



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.

**The implementation of the Peace Accord is failing women:** A report recently published reveals that 42% of the Peace Accord's commitments with a gender-based approach have not initiated, as opposed to only 27% of the general commitments.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, only 8% of the commitments with a gender focus have been fully implemented, against 25% of the general commitments. Based on the Framework Plan for Implementation issued by the national government, only two gender commitments shall initiate after 2019. The implementation of security guarantees for collective and community protection has lagged behind, with new risks emerging for female social leaders and human rights defenders, especially those pertaining to ethnic and rural communities. Most progress in the inclusion of gender-focused measures has been made on Point 5: "Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparations, and Non-Repetition".<sup>2</sup>

**Victims' Law validity extended until 7 August 2030:** The Victims and Land Restitution Law was initially valid until June 2021. Although Congress is still supposed to promulgate a new law by that date, the Constitutional Court decided to extend the validity of the current law until 7 August 2030. This disposition ensures that the rights of the victims will continue to be adequately protected in the future. Juan Fernando Cristo, the former Minister Interior and most vocal supporter of this decision, argued that all the objectives of the existing law have not yet been fulfilled, and thus, that its expiration would have severe implications for the entire public policy orientated towards the implementation of the Peace Accord.<sup>3</sup>

**Demobilized combatants arm themselves with diplomas:** More than 6,000 former combatants went back to high schools and universities after demobilizing. According to figures of the Agency for Reincorporation and Normalization (ARN), today, 33 demobilized persons study in universities while 396 have already graduated. Similarly, 146 are currently enrolled in technical education programs while 1,863 have already been certified. Flexible education models have succeeded in ensuring that 94% of enrolled participants remain committed throughout the curriculum. Yet, education has not guaranteed them jobs nor the success of their businesses.<sup>4</sup>

**"Peace is an opportunity to address the causes of conflict that are rooted in inequality":** The global launch of the Human Development Report 2019 took place on 9 December in Bogotá. Traditional economic indicators do not permit to grasp all the factors that induce inequality, argued the administrator of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Achim Steiner. He stressed that public debate is intensifying across the world, questioning state institutions and prevailing economic models. He argued that the report looks beyond income per capita, and includes new phenomena such as new technologies and climate change. Inequality and conflict are inextricably linked: inequality can be seen as a cause of conflict, while conflict can create extreme inequality. He concluded: "Peace is an opportunity to address the causes of conflict that are rooted in inequality".<sup>5</sup>

**Dialogue with the ELN "is possible – but with conditions":** On 6 December, the High Commissioner for Peace, Miguel Ceballos, declared being open to dialogue with the ELN, "as long as the guerrilla complies with the conditions [...] There can only be a possibility for peace if the people kidnapped by the ELN are returned, and if all criminal activities cease". Referring to letters sent to the ELN by Colombian bishops and former negotiator of the Peace Accord with the FARC, Humberto de la Calle, Miguel Ceballos said he wished "they [ELN] understood that not only the Government, but sectors representative of society at large, are calling for a change". He reiterated Colombian judicial authorities' demand that ELN negotiators be extradited to Colombia from Cuba, arguing that "the Government needs to back judicial decisions".<sup>6</sup>