



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.

“There will be no peace as long as social leaders and ex-combatants are being silenced”. This was the key message delivered by Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Head of the UN Verification Mission in Colombia, to the UN Security Council during the presentation of the latest report on the implementation of the Peace Accord. In 2019, 77 ex-combatants of the FARC were killed, making it the deadliest year since the signature of the Accord in November 2016.¹ Nonetheless, important advances were made this year, in particular with regard to the Development Plans with Territorial Focus (PDETs) which are “extremely relevant” in order to bring infrastructure, State presence and attention to communities most affected by the armed conflict. He also welcomed the advances made by former combatants in the Territorial Spaces for Training and Reincorporation.² In the past year, 12 new productive projects were selected, bringing their total number to 47, and benefitting 2,454 former combatants and 84 members of local communities.³

2020: A critical year for the implementation of the Peace Accord. This year, the Peace Process will face four fundamental challenges: guarantee that the Peace Accord is implemented in its entirety; ensure the commitment of new local administrations; guarantee security; consolidate the transitional justice system. The Fundación Ideas para la Paz argues that the six points of the Accord are intrinsically interdependent and that advances need to be made in all of the sectors if it is to bring about tangible results. For example, significant progress has been made in the area of voluntary and assisted eradication, yet substitution is lagging behind and may lead to a resumption of coca cultivation. Coordination between sectoral action plans and entities in charge of the implementation, in particular between PDETs, the Integral National Program for Substitution (PNIS) and sectoral action plans, is insufficient and needs to be reinforced.⁴

Rodrigo Londoño, alias Timochenko, threatened by rearmed FARC guerrilla leaders. According to the National Police, an attempt on Rodrigo Londoño’s life was recently thwarted. The President of the FARC political party was the target of an attack allegedly planned by Timochenko’s former brothers in arms, Ivan Márquez and el Paisa (who announced their rearming on 29 August 2019) and who issued a statement rejecting these accusations. The attack was due to take place in the department of Valle del Cauca, but the aggressors were neutralized by the police before they could carry it out.⁵ Analysts argue that the decision to attack Timochenko was based on the idea that he had betrayed the principles of the armed group. They also emphasize that the FARC are now more divided than ever, between a group that returned to illegality (led by Márquez and el Paisa), a struggling political party, and a resisting political faction led by Fabián Ramírez.⁶

Bishops warn about intensification of conflict in the Pacific. The bishops of the Pacific and south-western part of the country expressed their concern about the intensification of the conflict. “We have repeatedly called on the Colombian State to provide a comprehensive solution that would respond to the structural causes of this humanitarian crisis”, argued the bishops. These regions, in which most of the population is of Afro-Colombian and indigenous descent, have been disproportionately affected by violence during the armed conflict. Yet, the Peace Accord has not put an end to violence for these communities that are now threatened by the activities of the ELN, the AGC and other similar structures. The bishops also called for an in-depth investigation about the alleged connivance of the Colombian armed forces and police with these illegal groups.⁸

Humanitarian demining in Chocó: an unfulfilled promise. Last week, the High Commissioner for Peace, Miguel Ceballos, announced that the conditions for humanitarian demining in the department of Chocó were not met. Following the confinement of four afro-Colombian communities in Bojayá, it was announced that the only way to free the territory of landmines was through military demining. Yet this option is being opposed by inhabitants of the region, who call for an approach to demining that is centered on the needs of the local communities, with the objective to protect life and economic development. “We don’t need more military troops in Bojayá, what we need is social investment”, says the community. As landmines are being laid by the ELN and the Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia (AGC) in their competition for territorial control, the community argues that mine risk education is an important alternative to humanitarian demining.⁷