

DDR AND CHILD SOLDIER ISSUES

This monthly review, produced by IOM, provides a summary of news related to the implementation of the peace accord in Colombia, including disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) processes. Also included are statics on people in the process of reintegration and former child soldiers, the former of which are sourced from the Agency for Reincorporation and Normalization (ARN), and the latter from the Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF).



FIGURES & TRENDS

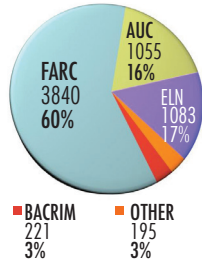
Disengaged Children & Adolescents

*These data are estimates based on the information available

TOTAL 6,394

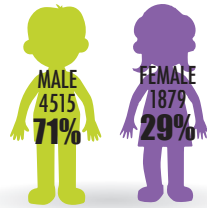
1. Armed Group

SINCE 1999



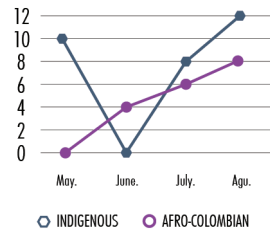
2. Gender

SINCE 1999



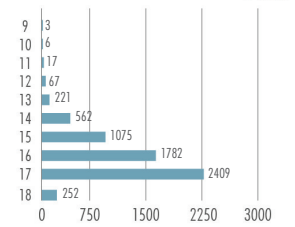
3. Ethnicity

LAST 4 MONTHS

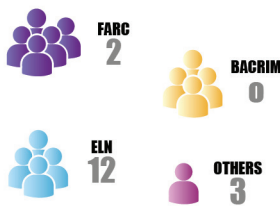


4. Age

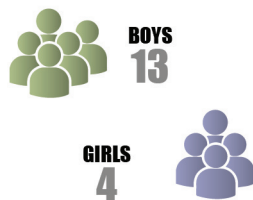
SINCE 1999



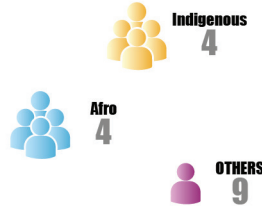
THIS MONTH: SEPTEMBER 30, 2017



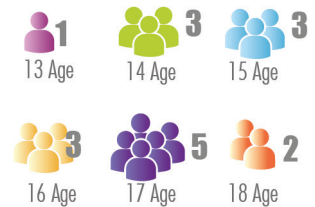
THIS MONTH: SEPTEMBER 30, 2017



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5: Victims of Forced Recruitment

Total 8,435** / Month to month 53**

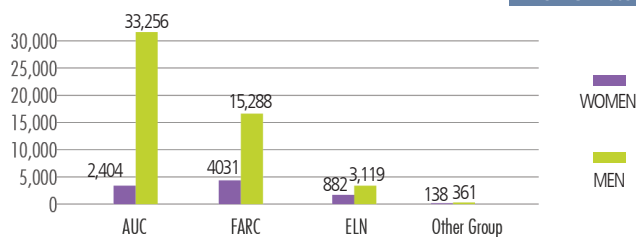
** Number of cases of child recruitment reported to the Victims Unit.

Demobilized Adults

TOTAL 59,562

5. Armed Group & Gender

SINCE 2003



6. Ethnicity

SINCE 2003

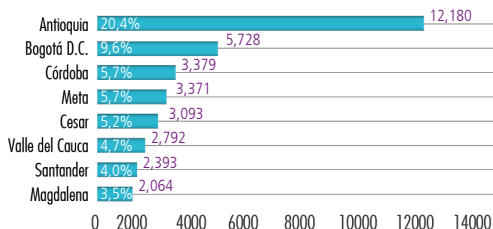


7. ACR Participants

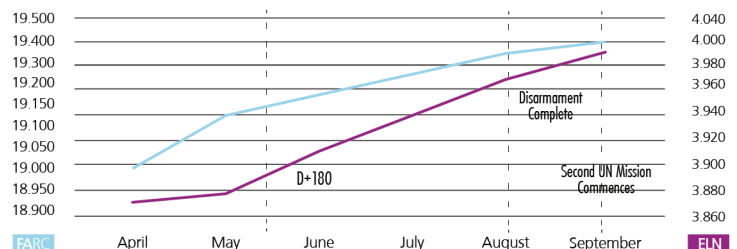


8. Area of Relocation

TOP 8 DEPARTMENTS



9. Accumulated Demobilization



Data up to septemberth 30, 2017

Figure 1: Total number of disengaged minors grouped by gender. Boys have historically been more frequently recruited than girls.

Figure 2: Numbers of minors who disengaged from each IAG. Most disengaged children were recruited by the FARC.

Figure 3: Total number of disengaged minors by ethnicity. Indigenous

groups are disproportionately affected by recruitment.

Figure 4: Numbers of disengaged minors in each age group. The average age of recruitment is between 15 and 18 years old. Sources for figures 1-4: ICBF Database, Unified Beneficiary Registry (RUJ)

Figure 5: Total number of male and female adults who demobilized from each IAG.

Figure 6: The eight departments to which the highest numbers of ex-combatants Figure 7: Demobilized Adults

Figure 8: Total number of demobilized adults by ethnicity. Sources for figures 5-7: ICBF Database and ACR Reintegration Information System (SIR)

Figure 9: Accumulated Demobilization

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Weapons extraction completed

The United Nations announced on September 15th that weapons cache extraction in Colombia was complete. In all, they were able to remove and/or destroy 750 of the 998 caches with information provided by the FARC, and will be reporting on why they were unable to attend to the remaining 248. The operations occurred through collaboration between members of the FARC and international observers, with security and logistical support provided by the Armed Forces.¹

Second U.N. Verification Mission began

The second U.N. verification mission began on Tuesday, September 26th. This second phase will be responsible for monitoring the security guarantees for the former guerrillas as well as their reincorporation processes (points 3.2 and 3.4 of the final accord), and will comprise 120 largely civilian international observers.² The second mission will maintain the same presence in the territories that the first one had, though some of the current transitional zones will be moved to more centralized, easy to Access sites.³

Pope visits Colombia, urges forgiveness and reconciliation

The Pope visited Colombia September 6-11 and travelled to three cities supporting the peace process, urging his followers, and Colombians in general, to forgive and reconcile. Among the central themes in his mass of over 1.5 million attendees in the Simon Bolivar park in Bogota, and during his national prayers for reconciliation and for victims of the armed conflict in Villavicencio and Medellin, were calls for recognizing the truth of the acts committed over the last half century. He urged Colombians not to be afraid to ask for and offer forgiveness, to heal, and the renounce cycles of vengeance and violence.⁴

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PEACE ACCORD

FARC-EP

Magistrates selected for the JEP

On Tuesday, September 26th, the Selection Committee for the JEP announced the 51 magistrates who would comprise the transitional justice mechanism. Among the list of the selected individuals are Ex-Minister of Justice, Yesid Reyes, and Ex-Magistrate of the Constitutional Court and Ex-Director of the Research Unit of the Attorney General's Office, Alejandro Ramelli. These individuals, along with their 49 colleagues, will be responsible for judging the most significant atrocities of the armed conflict: crimes against humanity and war crimes, as stipulated by the final legal framework of the JEP. Mirtha Patricia Linares Prieto will be the first president of the tribunal.⁵

Illicit crop removal and substitution advances

On Tuesday, September 12th, Ministry of Defense, Luis Carlos Villegas, announced that the Armed Forces of Colombia have already forcibly eradicated 62% of the 50,000 hectares of coca crops scheduled for destruction this year. The total goal between forced eradication and crop substitution for the year totals 100,000 hectares. Roughly 8,000 uniformed soldiers are working on the forced eradication process.⁶

Pardoned FARC member assassinated

Another FARC member was assassinated in Tumaco after being pardoned. Luis Herminsul Guadil Hinestroza had gained his freedom just two days before his murder. The FARC leadership has pointed the finger at paramilitary expansion in the region, and connects the incident with other social leader assassinations, which have totaled 101 between January and August of this calendar year.⁷ Earlier in the month, a known commander of the FARC, Édgar Mesías Salgado Aragón (alias, Rodrigo Cadete), escaped his bodyguards in the department of Caquetá and fled. "Rodrigo Cadete" was a close associate of now deceased "Mono Jojoy" and was the commander of the 27th Front of the guerrilla group.⁸

¹ <https://colombia.unmissions.org/la-misi3n-de-la-onu-finaliza-actividades-de-extracci3n-de-caletas-y-dejaci3n-de-armas-de-las-farc-ep>

² <http://nacionesunidas.org.co/blog/2017/09/26/inicia-mandatode-la-mision-deverificacion-dela-onu-en-colombia/>

³ <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/paz-y-derechos-humanos/asi-sera-la-segunda-mision-de-la-onu-en-colombia-GH7229668>

⁴ <http://multimedia.opusdei.org/pdf/es/papa-francisco-colombia.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/magistrados-de-la-justicia-especial-para-la-paz-134714>

⁶ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/balance-de-sustitucion-de-cultivos-ilicitos-en-colombia-con-acuerdo-de-paz-129978>

⁷ <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/paz-y-derechos-humanos/excombatiente-de-farc-asesinado-en-tumaco-BX7303892>

⁸ <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/paz-y-derechos-humanos/huyo-excomandante-de-las-farc-AA7277772>

ELN PEACE PROCESS

GoC-ELN Temporary bilateral ceasefire announced

Representatives from the Government of Colombia and the National Liberation Army (ELN) announced early on September 4th that the two parties had reached a temporary bilateral ceasefire agreement for the first time in the group's 52-year history. The bilateral ceasefire marked the conclusion to the third round of talks between the two groups in Quito, Ecuador. It will take effect on October 1st and last for 102 days until January 12, 2018. The GoC has required of the ELN that they 1) end kidnapping practices, 2) cease attacks on infrastructure, 3) discontinue the practice of laying antipersonnel mines, and 4) no longer recruit minors into their ranks. For its part, the GoC has committed to 1) suspend all military actions against the group, 2) investigate and address the ongoing assassinations of social leaders, 3) more effectively address the other illegal armed groups in the country, and 4) improve the conditions and develop a humanitarian plan for the guerrilla prisoners currently in Colombian jails.⁹ Nonetheless, clashes continued in the department of Cauca between the Colombian Armed Forces and the guerrilla group, negatively impacting indigenous communities in the territory, and doing little to raise expectations leading into the ceasefire.¹⁰

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

Colombia and Panama join forces to combat narco trafficking

Colombian Chancellor, María Ángela Holguín, and Vice President and Minister of International Relations for Panama, Isabel de Saint Malo de Alvarado met mid-September in order to form a strategic shared plan for combatting narco trafficking in the region. The leaders articulated their hopes that their efforts would complement those of the consumer countries for illegal drugs. At the same time, they strengthened their commitments to improving commerce and electric planning between the neighbor nations.¹¹

Israel and Colombia commit to greater cooperation the the postconflict era

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos met in order to develop collaborative initiatives in areas such as science and tourism as Colombia transitions to a postconflict era. Notably, Netanyahu's visit was the first time an Israeli prime minister visited Latin America. The relationship between the two countries has been largely military in nature to date, and the two leaders expressed optimism for new ways in which they might work together moving forward.¹²

INSTITUTIONAL PROGRESS

First Committee of the House of Representatives approves 16 Peace Constituencies

On September 25th the First Session of the House of Representatives approved the proposed 16 Special Peace Constituencies for the two legislative periods 2018-2022 and 2022-2026. The Special Legislative Procedures now pass to the final plenary debate for review. The Government has applied an "objective formula" for determining the 167 municipalities in which a second representative will serve to ensure the areas of the country most affected by the conflict have an additional representative throughout the next two electoral cycles. The additional candidates can only be nominated by victims organizations or others forms of social organizations (not political parties), and are intended to balance out historical power imbalances that contributed to conflict dynamics.¹³

Workshops in the territories promote citizen oversight in regions hard hit by the armed conflict

The Ministry of the Interior began a series of workshops on citizen oversight in the territories in the department of Meta. The "Training Workshops for Trainers on Social Control" represent a collaborative effort between the Ministry of the Interior, the Administrative Department of Public Functions (DAFP), the National Ombudsman's Office, the Agency for Territorial Renewal (ART), and the National Comptroller. The objective of these workshops is to create an informed body of citizen oversight committees to monitor and exert social control over certain programs included within the peace accord in the regions of the country most affected by the armed conflict.¹⁴

⁹ <http://www.univision.com/noticias/america-latina/el-ejercito-de-liberacion-nacional-afirma-que-ha-llegado-a-un-acuerdo-de-cese-el-fuego-con-el-gobierno>

¹⁰ <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/paz-y-derechos-humanos/combates-entre-el-ejercito-y-eln-en-norte-del-cauca-EX7246633>

¹¹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/gobierno/colombia-y-panama-fortalecen-lazos-en-lucha-contr-la-narco-trafico-131106>

¹² <https://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2017/09/13/world/americas/ap-It-colombia-netanyahu.html>

¹³ <http://www.mininterior.gov.co/sala-de-prensa/noticias/circunscripciones-de-paz-pasa-plenaria-de-camara>

¹⁴ <http://www.mininterior.gov.co/sala-de-prensa/noticias/mininterior-capacito-veedores-en-territorios-de-postconflicto>

DIVERSITY ISSUES

Challenges facing implementation of ethnic component of the Final Accord

On September 13th, representatives from ethnic groups in Colombia spoke out against the fact that the GoC had still not made concrete strides in planning for the implementation of the ethnic component to Final Accord. Various leaders from national and territorial indigenous organizations, ministries, the National Planning Department, and international cooperation, among others, met to discuss the lackluster advances in the budgeting and legislative processes meant to scaffold the postconflict programs for Afro-Colombian and indigenous populations. The GoC has until October 6th to finalize the financing of this component of the accords, though the tense meeting led participants and observers to believe that it is unlikely the deadline will be met.¹⁴

Gender equity in peacebuilding prioritized in the territories

The “Women and Peace” project develops strategic actions for preventing violence against women and strengthening their role in territorial peacebuilding. The Pasto installation of this initiative in September coordinated a talent competition for youth, titled “Gender Equity is my Best Grade.” In all, the participative pedagogical strategy involves representatives from local governments, international cooperation, and the education sector.¹⁵

FURTHER READING

Five areas in the country to watch during the ELN ceasefire

The ELN guerrilla group has historically had a strong presence in five departments in particular in Colombia: Norte de Santander, Nariño, Cauca, Antioquia, and Chocó. This month, Pacifista, offered an analysis of topics of interest related to these regions during the three months of the GoC-ELN bilateral ceasefire, which has a start date of October 1st. Depending on the region, ELN clashes have tended to be with the Colombian Army, narco-trafficking organizations, or paramilitary organizations. Coca production will also be a core factor in shaping the dynamics of the ceasefire and the hoped for end of conflict with the guerrilla group. The report provides analysis on each region, along with an overall depiction of the ELN presence at the national level.¹⁶

Conclusions of seven year study of paramilitary demobilization highlight ongoing challenges

The *Foundation for Peace and Reconciliation* released the results of its seven-year investigation into the developments following the demobilization of the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) paramilitary group. They found that many of the old paramilitary structures were coopted for criminal gangs after the demobilization, and that the overall patterns of operations have changed over time from command-and-control vertical structures to network-based operations. Narcotrafficking, illegal mining, and smuggling, as well as more urban-centered common crime networks persist. Efforts to fully dismantle the second generation groups have been undermined by significant political and private sector relations. The report ends with eight strategies for finally dismantling these successor groups, including distinct justice mechanisms, alternative industry development in areas where illegal industries are strongest, and a concerted strategy in the region to combat transnational criminal networks.¹⁷

¹⁴ <http://pacifista.co/indigenas-y-afros-estan-a-punto-de-quedarse-por-fuera-de-la-paz/>

¹⁵ <http://nacionesunidas.org.co/blog/2017/09/26/la-igualdad-de-genero-es-mi-mejor-nota/>

¹⁶ <http://pacifista.co/cinco-regiones-del-pais-donde-el-cese-al-fuego-con-el-eln-puede-ser-fragil/>

¹⁷ <http://www.pares.com.co/paz-y-posconflicto/las-bandas-criminales-y-el-postconflicto/>