

 PEACE MAIL

January 10-16 2017

WEEKLY UPDATE: Implementing the Peace Accords

The final peace accord contains a three-pronged approach to ensuring fulfillment of commitments included in the text: the *Commission for Monitoring, Promotion, and Verification of the Implementation of the Peace Accord* (CSIVI), the *National Reincorporation Council* (CNR) and the GOC-FARC-UN tripartite *Monitoring and Verification Mechanism* (MM&V). This callout box includes a weekly update on releases and work related to these supports for implementing the peace accords in Colombia.

On Tuesday, January 10th, a clash reportedly occurred between the *Teófilo Foreo* column of the FARC-EP and dissident members from the 14th Front of the same guerrilla in the hamlets of *La Novia Celestial* and *Tailandia*, Caquetá. The General Command of the Armed Forces released a statement on January 11th, asserting that it was a clear break in the ceasefire agreement for the FARC-EP members to use arms, even if it was against their own dissident members. Two individuals are suspected to have died in the clash, though that has not yet been confirmed by the MM&V.¹ As of January 12th, the two bodies had not been found.² The event prompted local mayor Humberto Sánchez Cedeño, among others, to call for a hastening of the process of guerrilla concentration to avoid future similar incidents.³ In response to the reported encounter, the MM&V regional site in the department's capital city of Florencia released a statement on January 11th noting that they were working in conjunction with the Armed Forces to conduct their investigation and to provide adequate security in the San Vicente del Caguán municipality in which it occurred.⁴

United Nations announces delays in early deadlines for laying down of arms by the FARC-EP

United Nations Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Mission in Colombia, Jean Arnault, announced on January 11th that the first two deadlines in the process for laying down arms will not be met: the January 1st date for FARC-EP concentration in transitional zones, and the January 30th deadline for the destruction of all unstable munitions. The UN does, however, hope for the process to begin in the coming weeks. Arnault cites delays related to the plebiscite loss on October 2nd and the geographic remoteness of the transitional zones as major contributing factors for the setbacks.⁵ The GOC and UN maintain that they will do everything possible to still complete the entire disarming process by the originally planned June date.⁶ In response to these delays, General Javier Flórez, commander of the Transition Strategic Command unit, said that when the FARC-EP are finally able to hand over their weapons, they will be permitted to stay within the transitional zones until they complete their reincorporation process as originally planned – i.e., the camps will remain operational longer than scheduled.⁷

Colombian Congress resumes debates on peace accords

Beginning Monday, January 16th, Colombia's Congress reconvenes for the year and resumes its work through the Fast Track mechanism on critical next steps for the implementation of the peace accords. The first session will be dedicated to discussing the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP), which is the organizing mechanism for critical justice mechanisms, such as the Peace Tribunal – the organism which will try those guerrillas charged with non-amnesty eligible crimes (e.g., crimes against humanity and genocide). Congress will also need to rapidly determine the guidelines for participation for the six guerrilla representatives – three in Senate, and three in Congress – who, as outlined in the final set of peace accords, will be permitted

to participate in debates related to the implementation of the peace accords, but who will not be entitled to a vote.⁸

ELN and GOC representatives meet for inaugural conversation in Quito, Ecuador

After over nine months of delay from the original March 30, 2016 launch date for the public phase of peace talks between the GOC and the ELN guerrilla group, representatives from both sides finally convened for their first encounter in Quito, Ecuador on Friday, January 13th. While the meeting did not mark the beginning of the public phase of the peace talks as planned, GOC chief negotiator Juan Camilo Restrepo called the confidential talks “fruitful”, with ELN representatives further stating that the conversations ended on a positive note. There is still uncertainty around when the public phase of the talks will begin, though the GOC maintains the non-negotiable requirement that the guerrilla group release 61-year-old Odín Sánchez, an ex-congress member who remains a hostage in their ranks, before it will be willing to publicly dialogue.⁹

