



This callout box includes a weekly update on news and work specifically related to implementing the Peace Accord between the Government of Colombia (GOC) and the FARC.

**Minister of Defense Botero forced to resign after army kills at least 8 minors in bombing:** This week, the revelations about the bombing that took place on 29 August, as part of “Operation Atair”, led to the resignation of Minister of Defense Botero. That night, in the rural area of San Vicente del Caguán (Caquetá), two airplanes bombed a mobile camp of the 7<sup>th</sup> Front Dissidence of the FARC eliminating alias Gildardo Cucho, in what was qualified as an “impeccable operation”. Yet, two months later, a motion of censure was voted against the Minister of Defense for failing to announce that eight minors had been killed in the operation, which led to his resignation on 6 November. Since then, new revelations indicate that the number of minors killed in the bombing may reach 16 to 18.<sup>1</sup>

**Head of UN Verification Mission says “the presence of the Army is not sufficient to guarantee security”:** Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Verification Mission, argues that a comprehensive government presence is required to address security challenges in Colombia’s territories. Expanding the offer of social services, justice, and economic opportunities, especially to communities most affected by the armed conflict (in Cauca and Antioquia, for example), would permit to fill the power vacuum in these regions. On the other hand, strengthening the response to early warnings emitted by the Ombudsman’s Office through an interinstitutional response mechanism could efficiently complement the individual and physical protection measures. Finally, he stressed the importance of investigating and prosecuting the assassinations of former FARC combatants and social leaders, to dismantle not only the authors but the networks operating against them.<sup>2</sup>

**Indigenous of Cauca wary of militarization of the region:** Last week, President Duque announced that an additional 2,500 troops would be deployed in Cauca “to exercise territorial control, to close routes used by drug-traffickers, and to dismantle the groups”. Yet, the “Lightning” Rapid Deployment Force aimed to deploy by December raises concerns among local indigenous communities wary of the militarization of the region. “We expect this to increase the risks for us”, argues the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC). 35 former FARC combatants have been killed in the department since the signature of the Peace Accord in November 2016, and 10 social leaders between January and June of 2019.<sup>3</sup>

**Former guerrilla and the police row together for peace:** In Miravalle (Caquetá), a region that was controlled by the insurgency in the 1990s, 300 persons participated in the first National Rafting Championship “Rowing for Peace”. Bringing together tourists, sportsmen and community members, the initiative was created by a group of former combatants of Miravalle and took place in the local Territorial Space for Training and Reincorporation. A group composed of former combatants, the police and the military called “United for Peace” competed, gaining the respect and admiration of all participants.<sup>4</sup>

**Assassination of former FARC candidate to the regional Assembly of Nariño:** On 9 November, the Alternative Revolutionary Force of the Common party announced the assassination of Diego Fernando Campo, a militant of the party, and candidate for the regional Assembly of Nariño in the regional and local elections of 27 October. In a communique, the party called state authorities to “promptly investigate and shed light on this crime”, also denouncing the increased insecurity faced by former combatants and militants of the FARC political party.<sup>5</sup>