

**Peace Mail**  
**February 2-8, 2016**

**Final public forum on peace process with the FARC**

On February 8-10, at the request of the GOC and FARC negotiation teams in Havana, a final public forum on the peace process is being organized to facilitate participation of civil society and the general public in the search for solutions and concrete proposals on the remaining two points on the agenda: ending the conflict (point 3) and referendum, implementation, and verification (point 6).<sup>1</sup> Over 500 participants have been invited from civil society and the private sector, including representatives of victims of the conflict, indigenous groups, afro-Colombians, women, LGBTI, ex-military and ex-combatants, farmers, labor unions, youth and others. Efforts will be made to ensure that at least 50% of participants are women and that regions most affected by the conflict are represented.<sup>2</sup> The event will be organized by the United Nations and the National University's Center for Reflection and Monitoring of the Peace Dialogues, who were also responsible for convening the previous forums on the first four points of the agenda: comprehensive rural development, political participation, illegal drugs and victims.

**"Time is running out" for peace talks with the ELN**

As the timeline for the peace process with the FARC nears its end, concern is growing that the ELN will be left out of the process. The lead negotiator for the GOC in the exploratory talks has stated that "time is running out" and President Santos has said that the "peace train is leaving."<sup>2</sup> The preliminary talks finally resulted in an agreement on a six-point agenda in November, but a roadblock was posed by ELN insistence on holding talks in Venezuela.<sup>3</sup> The ELN has insisted it has been ready and willing since November to move forward, which the GOC denies, stating that the ELN has not responded to any options offered to continue the talks and that more meetings are needed before public negotiations can begin.<sup>4</sup> The GOC has been unable to reinstate contact with the ELN for over 90 days.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile, the ELN has continued to carry out attacks and President Santos ordered an intensification of operations against the group, demanding the release of hostages as a precondition for restarting peace talks and stating that "the ELN is mistaken if they think that attacks pave the way for peace."<sup>6</sup> Civil society actors called on the ELN and GOC to immediately resolve their differences and move forward with formal negotiations.<sup>7</sup>