

DDR AND CHILD SOLDIER ISSUES

A MONTHLY REVIEW
JANUARY 2017

USAID supports the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Colombia through the **Recruitment Prevention and Reintegration (RPR) Program**. The RPR Program provides institutional strengthening for the Government of Colombia (GOC) to support legal, social and economic reintegration services to demobilized adults and disengaged children, as well as to prevent new recruitment.

The GOC supports demobilized adults through its **Colombian Reintegration Agency (ACR)**. The DDR initiatives of the ACR aim to fulfill the following objectives: 1) Create conditions for demobilized ex-combatants to become independent citizens, 2) Strengthen socio-economic conditions in receptor communities, and 3) Promote reconciliation.

Children and adolescents who disengage from illegal armed groups, recognized as victims, receive special attention through programs and policies led by the **Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF)** through its Specialized Assistance Program, which aims to reestablish and guarantee rights with special emphasis on protection, education and health.

This monthly review, produced by IOM, provides a summary of news related to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) in Colombia, along with statistics on ex-combatant adults and disengaged children.

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KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Final march of FARC guerrillas to transitional zones commences

According to the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace, 36 land- and river-based operations were planned to mobilize and move to transitional zones 4,394 members of the FARC-EP at the end of the month. Between January 28th and 29th, 1,037 guerrillas were transferred to transitional zones, with some 600 scheduled to move on Monday the 30th, and 2,541 more the next day¹. In all, the guerrillas will gather in 26 different zones and points throughout the country, located in 25 municipalities across 14 departments, where they will begin the process of laying down their arms².

United Nations announces delays in early deadlines for FARC-EP laying down of arms

United Nations Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Mission in Colombia, Jean Arnault, announced on January 11th that the first two deadlines in the process for laying down arms will not be met: the January 1st date for FARC-EP concentration in transitional zones, and the January 30th deadline for the destruction of all unstable munitions. The UN does, however, hope for the process to begin in the coming weeks. Arnault cites delays related to the plebiscite loss on October 2nd and the geographic remoteness of the transitional zones as major contributing factors for the setbacks³. The GOC and UN maintain that they will do everything possible to still complete the entire disarming process by the originally planned June date⁴. In response to these delays, General Javier Flórez, commander of the Transition Strategic Command unit, said that when the FARC-EP are finally able to hand over their weapons, they will be permitted to stay within the transitional zones until they complete their reincorporation process as originally planned – i.e., the camps will remain operational longer than scheduled⁵. On Wednesday, January 18th, High Commissioner for Peace Sergio Jaramillo announced that all FARC-EP members will be in their 36 designated transitional zones by January 31st, after delays due to logistical and other issues (malaria concerns, presence of coca crops) slowed the process originally scheduled to occur in December of last year⁶.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PEACE ACCORDS

FARC-EP

Food and sanitation challenges reported in pre-grouping zones

FARC-EP leader, Rodrigo Londoño, advanced a second call for attention to the medical care and provisions for FARC-EP members in pre-grouping zones, noting that the food was insufficient and at times unsanitary, as has been the medical attention for the guerrillas. Heavy rains had also taken a substantial toll on camp sanitation and infrastructures. Londoño asked specifically for a sanitation review by the Red Cross and Doctors without Borders⁷. Nonetheless, the FARC-EP continued their movement to transitional zones, with the historically powerful Southern Bloc of the guerrilla group – numbering around 2,000 members – beginning their transition to pre-grouping zones on January 8th.⁸

¹ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/arrancaultimoprocesodetrasladodefarczonasdeubiarticulo677282>

² <http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/CMS-16805113>

³ <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/acuerdos-de-gobierno-y-farc/onu-conocio-atrasos-en-el-cronograma-de-las-zonas-JX5743029>

⁴ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/onu-espere-dejacion-de-armas-de-farc-empiece-proximas-s-articulo-674206>

⁵ <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/acuerdos-de-gobierno-y-farc/las-zonas-veredales-funcionaran-por-mas-tiempo-gobierno-XD5731918>

⁶ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/farc-estaran-zonas-de-desarme-finales-de-enero-articulo-6753907>

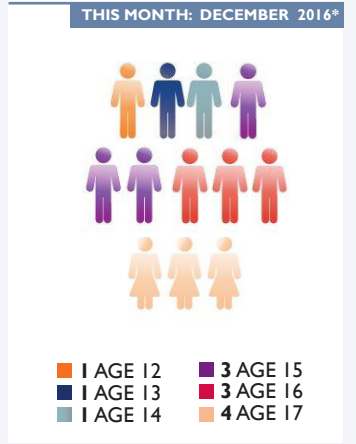
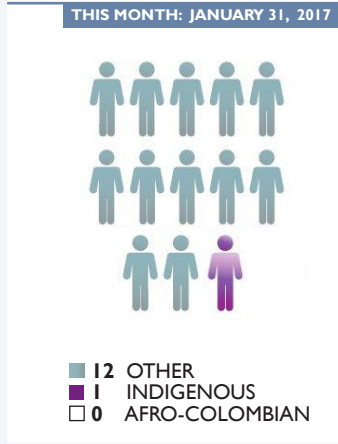
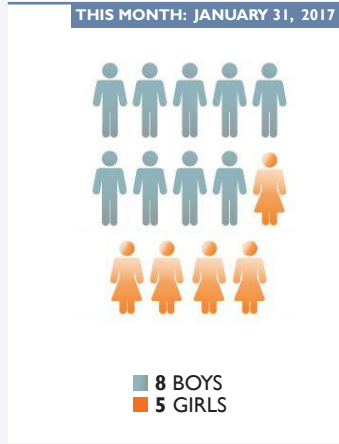
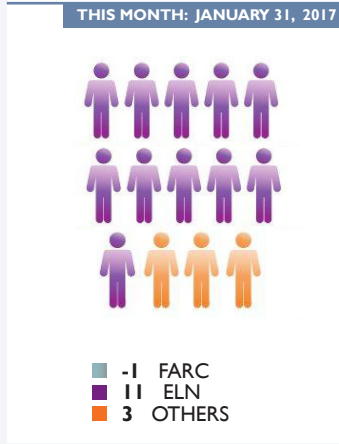
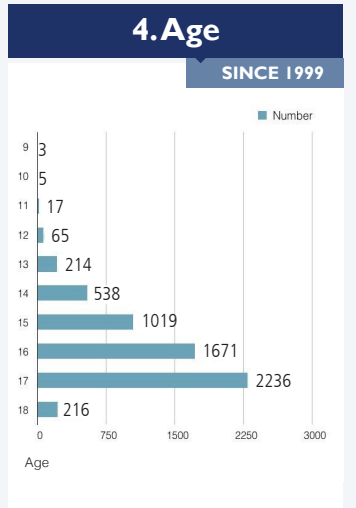
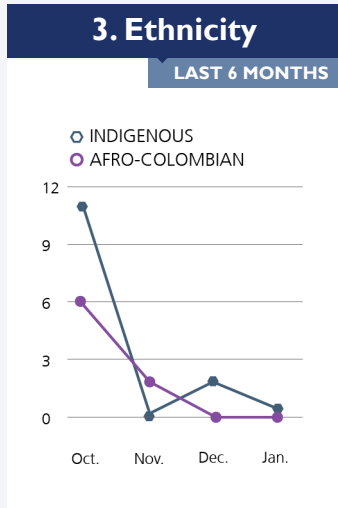
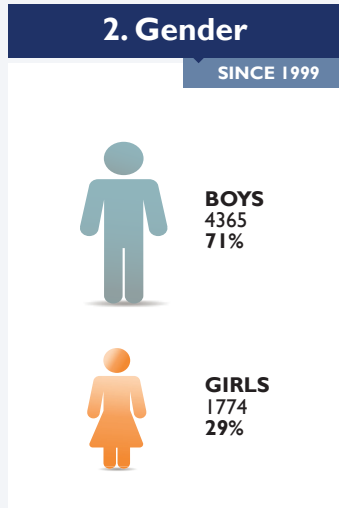
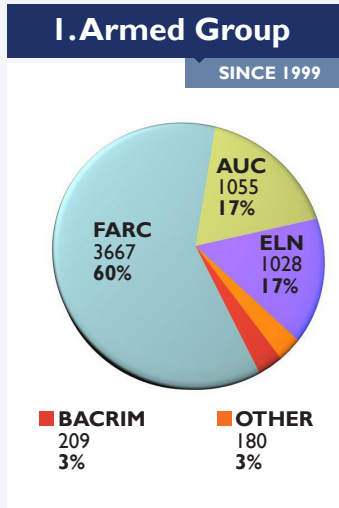
⁷ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/querrilleros-de-las-farc-se-movilizan-a-las-zonas-de-desarme/16806149>

⁸ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/bloque-sur-de-farc-el-mas-poderoso-de-esta-organizacion-articulo-673795>

FIGURES & TRENDS

* These data are estimates based on the information available

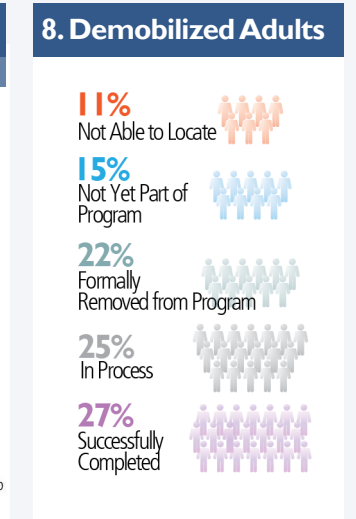
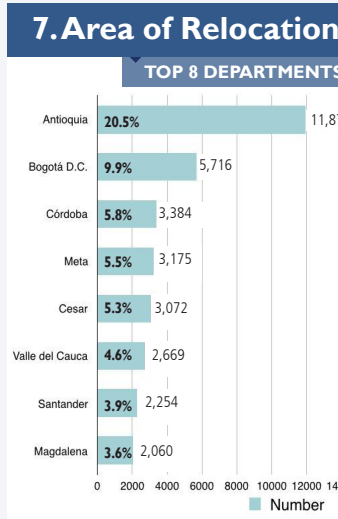
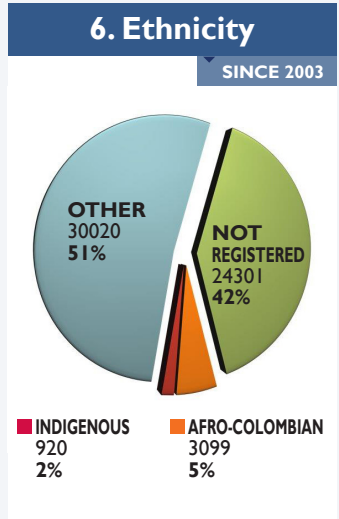
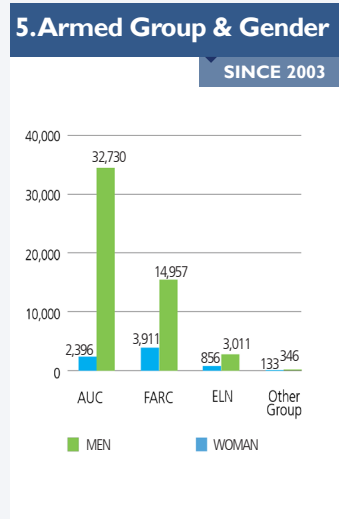
Disengaged Children & Adolescents TOTAL 6,139



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

5:Victims of Forced Recruitment

Total 8,091** / Month to month 54**



Data up to January 31, 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 (RUI)

Figure 5: Total of number of male and female adults who demobilized from each IAG. The AUC had the lowest proportion of women.

Figure 6: The eight departments to which the highest numbers of ex-combatants relocate for their reintegration process.

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

Figure 8: Demobilized Adults

Monthly actions of the Monitoring & Verification Mechanism (MM&V)

On January 1st, a video emerged of United Nations MM&V Monitors dancing with individuals in one of the FARC-EP temporary pre-grouping zones on New Year's Eve. The incident occurred with members of the 59th Front of the FARC-EP in the township of Fonseca in the department of La Guajira. The United Nations responded in an official release that the actions were "inappropriate and do not reflect the values of professionalism and impartiality of the Mission," and that the Agency would investigate the incident. The statement then went on to assure the Colombian people of the UN's commitment to objectivity and rigor in monitoring the bilateral ceasefire between the GOC and FARC-EP.⁹ They later announced on January 5th that they would be separating the three individuals in the video from the mission along with their supervisor, naming a guarantee of impartiality in operations as the motivating factor.¹⁰ As a result of this withdrawal, the FARC also removed its MM&V members from the same site.¹¹

On Tuesday, January 10th, a **clash reportedly occurred** between the *Teófilo Foreo* column of the FARC-EP and dissident members from the 14th Front of the same guerrilla in the hamlets of *La Novia Celestial* and *Tailandia*, Caquetá. The General Command of the Armed Forces released a statement on January 11th, asserting that it was a clear break in the ceasefire agreement for the FARC-EP members to use arms, even if it was against their own dissident members. Two individuals are suspected to have died in the clash, though that has not yet been confirmed by the MM&V.¹²

On Wednesday, January 25th, the **CNR** published its first Communiqué: the protocols for releasing remaining minors from the ranks of the FARC-EP would activate once all guerrillas were gathered in the designated transitional zones. The protocols co-developed between FARC-EP and GOC representatives in the CNR will occur in three phases, and the Presidential Council for Human Rights will assume responsibility for these phases: re-establishment of the rights of minors, reparations, and reincorporation and social inclusion. The CNR has identified ten transitional sites for releasing the minors.¹³

At the end of the month, both Chambers of Congress quickly passed the law permitting six delegates from the *Voces de Paz y Reconciliación* mechanism to participate in congressional sessions related to the implementation of the peace accords as congress persons with voice, but without vote. The law included provisions that the members of *Voces* conform to the rules of Congress, and a guarantee for victims' participation. *Voces* representatives are civilians - not FARC members - who will be responsible for representing the interests of both the FARC-in-transition and civil society.¹⁴

PEACE PROCESSES

GOC frees two ELN guerrillas, activates protocols for February 2nd release of Odín Sánchez

GOC-ELN representatives met in Quito, Ecuador on January 13th to discuss the launch of the public phase of the peace talks. Even as both sides prepared for the negotiations in Ecuador, confrontations continued, as did public disagreement over whether or not the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) developed in the FARC-EP negotiations would apply to the smaller guerrilla group, with the GOC arguing in favor of this option, and the ELN leadership against it. In the last few days of January, the GOC freed two ELN prisoners who will participate as facilitators in the peace dialogues between the ELN and the GOC. This signaled the completion of the GOC's commitment to meeting ELN demands to being the talks. Subsequent actions suggested that the ELN is preparing to fulfill their end of the bargain as well¹⁵. Defense Minister, Luis Carlos Villegas, announced on Wednesday, January 25th that the GOC activated the protocols for freeing ex-congressman Odín Sánchez, a long-standing GOC requirement for beginning peace talks with the guerrilla group. The ELN confirmed plans to release the hostage through group representative "Pablo Beltrán" (alias), and it is scheduled to occur before the end of the day, February 2nd, after which the public dialogues will begin on February 7th.¹⁶

⁹ <http://nacionesunidas.org.co/blog/2017/01/02/comunicado-de-prensa-mision-de-la-onu-en-colombia/>

¹⁰ <https://colombia.unmissions.org/misi%C3%B3n-de-la-onu-en-colombia-separa-observadores-de-su-servicio>

¹¹ <http://www.elspectador.com/noticias/paz/farc-se-retiran-del-monitoreo-conejo-guajira-articulo-673372>

¹² <http://www.elspectador.com/noticias/paz/una-violacion-al-cese-al-fuego-parte-de-farc-ff-mm-articulo-674258>

¹³ <http://www.farc-ep.co/comunicado/comunicado-no-01-consejo-nacional-de-reincorporacion-cnr.html>

¹⁴ <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/politica/avanza-ley-para-la-participacion-de-voces-de-paz-en-el-congreso-XN5807725>

¹⁵ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/liberan-dos-guerrilleros-del-eln-por-dialogos-de-paz/16803854>

¹⁶ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/comienza-protocolo-de-liberacion-de-odin-sanchez/16800523>

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

European countries pledge \$16.8 million USD more to the Multi-Donor United Nations Postconflict Fund

The United Kingdom, Sweden, Germany, and Norway announced on January 18th that they would be making an additional \$16.8 million USD in contributions to the Multi-Donor United Nations Postconflict Fund in order to support the construction of a stable and durable peace in Colombia. The announcement was received in a joint press conference by the fund manager and High Counselor for Postconflict, Human Rights, and Security, Rafael Pardo. The Multi-Donor Fund opened in February 2016 in response to the stabilization and peacebuilding needs identified in Colombia. It was developed to be an agile mechanism for financing related initiatives in the transitional and post-agreement phase, and combines the efforts of the GOC and those governments of donor countries. Currently, it funds 24 distinct projects.¹⁷

In visit to Colombia, French President François Hollande signs six international agreements, visits transitional zone

In the last weekend of the month, French President François Hollande visited Colombia and signed six agreements designed to benefit jointly the economies, commercial interests, culture, and tourism trades of both countries.¹⁸ President Santos asserted that France is the fourth largest contributor to Colombia and that, since 2010, the French Development Agency has contributed €2 billion in concessional loans and €18 million more in technical cooperation. Also during his visit, President Holland visited one of the FARC-EP transitional zones.¹⁹

German universities collaborate on shared institute for peace

The German Minister of External Relations, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, visited Colombia on January 12th to present the new Colombian-German Institute for Peace (CAPAZ), which will focus on themes of historic memory, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding. Five German and five Colombian universities will lead the institute. Since 2014, German financial and technical support for the Colombian peace process since 2014 has surpassed €495.3 million: roughly €457.5 in credits; €27.5 million in technical cooperation programs intended to strengthen local authorities in peace politics, victim supports, historic memory, transitional justice, disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, and land restitution; €3 million dedicated to the European Union Fiduciary Fund; €5 million to the Multi-Donor United Nations Postconflict Fund; and €2.3 million dedicated to humanitarian demining initiatives.²⁰

INSTITUTIONAL PROGRESS

Colombian Congress resumes debates on peace accords

Beginning Monday, January 16th, Colombia's Congress reconvened for the year and resumed its work through the Fast Track mechanism on critical next steps for the implementation of the peace accords. The first session was dedicated to discussing the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP), which is the organizing framework for critical justice mechanisms, such as the Peace Tribunal – the organism which will try those guerrillas charged with non-amnesty eligible crimes (e.g., crimes against humanity and genocide).²¹

Fast Track mechanism may be used in departmental assemblies

Minister of the Interior, Juan Fernando Cristo, announced on January 30th that the Congressional mechanism for rapid approval of initiatives related to the peace accords – known as the fast track – may also be used in departmental assemblies. In order to use the mechanism, the assembly would have to be working to implement a law related to the postconflict transition and the peace accord. The allowance is intended to facilitate decentralization of the process and territorial autonomy, explained Cristo.²²

¹⁷ <http://nacionesunidas.org.co/blog/2017/01/18/el-reino-unido-suecia-alemania-y-noruega-hacen-nuevas-contribuciones-por-16-8-millones-de-dolares-para-la-implementacion-de-la-paz-en-colombia/>

¹⁸ <http://www.elspectador.com/noticias/politica/francia-y-europa-estan-cumpliendo-su-cita-paz-santos-so-articulo-676169>

¹⁹ <http://m.eltiempo.com/politica/gobierno/colombia-y-francia-firman-seis-instrumentos-de-cooperacion/16798628/1/home>

²⁰ <http://www.cancilleria.gov.co/newsroom/news/alemania-renovara-su-apoyo-colombia-esfuerzos-alcanzar-paz>

²¹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/tramite-de-proyectos-del-acuerdo-de-paz-en-el-congreso/16792849>

²² <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/el-fast-track-podria-ser-usado-en-las-asambleas-para-agilizar-el-acuerdo-YG5844607>

Inter-Ministry collaboration commences for post-conflict job creation

In the third week of January, Vice Minister of Employment and Pensions led meetings with the Vice Ministers of Culture and Transportation in order to coordinate their respective agendas for culture and infrastructure in the post-conflict period within the framework of the “Projects for Peace and Development” initiative. The triad looks to develop job opportunities in culture and infrastructure in regions that are both underdeveloped and particularly hard hit by the armed conflict. The overarching goals of the initiative are to generate dignified work with an emphasis on community service work and tailored approaches to gender, reconciliation, and territorial development.²³

DIVERSITY ISSUES

Indigenous confinement and displacement in the Valledupar community (Buenaventura, Valle del Cauca)

Five armed men in camouflage have displaced and confined indigenous members of the Wounaan Nonam cabildo in a rural area of Buenaventura, Valle del Cauca. Since January 8th, they have maintained 83 individuals (roughly 16 families, 47 minors, 11 women, and 3 elderly persons) confined in the “Big House” located within the community. The community has historically been deeply affected by the armed conflict, with the presence of state armed forces often only increasing fears about armed confrontation between authorities and illegal armed actors that would leave the community in the crossfire. State and international agencies are currently coordinating in particular around the theme of personal hygiene kits and food rations, but entry to the community has been difficult because of 1) risks to the workers delivering the relief, and 2) heightened risk to civilian community members in the event of an armed confrontation.

Red Cross and German GIZ launch entrepreneurship project for displaced persons with disabilities

This month, the Colombian Red Cross along with German Cooperation GIZ launched the “Support Project” for entrepreneurial ventures launched by displaced persons with disabilities. The program looks to benefit 60 individuals this year in the department of Norte de Santander. This emerging focus on persons with disabilities extends the previous collaboration, PRO-INTEGRA, which last year promoted the creation of 40 productive entities that improve the quality of life for displaced persons. Common industries include food production and the beauty industry, among others. SENA also supports in the training efforts of program participants.²⁵

Indigenous Yukpa community hopes to recover from conflict violence, ensure cultural longevity

The La Laguna community of indigenous Yukpa, comprising 120 families on 300 hectares resting on the border between Venezuela and Colombia, is currently petitioning the GOC Land Restitution Unit for the return of 964 hectares of land lost to three decades of conflict violence at the hands of the FARC, the ELN, the Colombian army, and the paramilitaries in the region. This represents the third case of ethnic restitution to be processed in the department of Cesar, and one of 24 total cases nationally that are estimated to affect 10,000 families in total. Over the last five years, restitution judges have decided in favor of three cases, returning 124,000 hectares of land to indigenous communities. The La Laguna Yukpa hope for a win, not just to replenish their geographic holdings, but also to create space for new generations to learn the ways of ancestral practices tied to the lands (e.g., hunting, ancestral cemeteries), which many elders currently feel will become extinct under their current situation.²⁶

FURTHER READING

FIP report examines challenges and risks for the Tripartite Monitoring and Verification Mechanism

One of the most relevant aspects of the peace process and the implementation of the accords lies with the Tripartite Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (MVM), which comprises representatives from the FARC-EP, the United Nations, and the Government of Colombia. The January publication by Fundación Ideas para la Paz delineated the following characteristics of the mechanism: it is one of two supervisory systems created by the final accord and focuses on the ceasefire and surrender of arms; it is a tripartite mechanism; the mission has a civilian vocation and is composed of nearly 400 international observers from the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States; it operates at the central, regional, and local levels; it specifically monitors a pre-determined list of prohibited actions and mediates in these domains; and it will liaise with authorities and communities to facilitate the flow of information. The mechanism is novel and well-structured along a number of dimensions outlined in the report. However, it nonetheless faces several risks. First, the presence of other illegal armed groups in transitional zones complicates

²³ <http://www.mintrabajo.gov.co/enero-2017/7519-mintrabajo-articula-agenda-con-mincultura-y-mintransporte-para-jalonar-empleos-en-zonas-priorizadas-del-posconflicto.html>

²⁴ <http://mi.unidadvictimas.gov.co/node/590>

²⁵ <http://www.cruzroja colombiana.org/noticias-y-prensa/cruz-roja-colombiana-inici%C3%B3-proyecto-de-apoyo-emprendimientos-de-personas-en>

²⁶ <http://pacificista.co/restitucion-a-los-indigenas-yukpa-una-lucha-por-la-persistencia-cultural/>

the progression of the MVM tasks. Second, potential FARC-EP dissidents may undermine the work of the MVM in efforts to sabotage the peace process. Third, FARC-EP and GOC members that violate the ground rules will make the work of the MVM more difficult, and the Mechanism will need to demonstrate its ability to manage the development of the process. Fourth, inter-agency collaboration between the MVM and the existing Colombia country team is both challenging and essential. Finally, the MVM will need to interact distinctly with ethnic groups and indigenous communities, who occupy much of the neighboring territories surrounding many of the transitional zones.

FARC-EP Chiefs of Staff meet and release Full Political Declaration

The FARC-EP announced after the conference that they had completed the mandate coming out of the final 10th FARC-EP conference to Chiefs of Staff from a guerrilla structure to that of a political party. They hope to launch the new political party towards the end of May, confirming that the FARC-EP and all of its political structures have begun the transition to legality. The communiqué released by the group also mentioned the Voces de Paz new political group comprising civilian actors charged with ensuring the implementation of the peace accords through voice, but no vote participation in Congress, as well as facilitating the FARC-EP's transition to a political party. FARC-EP representatives voiced concern regarding what they viewed as growing paramilitarism in the face of "official indifference," and called on the Tracking, Implementation, and Verification Mission (CSIV) to turn their attention to these ostensible threats. They also offered recommendations for a transitional government in order to ensure continuity in the implementation of the accords.²⁷

²⁷ <http://www.farc-ep.co/comunicado/declaracion-politica-pleno-del-estado-mayor-central-de-las-farc-ep.html>