

## Colombia formalizes peace dialogues with the ELN guerrilla group

On March 30, at an event in Caracas, Venezuela, the GOC and the National Liberation Army (ELN) announced the start of a public phase of the peace process. This follows two years of exploratory talks with the guerrilla group in Ecuador<sup>1</sup>. The six point agenda includes: 1) participation of civil society, 2) democracy for peace, 3) transformations for peace, 4) victims, 5) ending the conflict and 6) implementation. Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador and Venezuela will host the talks, and together with Norway, will serve as guarantor countries<sup>2</sup>. Following the announcement, the parties met to discuss the methodology, timing and negotiating teams<sup>3</sup>. President Santos emphasized that although this process with the ELN will be separate from the process with the FARC, they are part of one unified effort to end the Colombian armed conflict. Agreements already reached with the FARC regarding transitional justice, a final ceasefire and the UN verification mission will not be renegotiated with the ELN<sup>4</sup>. President Santos stated that official negotiations will only begin after the ELN releases all hostages. According to the Ministry of Defense, the group still has 7 hostages. On April 3, the ELN released a 47-year-old woman in the department of Norte de Santander<sup>5</sup>.

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