷ <http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/el-n-le-pide-eeuu-asumir-su-cuota-de-responsabilidad-en-el-conflicto/420380-3>

³⁸ www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/recomendaciones-del-general-mauricio-vargas-al-proceso-de-paz-en-colombia/15357999

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US Sub-Secretary of State in Colombia to discuss peace

Sub-Secretary of State Sarah Sewall arrived in Colombia last week to discuss the GOC-FARC peace process and express US support for the talks to high-level GOC representatives. She also aims to discuss transitional justice measures and the demobilization of the FARC at the end of the peace talks.³⁹

International cooperation celebrates de-mining agreement

The UN released a communiqué praising the agreement to begin de-mining, announced by GOC and FARC dialogue teams last week. The statement highlighted that the de-mining efforts will have immediate positive impact on the quality of life of communities affected by mines.⁴⁰ Similarly, the OAS stated that the de-mining agreement consolidates citizen trust in the peace process, and demonstrates a commendable commitment to ending the conflict.⁴¹ The EU also commended the agreement as a significant step forward in the peace process.⁴²

5. Other Voices

Women's groups ask for de-escalation of conflict

Leaders of women's organizations in Colombia asked the GOC and FARC dialogue teams to agree a bilateral ceasefire as soon as possible, in order to stop victimization in the conflict.⁴³

25-year anniversary of M-19 demobilization invites comparisons

This week is the 25-year anniversary of the peace agreement and demobilization of the M-19 guerrilla group. Ex-President Cesar Gaviria wrote an open letter to Antonio Navarro, an ex-commander of the M-19 and now senator, in celebration of the anniversary of the peace process that led to their dismantling. Gaviria stated that the success of M-19's peace process shows that peace with the FARC is possible, and thereby adds legitimacy and credibility to the current talks.⁴⁴ Meanwhile, Attorney General Eduardo Montealegre highlighted that the M-19's entry to politics should inspire the FARC to work towards peace and a more democratic country, stating that the

³⁹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/subsecretaria-de-estado-de-ee-uu-viaja-a-colombia-para-hablar-del-proceso-de-paz/15346418>

⁴⁰ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/onu-celebra-acuerdo-de-desminado-entre-gobierno-y-farc-articulo-548158>

⁴¹ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/acuerdo-sobre-desminado-un-enorme-avance-el-proceso-de-articulo-548420>

⁴² <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/acuerdo-de-desminado-colombia-significativo-paz-union-e-articulo-548528>

⁴³ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/dirigentes-de-organizaciones-de-mujeres-en-la-habana/15354877>

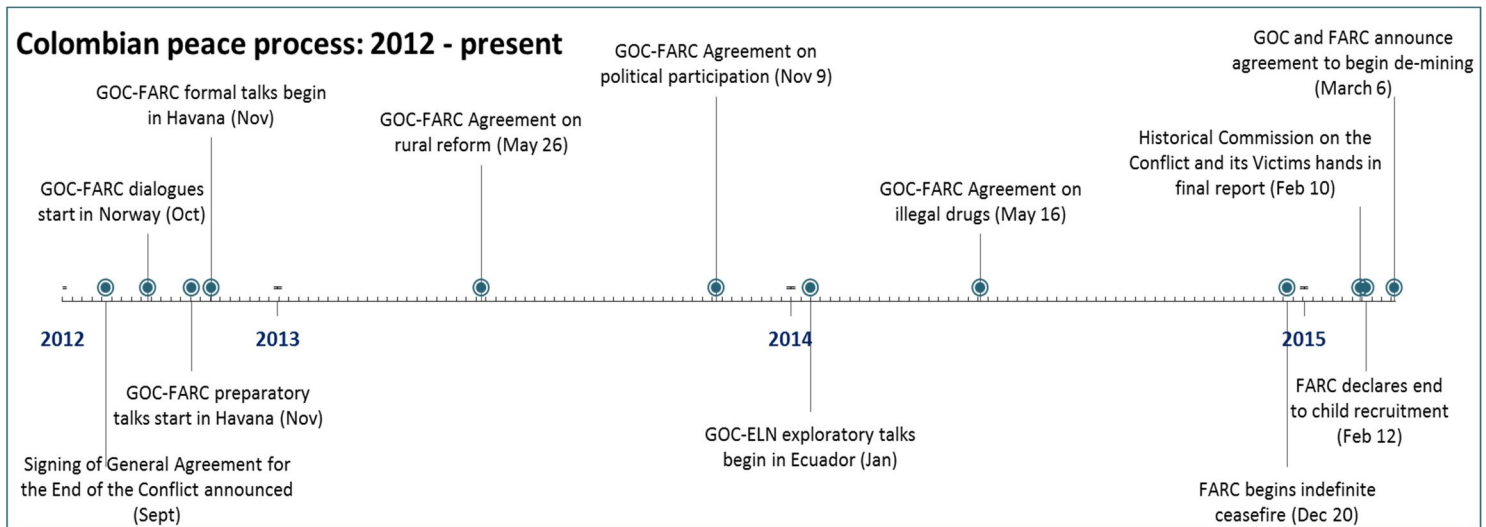
⁴⁴ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/cesar-gaviria-dice-proceso-de-paz-m-19-le-da-credibilidad-articulo-548265>

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M-19's experience proves that a negotiating solution to the conflict is the best option.⁴⁵ President Santos seconded this notion and asked the FARC to follow M-19's footsteps by demobilizing and contributing to peace.⁴⁶

6. Timeline



7. Further Reading

Gallup poll shows increase in support for talks

A recent Gallup poll showed that 72% of those interviewed stated that they agreed with the GOC's decision to hold peace talks, representing a 10% increase since December 2014. In addition, 69% stated that they believe a negotiated solution to the conflict can be achieved, which is an increase of 11% with respect to December last year.⁴⁷

Demining will be a challenge in certain areas: Mining activist

In interview with El Tiempo, mining activist Alvaro Jimenez highlighted various challenges to demining plans publicized last week, including the fact that de-mining will be difficult in areas where the ELN and other illegal armed groups are still active. He also mentioned areas he believes should

⁴⁵ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/judicial/hace-25-anos-el-m-19-creyo-democracia-fiscal-general-articulo-548347>

⁴⁶ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/santos-insta-farc-seguir-ejemplo-del-m-19-articulo-548389>

⁴⁷ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/encuesta-gallup-sobre-proceso-de-paz/15357581>



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be prioritized for de-mining efforts, which include municipalities in Putumayo, Caquetá, Nariño, Chocó, Antioquia, Córdoba, Meta, and Tolima.⁴⁸

NY Times publishes analysis of GOC-FARC talks

The New York Times published an analysis of the GOC-FARC dialogues, including topics such as the arrival of US Special Envoy Bernard Aronson to Havana, US support for Colombian military efforts to defeat the FARC, varied public support for the process, and the FARC's discourse on not going to jail after a peace agreement.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/el-problema-del-desminado-campos-que-farc-y-eln-comparten-/15361218>

⁴⁹ <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/10/opinion/hope-for-colombias-peace-process.html? r=0>

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2. GOC – FARC Key Developments from March 11th – March 17th

GOC suspends bombing of FARC

President Santos announced that the military will suspend all bombing of FARC sites for one month. This measure aims to contribute to current efforts to de-escalate the conflict, and to respond positively to the indefinite unilateral ceasefire maintained by the FARC since December 20th 2014. At the end of one month, FARC fulfillment of their unilateral ceasefire will be reviewed, and the GOC will decide whether to continue the suspension. The President also specified that if a threat against the population is perceived, the military will respond.⁵⁰ The FARC doubted the intentions of the announcement, saying that the GOC had suspended bombings due to fears over FARC retaliation for the killing of a FARC commander last week.⁵¹

Politicians react to suspension of bombing

The suspension of bombing against the FARC received reactions across the political spectrum. Many hailed the announcement as a significant step towards peace, with Senator Benedetti stressing that a bilateral ceasefire could be next, and Roy Barreras emphasizing the impact reduced armed activity has on the population.⁵² Inspector General Alejandro Ordóñez was less

⁵⁰ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/gobierno-anuncia-suspension-de-bombardeos-contr-farc-u-articulo-548593>

⁵¹ www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/farc-responde-a-cese-de-bombardeos-anunciada-por-gobierno-santos/15395459

⁵² <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/se-avecina-el-cese-al-fuego-bilateral-articulo-548618>



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positive, stating that the suspension represents a disguised bilateral ceasefire.⁵³ Ex-President Uribe also condemned the announcement.⁵⁴ GOC dialogue team leader Humberto de la Calle responded that the suspension is not a disguised bilateral ceasefire but rather a test period to ascertain regional conditions and support analysis of a possible bilateral ceasefire later on.⁵⁵

Peace Advisory Committee formed

President Santos announced that he invited various politicians and leaders to join a new Peace Advisory Committee, which started work this week by meeting first with the president and then with the dialogue teams in Cuba. The Committee includes ex-President Andrés Pastrana, who has been a harsh critic of the peace talks until now, ex-presidential candidate Antanas Mockus, ex-M-19 guerrilla member Vera Grabe, members of the Catholic Church, representatives of the business sector, and an indigenous leader. The objective of the Committee is to support the dialogue teams in overcoming challenges at the dialogue table, and to provide input as needed.⁵⁶ President Santos said that the first meeting of the Committee was productive, and clarified that its work will not replace that of the dialogue teams.⁵⁷

Round 34 begins with adjustment to dialogue team format

Round 34 of the GOC-FARC talks began with a slight modification to the format of the GOC dialogue team. As various active military commanders are in Havana as part of the Sub-Commission on the End of the Conflict, and are working with the dialogue teams on a range of military-related issues, retired Generals Oscar Naranjo and Jorge Enrique Mora will not be permanent members of the GOC dialogue team but rather will be called in as necessary.

3. GOC – ELN Key Developments from March 11th – March 17th

ELN states that formal talks are close

The ELN released a statement that only one more point has to be agreed in order for formal dialogues to begin. Without specifying what the point is, the guerrilla group stated that the most

⁵³ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/no-bombardear-campamentos-de-farc-un-cese-bilateral-dis-articulo-548677>

⁵⁴ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/uribe-y-zuluaga-vehementes-criticos-de-decision-de-sant-articulo-548630>

⁵⁵ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/cese-de-bombardeos-a-las-farc-habla-de-la-calle/15376675>

⁵⁶ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/proceso-de-paz-comision-asesora-de-paz-se-reunira-con-gobierno-y-farc/15404078> and <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/los-politicos-en-la-comision-de-paz/15381445>

⁵⁷ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/esta-comision-no-reemplazara-los-negociadores-santos-articulo-549682>

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recent round of exploratory talks finished on March 8th, and that they hope to be able to start formal talks soon.⁵⁸

4. International

Canadian government supports education for victims

The Canadian government signed an agreement with the National Learning Service (SENA) to initiate rural agriculture professional training programs for victims of the conflict. The program will be designed for implementation in the post-conflict phase, and will focus on agriculture, mining, and the environment.⁵⁹

UNOHCHR recommends jail-time for FARC leaders

The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights released its Colombia report, making various recommendations for transitional justice and the post-conflict phase. These recommendations include judicial and non-judicial mechanisms to address rights violations, initiatives to recognize responsibility, and fulfillment of alternative sentences for those responsible, taking into account that impunity for crimes against humanity is not possible.⁶⁰

5. Other Voices

Ex-President Uribe calls for talks to be prolonged

In an open letter to Inspector General Alejandro Ordóñez, ex-President Uribe called for the GOC to prolong FARC dialogues to ensure the two parties don't rush to reach agreements that damage democracy. He also opined that the FARC should be contained in one area where the authorities can supervise them to verify fulfillment of their unilateral ceasefire.⁶¹ President Santos responded that prolongation of the talks is not possible, as the end of the conflict must be agreed soon to put an end to victimization.⁶² This exchange came after a meeting between Santos and Ordóñez last week, in which the Inspector General said that a meeting between Santos and Uribe is key for the legitimacy and success of final peace agreements.⁶³

⁵⁸ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/proceso-de-paz-eln-falta-un-punto-para-iniciar-negociaciones/15404077>

⁵⁹ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/sena-firma-convenio-canada-brindar-educacion-victimas-d-articulo-548819>

⁶⁰

<http://www.hchr.org.co/documentoseinformes/informes/altocomisionado/informes.php3?cod=18&cat=11>

⁶¹ www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/proceso-de-paz-las-propuestas-de-uribe-prologar-el-dialogo-y-concentrar-a-las-farc/15404075

⁶² www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/santos-le-dice-a-uribe-que-dialogos-de-paz-no-se-deben-prolongar/15406037

⁶³ www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/procurador-ordonez-facilitaria-cita-entre-juan-manuel-santos-y-alvaro-uribe/15395700



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Anti-peace talks march in Medellín include ex-military

A march held in Medellín on the weekend expressed protesters' disagreement with the peace talks, specifically with the perception that there could be impunity for ex-FARC members who demobilize as the result of a peace agreement. The march included retired members of the military and police, as well as civil society.⁶⁴

6. Emerging Challenges and Responses

Antioquia Governor calls on GOC to inform population of peace process

Governor of Antioquia Sergio Fajardo urged the GOC to inform the rural population about the peace process. He stated that more campaigns are needed to raise awareness about the goals of the peace talks, and progress made, so that false statements do not take hold in the population.⁶⁵ Meanwhile, Minister of the Interior Juan Fernando Cristo said enemies of the peace talks are spreading such false messages and generating uncertainty about the process in rural areas, and that it is difficult for many to imagine the country at peace.⁶⁶

General (r) Oscar Naranjo discusses de-mining efforts

GOC dialogue team member and Minister of Post-Conflict General (r) Oscar Naranjo discussed implementation of the recently agreed de-mining efforts with El Espectador. He affirmed that the de-mining agreement aims to generate immediate impact, so that people will feel the positive effects of the process. He added that a pilot de-mining model will be implemented in rural areas, to make adjustments as necessary before implementing countrywide.⁶⁷

Universities announce partnership to analyze peace

The Javeriana, Los Andes, Nacional, and the Externado universities will form a working group to analyze the peace process and make proposals for the GOC and FARC dialogue teams. The partnership aims to open spaces for civil society debate related to the peace process.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/militares-retirados-marchan-contra-el-proceso-de-paz-articulo-549402>

⁶⁵ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/proceso-de-paz-fajardo-pide-pedagogia-del-proceso-en-regiones-15388675>

⁶⁶ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/gobierno/entrevista-con-el-ministro-del-interior-juan-fernando-cristo/15389175> and <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/hay-muchos-colombia-aun-son-incapaces-de-imaginar-el-pa-articulo-549394>

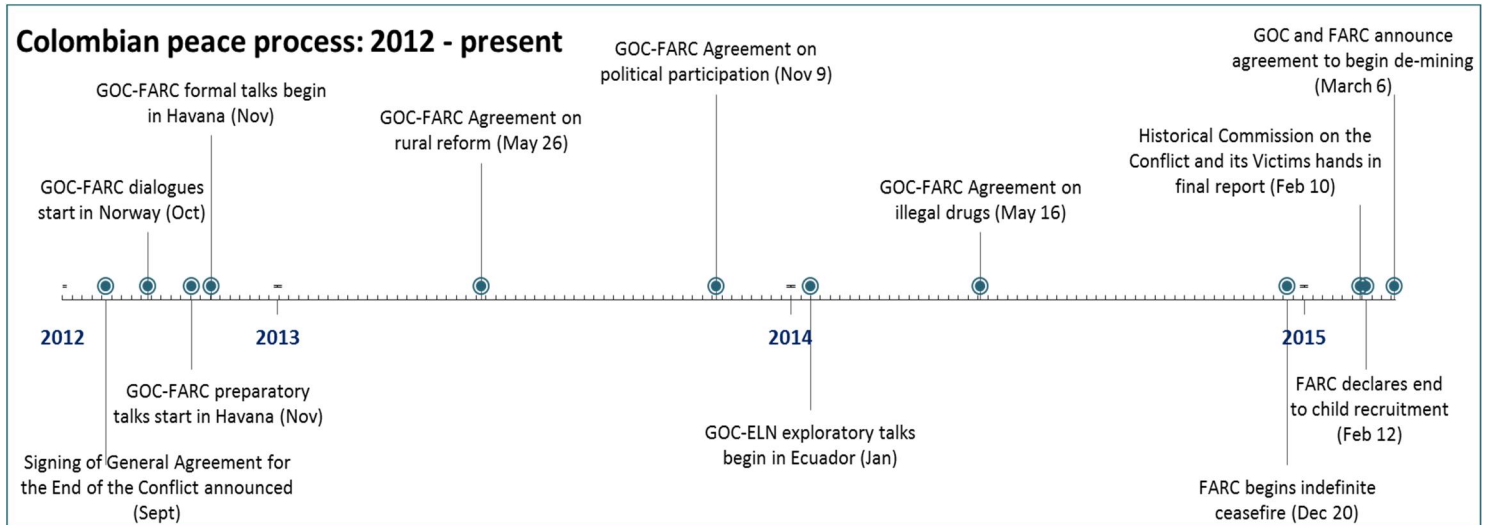
⁶⁷ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/acuerdo-de-desminado-si-bilateral-articulo-549574>

⁶⁸ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/universidades-anuncian-alianza-analizar-el-proceso-de-p-articulo-549343>

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7. Timeline



8. Further Reading

Analysts weigh in on suspension of bombings against FARC

Various analysts have contributed to the discussion on the suspension of bombing. Jorge Restrepo, Director of the Center for Conflict Analysis (CERAC), said this is a formal agreement reflecting (but not directly admitting) the bilateral ceasefire that has been in operation since December, when the FARC implemented their unilateral ceasefire on the condition that the armed forces not attack. He qualified this by saying that the agreement is not a truce, and is subject to possible modification.⁶⁹ Others highlight the fact that air force bombings have instilled the most fear in the FARC since the armed forces were modernized, resulting in great reductions in FARC manpower. These analysts state that suspension of bombings represents a significant gesture by the GOC, in reciprocity for the FARC's unilateral ceasefire.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/gobierno-detiene-bombardeos-contra-las-farc analisis/15374136>

⁷⁰ <http://www.verdadabierta.com/procesos-de-paz/farc/5659-los-bombardeos-cambiaron-la-guerra-en-colombia> and <http://lasillavacia.com/historia/santos-le-ofrece-las-farc-tres-calmantes-49733>



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Antonio Navarro discusses M-19 anniversary, FARC talks

In interview with El Tiempo, Senator and ex-member of the demobilized M-19 guerrilla group discussed the 25th anniversary of the demobilization, his perceptions of the FARC's goals and capacity, and the GOC's announcement that it will stop bombing FARC camps for one month.⁷¹

⁷¹ www.eltiempo.com/politica/justicia/antonio-navarro-wolff-habla-de-sus-anos-en-el-m-19-y-acuerdos-con-las-farc/15400179

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1. Background

On September 4, 2012, President Santos announced the signing of a General Agreement for the Termination of the Conflict between the Government of Colombia and the FARC, initiating the fourth official peace talks with this group. The agenda includes: 1) integrated rural reform; 2) guarantees for political opposition and civic participation; 3) the end of the conflict (laying down arms and reintegration into civilian life); 4) illegal drugs; and 5) victims' rights. Preparatory talks started in Oslo on October 17, 2012 and substantive dialogues in Havana, on November 19, 2012. Three agreements have been reached: one on the first agenda point, integrated rural reform, on May 26, 2013; the second on the next point, political participation, on November 6, 2013; and another on the fourth agenda point, illegal drugs, on May 16, 2014.

On June 10, 2014, the GOC announced that exploratory talks with the ELN were taking place to define an agenda for peace talks. These initial meetings have been held since January 2014, and the issues of victims and societal participation are the first two agenda points. The GOC and ELN will release information on the progress of the exploratory talks as they continue.

2. GOC – FARC Key Developments from March 18th – March 25th

FARC criticizes composition of Peace Advisory Committee

After the first meeting of the recently announced Peace Advisory Committee, the FARC stated that its composition is not diverse enough, and reflects the social and political exclusion that has characterized Colombian history. The new Committee, which started work last week, includes: ex-President Andrés Pastrana, who has been a harsh critic of the peace talks; ex-presidential candidate Antanas Mockus; ex-M-19 guerrilla member Vera Grabe; members of the Catholic Church; business representatives; and an indigenous leader. The objective of the Committee is to support and advise the GOC dialogue team.⁷² In addition, Pastrana stated that ex-President Uribe – one of the talks' most ardent critics – should be on the Committee.⁷³

Unilateral ceasefire is at risk: FARC

The FARC warned that their unilateral ceasefire is at risk due to attacks on the guerrilla group by the military. They recognized that implementation of the ceasefire has become “diluted” as they

⁷² <http://www.elspectador.com/noticias/paz/comision-asesora-paz-excluyente-y-poco-diversa-farc-articulo-550094>

⁷³ <http://www.elspectador.com/noticias/politica/pastrana-asegura-uribe-deberia-estar-comision-asesora-p-articulo-549993>

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have been forced to retaliate to the armed forces. They also took responsibility for the death of a soldier last week, which they claimed was necessitated by the military attacks.⁷⁴

Demining to occur near urban areas first: FARC

The FARC stated on March 24, that the first areas to be demined will be close to towns and villages. The pilot program will start in about six weeks, according to Oscar Naranjo. Finally, the FARC clarified that this is what they call “humanitarian” demining – removing mines that directly affect the civilian population. “Military” demining is what the FARC will carry out later by removing mines the group claims to use for defensive purposes.⁷⁵

FARC violated ceasefire: Military

The Army announced this week that on March 23, the 1st Front of the FARC attacked the military base located in Calamar, Guaviare, resulting in the death of one soldier and three more wounded. The Army stated that the attack was a direct violation of the FARC’s self-declared ceasefire.⁷⁶

3. International

Ex-combatants could study in Spain

Manuel López, an academic delegate and leader from Spain, stated in an interview that in a post-conflict setting, ex-combatants could receive the opportunity to study in Spain. He did not mention the FARC directly, though. López also said that he hoped universities in Spain could be an important ally to build peace in Colombia.

4. Other Voices

Roy Barreras calls for mapping of disappeared

Senate Peace Commission President Roy Barreras called on the GOC and FARC dialogue teams to compile a map of the disappeared people in Colombia. He stated that as mapping will be conducted to support de-mining efforts, it should also be used as a tool to support efforts to find out the truth about the disappeared and thereby support peace.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/farc-se-responsabilizan-por-muerte-de-un-soldado/15422899> and <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/farc-advierten-tregua-unilateral-esta-riesgo-ataques-gu-articulo-550328>

⁷⁵ <http://colombiareports.co/landmines-to-be-removed-near-urban-centers-1st-and-remote-areas-later-farc/>

⁷⁶ <http://www.caracol.com.co/noticias/actualidad/en-medio-de-la-tregua-ejercito-denuncia-ataque-de-las-farc/20150323/nota/2686841.aspx>

⁷⁷ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/mapa-de-desaparecidos-tarea-pendiente-de-mesa-de-paz-de-articulo-550321>

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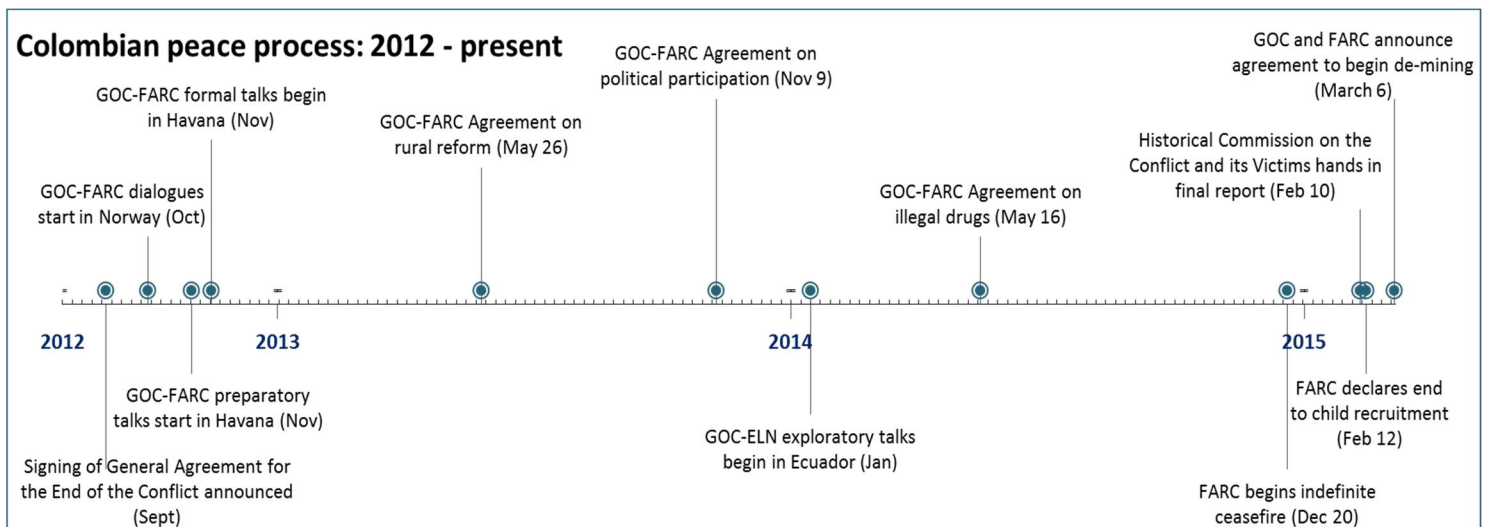
5. Emerging Challenges and Responses

Points of agreement and divergence in Historic Commission report

Reconciliación Colombia compiled a list of points on which the commissioners involved in the Historic Commission on the Conflict and its Victims agreed and differed. Points of concurrence included: 1) the multi-causal origins of the conflict; 2) the conflict is related to deep problems of democracy; 3) Colombia has a history of attacking popular expressions of alternative politics; 4) the origins of the conflict go back to the 1920s when attempts at social reform were violently repressed; 5) all sectors of society have lost something in the conflict.

The commissioners disagreed on points including: 1) the thesis that the Colombian capitalist model is intrinsically violent; 2) the idea that state terrorism exists in the country; 3) the degree to which the conflict is linked to drugs trafficking; 4) whether or not social exclusion has a role in the violence; 5) the role of the United States in the conflict.⁷⁸

6. Timeline



7. Further Reading

Fenalper evaluates regional peacebuilding initiatives

The National Federation of Spokespeople (Fenalper) is holding a competition to select the five best peacebuilding and reconciliation initiatives in the country. The project videos that have been

⁷⁸ <http://www.reconciliacioncolombia.com/historias/detalle/761/5-acuerdos-y-5-desacuerdos-de-las-visiones-historicas>



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submitted include information about a range of efforts including online tools for displaced people, materials to promote coexistence values, and other projects to address local-level needs.⁷⁹

The Why and Risks of a Peace Agreement Referendum

Analyst and professor from the University of the Andes, Carlo Nasi, lays out the reasons why the GOC and FARC would look for approval from the Colombian public regarding a peace agreement signed in Havana. He outlines the risks of doing so as well, highlighting the fact that everything would be at stake and that public opinion manipulation could occur as well.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ <http://www.reconciliacioncolombia.com/historias/detalle/764/en-video-colombianos-contaron-cuales-son-sus-iniciativas-de-paz>

⁸⁰ <http://www.razonpublica.com/index.php/conflicto-drogas-y-paz-temas-30/8343-refrendaci%C3%B3n-del-acuerdo-de-paz-las-razones,-las-ventajas-y-los-riesgos.html>