

PEACE MAIL

November 7-13

WEEKLY UPDATE: Implementing the Peace Accords

This callout box includes a weekly update on releases and work specifically related implementing the Final Peace Accord between the Government and the FARC in Colombia.

On November 7th, the **House of Representatives approved the Political Reform initiative**, intended to improve the exercise of politics in Colombia. It addresses, among other things, campaign financing, independent oversight committees. The initiative will pass on to the First and Plenary Committees of the Congress.¹

On November 9th, the **Plenary session of the House of Representatives approved the legal project that creates 16 special circumscriptions for peace** in the 2018-2022 and 2022-2026 periods. The purpose of these special seats is to augment the political participation of regions historically marginalized in Colombian politics, and who have suffered disproportionately from both the Colombian conflict and from extreme poverty. The seats will be limited to victims and social organizations that operate in the territories; formal political parties may not recommend candidates in these cases.²

The **11 members of the Truth Commission have been selected**, and the Commission will be chaired by the Jesuit priest, Francisco de Roux. The Truth Commission is part of the Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparations, and Non-Repitition delineated in the Final Accord. The mandate of the commission is to clarify the crimes that were committed within the framework of the armed conflict by all actor groups.³

FARC removed from EU Terrorist List

On Monday, November 13th, the Foreign Ministers of the European Union announced that the FARC have been removed from their list of terrorist organizations. They had previously been suspended from the list in September of last year. Now, members of the political organization that has replaced the armed insurgent one will no longer be at risk of sanctions such as having their assets frozen or other restrictive measures.⁴

Official Verification Mission report for first month of ELN bilateral ceasefire released

The Episcopal Conference of Colombia and the Verification Mission of the U.N. released a joint communiqué about the first month of their work monitoring the bilateral GoC-ELN ceasefire. The 33 regional teams are operational. The Mission reports that, although there has been a degree of relief in certain areas of the country, the situations in Chocó and Tumaco – and in particular the specific October incidents of the rural farmer killings and indigenous leader assassination reported in previous Peace Mails – are particularly worrying. They also name Catatumbo, Norte del Cauca, and Buenaventura, Valle del Cauca as other zones that should be monitored closely.⁵