

 PEACE MAIL

October 25-31, 2016

Conversations with opposition leaders on the GOC-FARC peace accord advance

Recent communications from both GOC and FARC representatives as well as opposition leaders assert that conversations in Havana for revising the original peace accord are advancing productively. These conversations are the result of the overturn of the accords in the October 2nd plebiscite. The 3rd Joint Communiqué released by the GOC and the FARC on October 28th reiterates both parties' faith in the content of the accords, notes that they have reviewed all of the proposals for revisions – already incorporating some content into the new versions – and extends ongoing conversations with opposition leaders until Thursday November 3rd.² On Saturday, October 29th, negotiators met for seven hours to discuss two points of the accords: rural reform and political participation of ex-guerrillas. Representatives of both sides described the conversations as constructive.³ Following, a marathon eight hour meeting on Monday the 31st addressed the point on transitional justice, which has received the highest volume of critiques and recommendations from the opposition. Though no concrete solutions emerged, comments from opposition leader, Senator Álvaro Uribe, and others involved in the conversation, suggest that the tone of the conversations has improved over the last week.⁴ For his part, President Juan Manuel Santos is hopeful that a new accord will emerge by the end of November.⁵

GOC-ELN talks continue to experience difficulties

After chief GOC negotiator with the ELN Juan Camilo Restrepo announced that the ICRC and the Catholic Church had begun an operation to free remaining hostage Odín Sánchez – the lynchpin for launching the joint peace talks in Quito, Ecuador – the ICRC confirmed Monday that no such operation was underway.⁶ The GOC-ELN peace talks were scheduled to begin Thursday October 27th, but have been pushed back because of the GOC requirement that Sánchez be released before the talks commence. The talks with the 1,500 person guerrilla group had originally stalled after a March 30th announcement that they would begin, and had in recent weeks received new life in the naming of new negotiating teams and setting the initiation date for the end of October. Immediate next steps are uncertain, though most likely remain contingent on the release of Sánchez.

<http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/no-habra-otro-plebiscito-paz-santos-anuncia-implementac-articulo-663573>

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