

December 25-31

#### 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 (GOC) and the FARC in Colombia.

**The Colombian government has extended provision of food and other basic services until 15 August 2019** for the approximately 4,000 former FARC combatants and their families residing in 22 Territorial Spaces for Training and Reincorporation (ETCR) and surrounding areas. The extension was a response to the call made by the head of the UN Verification Mission, Raúl Rosende, who argued that given the delays in the commencement of the former combatants' productive projects, which are meant to sustain their livelihoods in the long-run, such support was necessary until the date on which the reincorporation zones will exist as such, as stipulated in the Peace Accord.<sup>1</sup>

**The JEP has confirmed that it will not welcome the testimony of key witness Juan Guillermo Monsalve in the case investigating former President and current Senator Álvaro Uribe** and his brother Santiago Uribe for extra judicial killings, known as "false positives".<sup>2</sup> The JEP rejected his admission since he made the request as a former member of the AUC and the criminal group *Los Rastrojos*, third parties, which, the Court says, do not fall within its competence. Monsalve, who is in currently in prison, was an employee at the Uribe family property where the Bloque Metro of the AUC were supposedly organized.<sup>3</sup> Uribe is under investigation by the Supreme Court for procedural fraud and crimes of bribery, a case in which Monsalve is also involved.

Meanwhile, this week Senator **Uribe announced that his agenda for 2019 includes the intention to modify the Peace Accord, as it relates to the transitional justice system, particularly extradition**, by proposing legislation through Congress. This is not Uribe's first attempt to reform the JEP: in October of this year he pushed to create special chambers to prosecute members of the Colombian Armed Forces who committed serious crimes during the armed conflict.<sup>4</sup>

In other news at the JEP, **several former combatants of the FARC who were conditionally released from prison as a result of the Peace Accord, remain in juridical limbo**. Given that they demobilized individually, these former combatants were not part of the collective reinsertion process; however, they have not been able to carry out an individual reincorporation process either, as they still have criminal records and valid arrest warrants. Their release is conditional, and they await decisions from the Amnesty and Pardon Chamber of the JEP, which must process amnesty cases individually.<sup>5</sup>

The UNHCR reported that more than **30,500 Colombians were internally displaced between January and November 2018**. The vast majority of those displaced hailed from three regions: Catatumbo, Bajo Cauca, and the Pacific, with 95% from the corresponding departments of Norte de Santander, Antioquia, Chocó and Nariño. Compared to 2017, the number displaced is more than three times higher than the 9,075 persons reported last year in November.<sup>6</sup>

**A member of the National Army's Rapid Deployment Task Force was killed on 29 December in a confrontation with the ELN in Norte de Santander**. Walter Gomez Duarte was 25 years old and had served in the military for four years.<sup>7</sup> In other news related to the ELN, **the group liberated an engineer who, while working for Ecopetrol, was kidnapped in January 2018 in Saravena, Arauca**. The release took place in a rural zone of Arauca with a commission from the local Ombudsman's Office and Catholic church acting as guarantors of the liberation.<sup>8</sup>