

Colombian Peace Process: IOM Weekly Report

November, 2014

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1. Background

On September 4, 2012, President Santos announced the signing of a General Agreement for the Termination of the Conflict between the Government of Colombia and the FARC, initiating the fourth official peace talks with this group. The agenda includes: 1) integrated rural reform; 2) guarantees for political opposition and civic participation; 3) the end of the conflict (laying down arms and reintegration into civilian life); 4) illegal drugs; and 5) victims' rights. Preparatory talks started in Oslo on October 17, 2012 and substantive dialogues in Havana, on November 19, 2012. Three agreements have been reached: one on the first agenda point, integrated rural reform, on May 26, 2013; the second on the next point, political participation, on November 6, 2013; and another on the fourth agenda point, illegal drugs, on May 16, 2014.

On June 10, 2014, the GOC announced that exploratory talks with the ELN were taking place to define an agenda for peace talks. These initial meetings have been held since January 2014, and the issues of victims and societal participation are the first two agenda points. The GOC and ELN will release information on the progress of the exploratory talks as they continue.

2. GOC – FARC Key Developments from October 29th – November 4th

Fourth group of victims arrives in Havana to participate in talks

The fourth delegation of victims to participate in the talks travelled to Cuba on Saturday. They were selected by the UN and Universidad Nacional, and include: 1) Jineth Bedoya, a journalist for El Tiempo who was kidnapped by the paramilitaries; 2) Tulio Murillo Ávila, a guerrilla member requested by the FARC to represent victims of the State, participating by video from jail¹; 3) Guillermo Murcia, a mine victim; 4) Juan Carlos Villamizar, exiled to Spain after being declared a target by the paramilitaries; 5) Alberto Tarache, a victim of child recruitment by paramilitaries; 6) Nora Elisa Vélez, who lost four siblings at the hands of various actors and represents the LGBTI community; 7) Lisinia Collazos, indigenous survivor of a paramilitary massacre;² 8) Maria Zabala, whose son and husband were killed by paramilitaries; 9) Maria Jackeline Rojas, whose father, husband, and brother were killed by the FARC, ELN, and paramilitaries respectively;³ 10) Germán Graciano Posso, who lost family members to various armed groups; 11) Wilfredo Landa Caicedo,

¹ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/guerrillero-victima-contara-su-experiencia-medio-de-vid-articulo-525533>

² <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/jineth-bedoya-entre-las-nuevas-victimas-que-iran-a-la-habana/14776015>

³ <http://www.informador.com.mx/internacional/2014/557479/6/victimas-participan-en-dialogo-de-paz-de-colombia.htm>

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displaced by the FARC;⁴ and 12) Luz Marina Cuchumbe, whose daughter was killed by armed groups.⁵ After making their statements, the victims asked that the teams not leave the talks until an agreement is reached.⁶

Victims receive threats

Members of the delegations of victims who have travelled to Havana to participate in the peace talks say they have received threatening messages from illegal armed groups. UN Resident Coordinator in Colombia, Fabrizio Hoschild, said that it is likely that the messages are from groups and people with links to the paramilitary organizations.⁷

FARC make statements on responsibility for victimization

In a press statement last week, the FARC assumed responsibility for victimization of the civilian population, saying that this occurs in war as a result of accidental use of excessive force, involuntary error, or unpredictable consequences of actions of war.⁸ In another statement the group said that they do not consider themselves responsible for crimes against humanity.⁹ The Inspector General rejected this statement, saying that it ignores the rights of the victims.¹⁰

Military-FARC meeting causes controversy

The meetings between military and FARC leaders as part of the Sub-Commission on the End of the Conflict have caused controversy due to the fact that some people believe this puts the military on the same level as the FARC. El Tiempo highlighted that this type of meeting has occurred in peace processes around the world, including Guatemala and El Salvador.¹¹

3. GOC – ELN Key Developments from October 29th – November 4th

ELN confirms that exploratory talks continue

In a press communiqué, the ELN confirmed that exploratory peace talks continue between the guerrilla group and the GOC. The statement says that multiple agenda points have so far been agreed, but others have to be confirmed in order to complete the formal agenda. The ELN also stated that although it does not agree with keeping the dialogues secret from the population, they will respect the confidentiality agreement made with the GOC.¹²

⁴ <http://pagina10.com/index.php/global/item/7234-la-habana- recibe-cuarta-delegacion-de-victimas>

⁵ <https://www.salvalselva.org/noticias/4123/mujeres-territorio-y-vida-en-colombia>

⁶ www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/victimas-piden-a-negociadores-que-no-descansen-hasta-alcanzar-la-paz/14780215

⁷ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/delegaciones-de-victimas-viajaron-habana-continuan-sien-articulo-525380>

⁸ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/poblacion-no-ha-sido-blanco-principal-de-nuestro-actuar-articulo-525025>

⁹ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/farc-niegan-estar-relacionados-crime-les-a-humanidad-articulo-525374>

¹⁰ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/judicial/procuraduria-general-rechazo-negativa-de-farc-reconocer-articulo-525769>

¹¹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/cara-a-cara-entre-el-gral-florez-y-romana-un-punto-de-inflexion/1477460>

¹² <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/eln-partidario-de-revelar-dialogos-exploratorios-de-paz-articulo-525647>



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4. International

President Santos begins Europe visit

President Santos arrived in Spain at the beginning of a tour to Portugal, Belgium, France, and the United Kingdom, to discuss the peace process and post-conflict. He aims to consolidate European financial support for the post-conflict phase.¹³ The President of the EU Council, Herman Van Rompuy, said the EU is committed to providing post-conflict financial support.¹⁴ The German Reconstruction Credit Institute announced a US\$100 million loan for peace process initiatives.¹⁵ Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel expressed his country's support of the talks and commitment to post-conflict support.¹⁶ Some EU delegates requested that EU support for post-conflict initiatives in Colombia be conditioned on respect for human rights.¹⁷

5. Other Voices

Ex-kidnap victim leads projects with demobilized people

An ex-kidnap victim called César Augusto Montealegre in Florencia, Caquetá, was interviewed by El Tiempo. He discussed his experience of forgiving his victimizer face-to-face, and his commitment to leading projects that employ demobilized people. He has led such projects to benefit 60 ex-combatants so far.¹⁸

6. Emerging Challenges and Responses

Colombian population has mixed views of peace process: Caracol survey

Caracol Radio conducted a survey of 2,933 people in urban areas, to assess their perceptions of the peace process. 85% were against no jail time for FARC leaders, and 69% were against exempting low-level combatants from jail time as well. 52% of those surveyed said they believe that the talks will reach a peace agreement.¹⁹

¹³ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/lunes-arranca-madrid-gira-europea-lograr-apoyo-al-posco-articulo-525485>

¹⁴ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/presidente-del-consejo-europeo-prometio-apoyo-de-ue-col-articulo-525727>

¹⁵ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/us100-millones-el-posconflicto-articulo-525700>

¹⁶ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/belgica-felicita-santos-el-proceso-de-paz-y-se-adhiere-articulo-525767>

¹⁷ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/eurodiputados-piden-ue-condicione-su-ayuda-respeto-de-d-articulo-525732>

¹⁸ www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/el-exsecuestrado-que-perdono-a-su-victimario-y-emplea-a-desmovilizados/14763236

¹⁹ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/colombianos-creen-el-proceso-de-paz-no-tendra-un-final-articulo-525042>

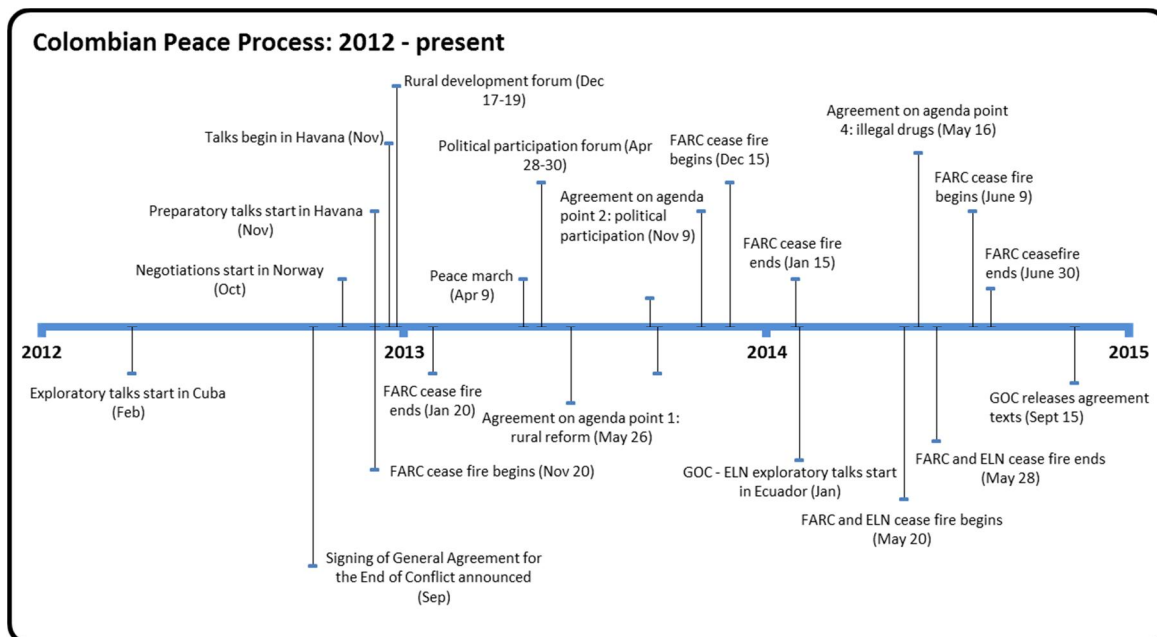
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GOC to request extension of peace process law

Minister of the Interior Juan Fernando Cristo made a request that Congress allow the extension of the law that covers the peace process, including the permission for members of the FARC dialogue team to be in Havana. The law is currently set to expire in December.²⁰

7. Timeline



²⁰ <http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/gobierno-pide-extender-salvoconductos-para-las-farc/407945-3>



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8. Further Reading

BBC analysis of the implications of peace

The BBC published an analysis of the implications of peace for Colombia. It includes a brief history of the conflict, the interaction between the economy and the conflict, security, drug trafficking, and civil society.²¹

National Corporate Associations do not have unanimous opinion of talks

Bruce MacMaster, the President of the National Council of Corporate Associations, was interviewed by El Espectador. He discussed the role of the private sector and corporate associations in peacebuilding, and stated that corporate association leaders do not have a unanimous opinion of the peace process, but rather are waiting to see the results of the talks before reaching a consensus.²²

²¹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-29693391>

²² <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/no-tenemos-una-posicion-unanime-sobre-el-proceso-de-paz-articulo-525688>

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2. GOC – FARC Key Developments from November 5th – November 11th

De la Calle begins information sessions with political parties

GOC dialogue team leader Humberto de la Calle has begun a series of meetings with political parties of all sides of the spectrum to distribute information about the GOC-FARC peace process. The meetings aim to dispel rumors about goings-on and progress of the talks, and to gain insight on party concerns and points of contention.²³ De la Calle has expressed that he would particularly like to discuss the peace process with ex-President Uribe and his supporters, as they are staunch opponents of the talks.²⁴ However, Uribe's supporters rejected the invitation, saying that such an encounter should take place in public, not in a private meeting.²⁵

Jineth Bedoya tells of her experience at the dialogue table

Journalist and victim Jineth Bedoya wrote an article about her experiences traveling to Havana to participate directly in the peace talks. She described both the other victims in the delegation,

²³ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/se-inician-los-cara-cara-de-de-calle-los-partidos-polit-articulo-526971>

²⁴ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/humberto-de-la-calle-socializa-proceso-de-paz-con-congresistas/14818876>

²⁵ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/uribismo-rechazo-posibilidad-de-encuentro-humberto-de-c-articulo-527027>



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which was present in Havana last week, and their experiences arriving in Cuba and sitting down to talk with the leaders of the FARC.²⁶

3. GOC – ELN Key Developments from November 5th – November 11th

ELN member goes missing while travelling to talks

A communiqué from the ELN guerrilla group stated that a member named Eduardo Martínez (now believed to be commander alias 'Jairo') disappeared near Cúcuta while on his way to an unknown destination to join the ELN exploratory dialogue team. The statement alleges that he was abducted at a police roadblock on the highway outside Cúcuta.²⁷ 'Jairo' has extradition orders, but it remains unclear where he is or if the orders will be fulfilled.²⁸

4. International

Santos European tour increases support for peace

President Santos completed his tour to Spain, Portugal, Belgium, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, in which he aimed to consolidate European financial support for the post-conflict phase.²⁹ On the tour, Santos presented planned post-conflict initiatives including programs to address climate change and rural development, access to land, infrastructure in conflict-affected areas, and institutional strengthening.³⁰ He highlighted his hope that the process of Colombia becoming an OECD country will be complete soon, to complement the approaching post-conflict phase.³¹

²⁶ www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/jineth-bedoya-relata-como-fue-el-encuentro-de-victimas-en-la-habana/14808935

²⁷ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/el-denuncia-desaparicion-de-interlocutor-dialogos-expl-articulo-526234>

²⁸ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/judicial/los-captura-de-un-facilitador-de-paz-del-eln-articulo-526960>

²⁹ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/gira-europea-cumplio-creces-apoyo-paz-santos-articulo-526791>

³⁰ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/los-proyectos-de-santos-el-posconflicto-articulo-526128>

³¹ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/santos-resalto-deseo-de-acceso-ocde-coincida-acuerdos-d-articulo-526348>

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5. Other Voices

Indigenous people in Cauca call for continuation of talks

Cauca indigenous groups called on the dialogue teams not to stop the peace talks until there is a peace agreement, after two of their leaders were killed in conflict-related violence.³²

FARC victims create organization to gain clout in peace process

FARC victims will form the National Victims' Federation, a conglomerate of all FARC victims' associations across the country. Dissatisfied with the representation they have received in the GOC-FARC peace process, the victims aim to increase their clout and voice in the talks.³³

Civil society peace meetings aim to raise awareness of peace

The Pro-Peace Network and other groups organized regional meetings to raise awareness about the peace process and combat negative rumors spread by those who oppose it. Irma Adela Perrilla Piñeros, leader of the NGO "Social Thought and Action" was interviewed by El Espectador about these meetings, their objectives, and her perspective on the peace process.³⁴

Liberal Party reiterates support for peace process

The Liberal Party, who held a series of annual meetings last week, confirmed its ongoing support for the GOC-FARC peace process. They also invited other parties to debate the various opinions of the talks, in the interests of deciding what is best for Colombia.³⁵

National Peace Prize nominees announced

Nominees for the UNDP's National Peace Prize, which will be given on November 16th, were announced last week. They are: the Ruta Pacifica de Mujeres, a women's collective comprised of various organizations working for gender equality and peace on the Pacific Coast; Asociación Guardagolfo, which focuses on sustainable fishing practices; and Centros de Reconciliación, an initiative that provides training and awareness about reconciliation.³⁶

³² <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/indigenas-amenazados-farc-piden-continuen-los-dialogos-articulo-526641>

³³ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/victimas-de-farc-crean-organizacion-tener-mas-peso-el-p-articulo-526134>

³⁴ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/el-poder-de-sociedad-civil-articulo-526124>

³⁵ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/partidos-politicos/liberales-reiteraron-su-apoyo-al-proceso-de-paz/14805735>

³⁶ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/trabajos-de-mujeres-pesca-y-reconciliacion-optan-premio-articulo-526877>

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6. Emerging Challenges and Responses

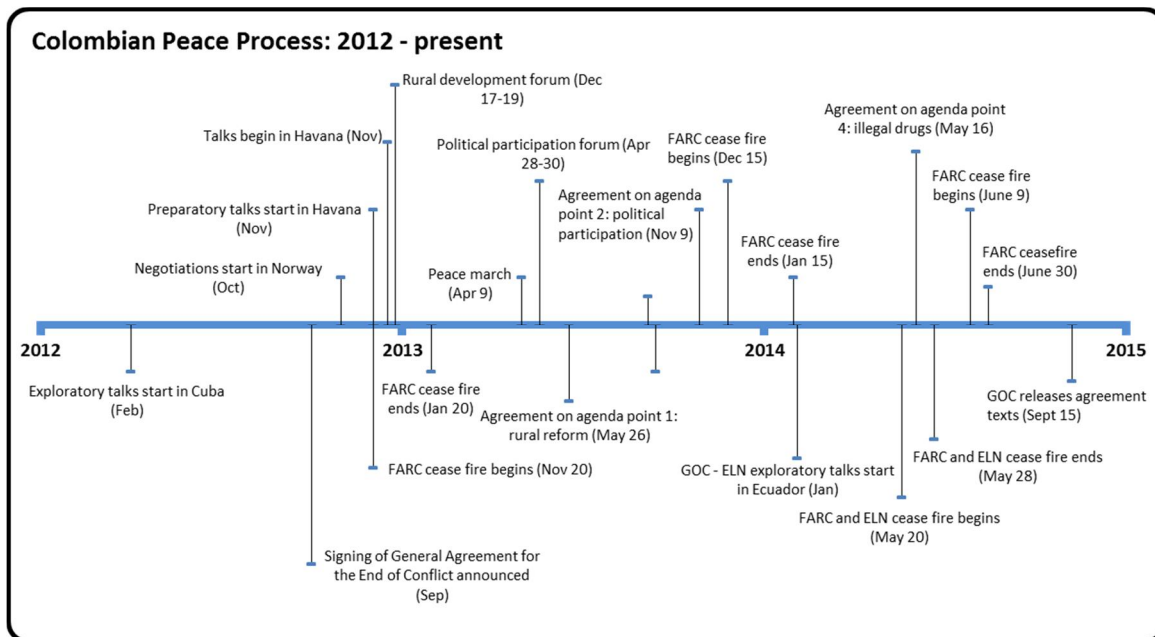
Different peacetime needs at regional and national levels

El Espectador interviewed a range of people at the national and regional levels, all of whom are working towards peace. While those who work on the national level, for example representatives of the High Commissioner for Peace, highlighted the need for regionally-planned and implemented post-conflict initiatives that take into account local contexts, those operating at the local levels emphasized the need for national government support for such efforts, as local resources are not enough to achieve all that needs to be done for peace.³⁷

Ex-President Uribe suggests partial constituent assembly

As debates about the use of a referendum or, as the FARC have suggested, a constituent assembly to approve or disprove a final peace agreement continue, ex-President Uribe suggested that a constituent assembly with limitations on its scope could be the answer. He conditioned this option on the FARC handing their weapons over to the State.³⁸

7. Timeline



³⁷ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/el-posconflicto-visto-regiones-articulo-526576>

³⁸ www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/constituyente-limitada-seria-camino-para-refrendar-acuerdos-uribe/14810255

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8. Further Reading

Spanish philosopher weighs in on peace talks

The Spanish philosopher Fernando Savater was interviewed by El Tiempo. He discussed the characteristics of contexts in which violence is prevalent, the violence in Basque country and in Colombia, and the current GOC-FARC peace talks.³⁹

Post-conflict checks and balances – not so balanced?

Semana published an overview of the statements that have been made about financing the post-conflict phase. The article highlights that most economists have stated that it remains unclear how the post-conflict phase will be financially supported, while the GOC maintains that this is speculation, as the initiatives to be included under the post-conflict umbrella remain undefined until agreements on all points of the dialogue agenda have been signed.⁴⁰

Gallup poll shows increased support for peace talks

The most recent Gallup poll shows that positive opinion of the GOC-FARC peace talks increased from 56% in August to 62% in October. The survey was taken with 1,200 people in Bogotá, Medellín, Cali, Barranquilla, and Bucaramanga.⁴¹

Public opinion supports referendum

The company Cifras y Conceptos conducted a survey to see which topics of debate would be accepted by the public. It found that 87% accepts referendum of a final peace agreement, 54% accepts zero years of jail-time for low-level ex-combatants and 5-8 years for commanders (as was done with the paramilitaries), and 23% accepts zero years of jail time for FARC leaders.⁴²

“Colombianologists” send letter supporting peace process

Academics who focus on Colombia joined together to sign a letter supporting the peace process. The letter highlights the opportune moment at which the talks find themselves, especially given the ideological flexibility with which the FARC are approaching the process and the significant progress already made, as demonstrated by the agreements reached.⁴³

³⁹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/gobierno/prohibir-la-droga-es-algo-irracional-fernando-savater-14808941>

⁴⁰ <http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/las-cuentas-del-posconflicto-no-dan/408351-3>

⁴¹ www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/colombianos-prefieren-el-dialogo-en-lugar-de-la-via-militar-encuesta/14806015

⁴² www.caracol.com.co/noticias/actualidad/no-a-un-acuerdo-de-paz-sin-carcel-a-los-guerrilleros/20141106/nota/2495226.aspx

⁴³ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/carta-de-los-colombianologos-apoyo-al-proceso-de-paz-articulo-526895>

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2. GOC – FARC Key Developments from November 12th – November 18th

Dialogues suspended after kidnapping of army General

On November 17th 2014, President Santos announced a suspension of the peace process due to the kidnapping of General Rubén Darío Alzate Mora, Captain Jorge Rodríguez Contreras, and lawyer Gloria Urrego the day before in Chocó department. The General was in civilian clothes and had violated all security protocols for his trip from Quibdó to the village of Las Mercedes, ignoring warnings about the presence of FARC's 34th Front. However, Santos emphasized that the "unacceptable" kidnapping was the FARC's responsibility, and suspended the talks until the hostages are freed.⁴⁴ The General is the highest-ranked official to be kidnapped by the FARC.⁴⁵

FARC statements on the kidnapping

After initially saying they did not know the whereabouts of the three hostages,⁴⁶ FARC leaders in Cuba reported that they are under the control of the 34th Front. A communiqué from that Front stated that they will respect the life of the hostages in accordance with state response to the situation, and that they continue to operate under orders of high command. Neither this communiqué nor that of the FARC dialogue team indicated when they intend to release the

⁴⁴ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/santos-suspende-dialogos-farc-secuestro-de-general-alza-articulo-527984>

⁴⁵ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/judicial/general-alzate-el-oficial-de-mas-alto-rango-secuestrado-articulo-528003>

⁴⁶ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/delegados-de-farc-cuba-dicen-no-tener-informacion-sobre-articulo-528096>

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hostages, but they did state that the President should propose mechanisms to resolve the issue. They also said the decision to suspend the dialogues was rash.⁴⁷

In response to these statements, analysts and politicians seemed optimistic that the hostages will be released soon, but said that could be in days or even weeks.⁴⁸

Uncertainty over nature of kidnapping

Some analysts have speculated that the kidnapping could have been conducted by potential spoilers operating outside FARC chain of command, with the goal of sabotaging the peace process.⁴⁹ Other uncertainty surrounds the fact that the General was very well-trained and considered highly unlikely to break protocol without reason, leading some to believe that he was going to negotiate a demobilization with the 34th Front.⁵⁰

Politicians speak out about suspension of peace process

Politicians from all sides of the spectrum emphasized the need to free the hostages and continue with the talks, so as not lose two years of work.⁵¹ The Senate and Chamber Peace Commissions, and a group of business associations, called for the immediate release of the kidnap victims,⁵² and the Inspector General said this would be the only way to re-start the dialogues and that the situation should be seen as an opportunity to place conditions on the FARC.⁵³ Ex-President Uribe and his supporters have stated that this kidnapping is a sign that President Santos has allowed the FARC to feel that they are on the same level as the armed forces, and said that the international community should demand that the FARC implement a unilateral ceasefire. He blamed the President for allowing security to worsen in the country.⁵⁴

⁴⁷ www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/bloque-ivan-rios-de-farc-dice-que-general-alzate-esta-en-su-poder/14842818

⁴⁸ www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/retorno-de-general-entraria-en-fase-de-solucion-en-cualquier-momento/14847896

⁴⁹ <http://vbouvier.wordpress.com/>

⁵⁰ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/desaparicion-de-general-alzate-podria-no-ser-un-secuest-articulo-528024> and <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/alzate-de-civil-una-zona-roja-articulo-528036>

⁵¹ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/no-se-pueden-echar-borda-dos-anos-de-trabajo-partidos-p-articulo-528069>

⁵² <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/congreso/comisiones-de-paz-dicen-que-negociaciones-deben-reanudarse/14846858> and <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/gremios-apoyan-suspension-de-dialogos-hasta-sea-liberad-articulo-528143>

⁵³ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/judicial/dialogos-no-pueden-reanudarse-hasta-farc-no-liberen-los-articulo-528093> and <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/justicia/esta-es-la-oportunidad-para-poner-condiciones-a-las-farc-procurador/14846056>

⁵⁴ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/uribe-arremete-contra-el-gobierno-tras-secuestro-de-gen-articulo-528006>

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3. International

International comments on the suspension of the dialogues

The European Union has called on the FARC to free the three hostages immediately in order to re-establish the peace process,⁵⁵ while Spanish news source El País criticized the FARC for breaking the trust of the Colombian population, and supported Santos' decision to suspend the dialogues.⁵⁶ The United Nations in Colombia released a press statement that given the progress until now in the peace process, it is important that the hostages are released and the situation resolved as soon as possible.⁵⁷

4. Other Voices

Inspector General calls for multi-party pact for peace

Inspector General Alejandro Ordóñez, a frequent critic of the peace process, has called for an inter-party mechanism that allows a pact for peace that will incorporate voices and opinions from all over the political spectrum, making peace more sustainable and legitimate.⁵⁸

People's Ombudsman calls for more indigenous representation in Havana

Jorge Armando Otálora, the People's Ombudsman, called on the GOC to allow more indigenous people direct representation at the dialogue table in Havana. He stated that it is essential that an indigenous person be included in the last delegation of victims to travel to Cuba to participate directly in the talks.⁵⁹

Victims call for continuation of talks

The National Movement of Victims of State Crimes (MOVICE) urged the GOC to continue the peace process despite the kidnapping of General Rubén Darío Alzate Mora and two others. They said that a bilateral ceasefire is absolutely necessary to continue the talks.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/judicial/ue-pide-farc-liberen-de-inmediato-y-sin-condiciones-los-articulo-527991>

⁵⁶ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/elmundo/diario-el-pais-de-espana-critica-actitud-de-farc-y-resp-articulo-528084>

⁵⁷ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/la-onu-expreso-su-preocupacion-por-secuestros-en-colombia/14843425>

⁵⁸ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/procurador-pide-crear-un-pacto-paz-incluya-criticos-articulo-527439>

⁵⁹ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/defensoria-del-pueblo-pidio-representacion-indigena-dia-articulo-527554>

⁶⁰ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/victimas-de-estado-exigen-gobierno-reanudar-dialogos-de-articulo-528132>



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5. Emerging Challenges and Responses

Police to take on central role in post-conflict

President Santos said the police will play a central role in post-conflict stability, and will be more numerous and effective to contribute to peace, especially in terms of citizen security.⁶¹

GOC assures that FARC will disarm

After multiple FARC declarations that they will not give up weapons after a peace agreement, GOC dialogue team leader assured that armed peace is not an option.⁶² High Commissioner for Peace Sergio Jaramillo also emphasized that disarmament is necessary for peace, and a final agreement will not be reached without FARC commitment to leave weapons aside.⁶³

Concept of political crime must be broadened as part of peacebuilding

In interview with El Tiempo, President Santos discussed his hopes for his second term, which reached its first 100 days on Monday. He said the peace process still requires effort to make difficult decisions related to topics left on the agenda – the end of the conflict and victims. He also said that the concept of political crime – currently limited to sedition and rebellion – must be broadened, in order to include crimes connected with these two.⁶⁴

Do the FARC have complete control over all of their units?

In light of the kidnapping of General Rubén Darío Alzate Mora, Captain Jorge Rodríguez Contreras, and lawyer Gloria Urrego, apparently by the 34th Front, Semana Magazine published an analysis of the possibility that the FARC leadership do not have complete control over all units. The article highlights the contradictory messages sent out by the FARC after the kidnapping, which first said they had no knowledge of it, then tweeted that they did, then claimed their Twitter page had been hacked, and finally took responsibility. The article also evaluates the possibility of dissent in the FARC ranks.⁶⁵

⁶¹ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/santos-dice-policia-jugara-un-papel-determinante-el-pos-articulo-527700>

⁶² <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/humberto-de-calle-asegura-farc-dejaran-armas-articulo-527398>

⁶³ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/esta-es-la-oportunidad-la-paz-debe-llegar-ya-sergio-jaramillo/14840115>

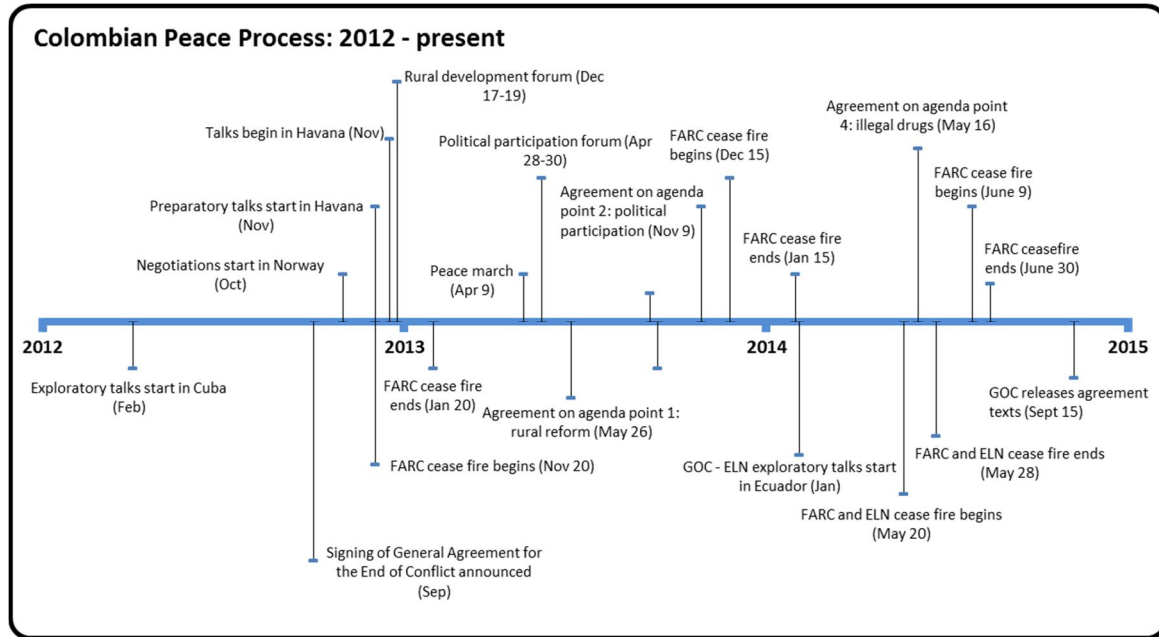
⁶⁴ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/gobierno/hay-que-ampliar-delitos-politicos-conexos-si-queremos-la-paz-santos/14838217>

⁶⁵ <http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/tienen-las-farc-un-control-absoluto-sobre-sus-frentes/409393-3>

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6. Timeline



7. Further Reading

Photo essay of peace process highlights

El Espectador published a photo essay of highlights of the GOC-FARC peace process, including the initial announcement of the dialogues, the FARC's two Christmas ceasefires, and civil society marches in support of the peace talks.⁶⁶

Frank Pearl emphasizes need for legitimate peace

In an interview with Blu Radio, GOC dialogue team member Frank Pearl emphasized the need for legitimacy in the peace process, and for an agreement in which Colombians feel confident. He was optimistic that this can be achieved, and highlighted progress so far, including the three partial agreements.⁶⁷

Semana profiles General Alzate's objectives

Semana Magazine published a previous interview and profile of General Alzate, who was kidnapped by the FARC on Sunday, and his objectives and goals of bringing positive change to the Chocó region. He stated that social initiatives such as bringing electricity and other services to

⁶⁶ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/los-hechos-han-marcado-el-proceso-de-paz-galeria-528015>

⁶⁷ <http://www.bluradio.com/82665/son-especialmente-importantes-opiniones-de-opositores-dialogos-de-paz-pearl>



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Chocó were very important to resolving the conflict, and that military force can no longer be the center of efforts to stop the guerrilla groups and bring peace to Colombia's regions.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/el-general-ruben-dario-alzate-queria-llevarle-energia-electrica-todo-el-choco/409341-3

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1. Background

On September 4, 2012, President Santos announced the signing of a General Agreement for the Termination of the Conflict between the Government of Colombia and the FARC, initiating the fourth official peace talks with this group. The agenda includes: 1) integrated rural reform; 2) guarantees for political opposition and civic participation; 3) the end of the conflict (laying down arms and reintegration into civilian life); 4) illegal drugs; and 5) victims' rights. Preparatory talks started in Oslo on October 17, 2012 and substantive dialogues in Havana, on November 19, 2012. Three agreements have been reached: one on the first agenda point, integrated rural reform, on May 26, 2013; the second on the next point, political participation, on November 6, 2013; and another on the fourth agenda point, illegal drugs, on May 16, 2014.

On June 10, 2014, the GOC announced that exploratory talks with the ELN were taking place to define an agenda for peace talks. These initial meetings have been held since January 2014, and the issues of victims and societal participation are the first two agenda points. The GOC and ELN will release information on the progress of the exploratory talks as they continue.

2. GOC – FARC Key Developments from November 19th – November 25th

General Alzate to be released

General Rubén Darío Alzate Mora, Captain Jorge Rodríguez Contreras, and lawyer Gloria Urrego were kidnapped by the FARC on November 16th, causing a suspension of the GOC-FARC peace talks. Over the last week, a plan has been made to release them, causing optimism that the process will resume soon. President Santos stated that he already has the coordinates for the release, which he expects to occur on Thursday, and which will be supported by the Red Cross.⁶⁹ Minister of Defense Juan Carlos Pinzón and the military both confirmed that the necessary humanitarian guarantees to support the release are in place.⁷⁰

Criticism flies surrounding kidnap victim release

The FARC have criticized the military operations in Chocó where General Alzate, Captain Rodríguez, and Gloria Urrego were kidnapped, saying that they put the kidnap victims at risk. The group therefore threatened to not release the three.⁷¹ They also asked ex-President Uribe not to

⁶⁹ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/santos-confirma-tiene-coordenadas-liberacion-de-secuest-articulo-528992>

⁷⁰ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/mindefensa-dice-hay-plenas-garantias-mision-humanitaria-articulo-528981> and <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/ejercito-dice-estan-dadas-condiciones-liberar-secuestra-articulo-529547>

⁷¹ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/farc-dicen-operativos-militares-ponen-peligro-liberacion-articulo-529123> and <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/ejercito-pretende-rescate-aventurero-y-arriesgado-del-g-articulo-529239>

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sabotage the release by publicizing the coordinates or other confidential information, as he has done with other delicate matters in the past.⁷² FARC leader ‘Timochenko’ released a statement that FARC trust in the peace process has been diminished and that it will be hard to return to the dialogue table under the same conditions and dynamics.⁷³

Meanwhile, Inspector General Alejandro Ordóñez stated that the release of the kidnap victims is not an act of good will, and encouraged the GOC to use the suspension of the dialogues as an opportunity to formulate and present additional peace process terms and conditions to the FARC.⁷⁴ In addition, the Senate has already made a request that General Alzate appear in Congress after his release, to explain why he was in a dangerous area, in civilian clothes, and without a bodyguard.⁷⁵ The People’s Ombudsman has stated his hope that the kidnap victims will be released soon so that the peace talks can resume as promptly as possible.⁷⁶

Release of two kidnapped soldiers demonstrates “maturity” of process

Two soldiers who were kidnapped by the FARC in Arauca a month ago were released. Santos praised this move as a demonstration of the maturity of the peace process and a positive step forward towards peace, especially when combined with the prospective release of General Alzate and the other two kidnap victims in Chocó.⁷⁷

3. International

Spanish ex-Foreign Minister recommends UN support Colombian peacebuilding

Spanish ex-Foreign Minister José Manuel García-Margallo, who will join the UN Security Council next year, is in Bogotá meeting with the President and other officials. He suggested that the UNSC should be involved in peacebuilding after the signing of an agreement with the FARC. He stated that the greatest challenge in this process will be the balance between justice and peace, and that

⁷² <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/farc-le-pide-uribe-no-sabotee-liberacion-de-general-alz-articulo-528801>

⁷³ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/timochenko-considera-dificil-reanudar-dialogos-de-paz-m-articulo-529254>

⁷⁴ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/judicial/liberacion-del-general-alzate-no-ningun-acto-de-buena-v-articulo-528822>

⁷⁵ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/general-alzate-tendra-dar-explicaciones-el-congreso-articulo-528743>

⁷⁶ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/defensoria-del-pueblo-pide-destrabar-el-proceso-de-paz-articulo-529520>

⁷⁷ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/gobierno/santos-dice-que-liberaciones-demuestran-madurez-del-proceso-de-paz-14884058>

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the UNSC could be of great support in this area.⁷⁸ García Margallo also stated that Spain is fully committed to providing financial support to Colombia's post-conflict.⁷⁹

4. Other Voices

Post-conflict forum in Cali highlights regional peace needs

A forum to bring national and regional leaders together in Cali resulted in a number of conclusions about the approaching post-conflict. The first was the fact that Colombia's regions have been highly affected by the conflict and have specific financial and capacity needs in terms of implementing a final peace agreement. Another was the need for profound reform to regional land holding processes to support this implementation.⁸⁰

Minister of the Interior thinks FARC entry to politics is possible

In a forum organized by El Tiempo, Minister of the Interior Juan Fernando Cristo emphasized that a true reintegration of the FARC after a peace agreement would require political participation, including taking political leadership positions. Meanwhile, UN Resident Coordinator Fabrizio Hoschild highlighted that Colombia's institutional offering and capacity must be strengthened in order to manage post-conflict needs. Other topics included private sector involvement in peacebuilding and the stigmatization of ex-combatants.⁸¹

5. Emerging Challenges and Responses

Uribe suggests FARC protection zone

Ex-president Uribe suggested that if the FARC agreed to a ceasefire, a special zone could be created to contain and protect them. The area would be constitutionally protected, and the armed forces would be present to ensure security. Uribe believes that this area would support the end of the conflict and the reintegration of ex-combatants.⁸²

6. Timeline

⁷⁸ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/espana-buscara-onu-se-involucre-paz-de-colombia-articulo-528858>

⁷⁹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/gobierno/espana-tramitara-mas-ayuda-internacional-para-la-paz-de-colombia/14867795>

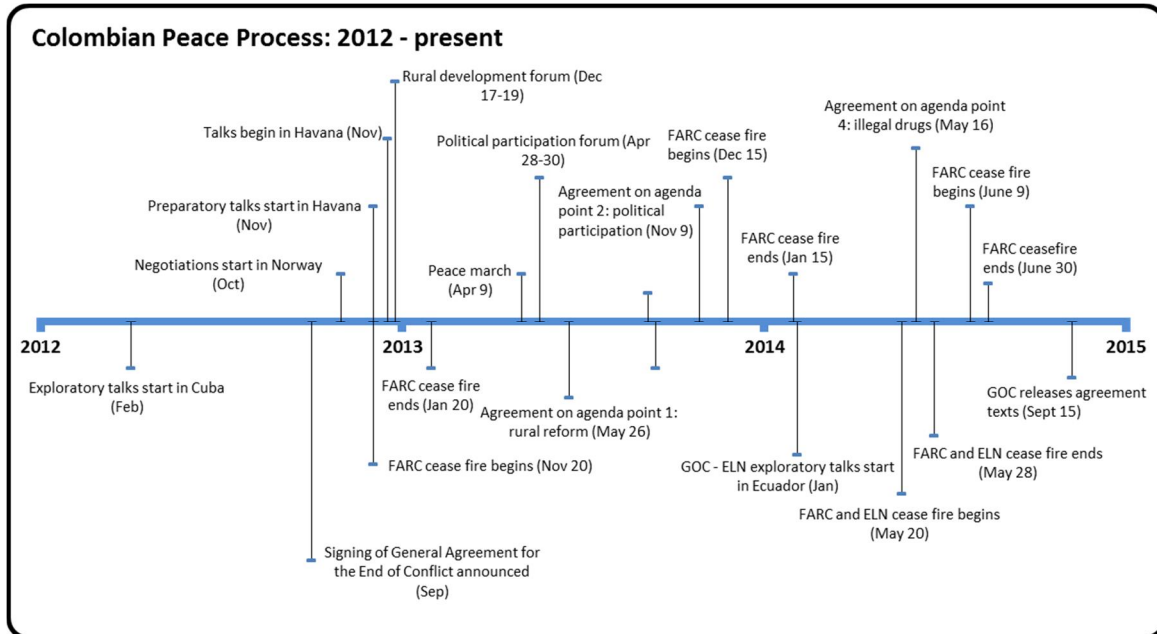
⁸⁰ <http://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/cali/en-el-posconflicto-las-regiones-esperan-mayor-autonomia/14873897>

⁸¹ <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/en-vivo-mininterior-dice-que-aprueba-a-jefes-guerrilleros-en-politica/14880536>

⁸² <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/expresidente-uribe-propone-concentrar-guerrilleros-de-f-articulo-529080>

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7. Further Reading

Samper encourages peace in Colombia for peace in South America

At one of his first press conferences as Secretary General of UNASUR, former Colombian president Ernesto Samper stated that peace in Colombia is necessary to bring peace to all of South America. He also expressed his optimism about the outcome of the current GOC-FARC peace talks.⁸³

⁸³ <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/paz/samper-dice-conflicto-colombiano-impide-suramerica-ser-articulo-528566>