

 PEACE MAIL

November 29-December 5, 2016

Colombian Congress Passes New Peace Accords

This past Tuesday, November 29th and Wednesday, November 30th, the Senate and House of Representatives held special sessions in order to vote YES or NO on the final revised accords. By 9:00 p.m. on Wednesday, the accords had passed both Chambers of Congress, with a total vote of 205 YES and 0 NO. The primary opposition party, the *Centro Democrático*, along with a small contingent of conservative representatives, abstained from voting, although they voiced their opposition during both sessions. Among other actions, it is expected that the FARC will have handed over the entirety of their arms and cease to exist as an armed guerrilla group within 150 days of December 1st, thus beginning their conversion into a political party.¹

Commission for Monitoring, Promotion, and Verification of the Peace Accord Implementation (CSIVI) launches

Thursday, December 1st, 2016 marked the official D-Day – or beginning of the implementation clock – for the final peace accords passed through the Colombian Congress on Tuesday and Wednesday of last week. The following day, the GOC and the FARC officially launched the Commission for Monitoring, Promotion, and Verification of the Implementation of the Peace Accord (CSIVI). The Accords included in their design the work of the CSIVI, which will track the implementation of the peace accords on a constant basis for up to ten years, and whose members comprise three GOC and three FARC members who led the negotiations process in Havana. The CSIVI is one element of a three-pronged approach to ensuring fulfillment of the commitments outlined in the peace accords: the remaining two include the National Reincorporation Council (CNR) and the GOC-FARC-UN tripartite Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (MM&V). It is the role of the CSIVI to address all disputes between actors implicated in the accords that do not fall within the mandate of the MM&V.²

Monitoring & Verification Mechanism (MM&V) hand over first findings on break in ceasefire earlier this month

On Wednesday, November 30th, the tripartite MM&V comprising members from the United Nations, the FARC, and the GOC, determined that the break in the ceasefire that occurred this past November 13th resulted from errors on both sides. The confrontation between members of the 37th Front of the FARC and GOC armed forces in the Santa Rosa municipality in the south of the department of Bolívar had resulted in two guerrilla deaths and one capture. On the part of the guerrilla, the MM&V found that the demobilized ex-combatant had not notified the appropriate authorities of his movements on this day. For their part, the armed forces of Colombia did not verify that the individuals that they opened fire on were in fact the ELN members that they had suspected.³

ELN talks postponed until January 10, 2017

The GOC announced that, after consultation with ELN representatives, the public phase of the peace talks is rescheduled for January 10th next year. This postponement comes after more than a month of delay following the original proposed date of October 27th, a delay largely linked to the ELN's failure to release its final high profile hostage Odín Sánchez from Chocó. On December 1st, the ELN peace delegation member Pablo Beltrán also released a five minute video articulating his concerns with the slow-to-start peace process: the seemingly inflexible demands of the GOC, increased persecution of social leaders, especially on the left, intensified counterinsurgency operations against guerrillas, and the liberation of incarcerated ELN prisoners.⁴