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PEACE MAIL

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Colombia's Constitutional Court Approves Plebiscite

On Monday, July 18th, Colombia's Constitutional Court approved the plebiscite for the final peace agreement between the GOC and the FARC. This mechanism uses a popular vote to either legitimize or reject a single issue, and will potentially take place around October this year. Citizens will have the opportunity to vote either "yes" or "no" for the final peace agreement. Voters will not have the typical electoral option of leaving their ballot blank and the process will require 4.5 million votes (13% of the Colombian voting population) to be valid. In the case of a positive result, the agreement will then pass to Congress to determine the means of implementation through potential constitutional reforms, laws and decrees.¹

Also up for deliberation yesterday: whether or not public officials could lead campaigns for or against the peace accords leading up to the plebiscite. Previously, the Attorney General's Office had promised sanctions for such activities. The Constitutional Court overturned those threats, though it warned that the campaigns related to the plebiscite may not be used to promote particular parties or candidates, nor may they use state resources.³ Analysts predict animated opposition from the *Centro Democrático* party.⁴