

 PEACE MAIL

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WEEKLY UPDATE: Implementing the Peace Accords

The final peace accord contains a three-pronged approach to ensuring fulfillment of commitments included in the text: the *Commission for Monitoring, Promotion, and Verification of the Implementation of the Peace Accord* (CSIVI), the *National Reincorporation Council* (CNR) and the GOC-FARC-UN tripartite *Monitoring and Verification Mechanism* (MM&V). This callout box includes a weekly update on releases and work related to these supports for implementing the peace accords in Colombia.

After the United Nations conducted a review of the video that showed agents of the MM&V dancing with FARC members on New Year's Eve in one of the pre-grouping zones, they announced on January 5th that they would be separating the three individuals in the video from the mission along with their supervisor, naming a guarantee of impartiality in operations as the motivating factor.¹ As a result of this withdrawal, the FARC has also removed its MM&V members from the same site.²

FARC leader, Rodrigo Londoño, advanced a second call for attention to the medical care and provisions for FARC members in pre-grouping zones, noting that the food is insufficient and at times unsanitary, as has been the medical attention for the guerrillas. Heavy rains have also taken a substantial toll on camp sanitation and infrastructures. Londoño asked specifically for a sanitation review by the Red Cross and Doctors without Borders.³ Nonetheless, the FARC continues their movement to transitional zones, with the historically powerful Southern Bloc of the guerrilla group – numbering around 2,000 members – beginning their transition to pre-grouping zones on January 8th.⁴

Separately, a report released by a commission of the Governor's Office of the department of Antioquia requested a different site for the FARC transitional zone, currently planned to occupy the hamlet of Carrizal in the Remedios municipality. The report cited mercury contaminated water, the presence of illnesses such as paludism, psoriasis, and malaria, slow advances in camp construction, and weak infrastructure as the key reasons for the recommended move from Carrizal to the municipality of Segovia, the latter of which already hosts a current pre-grouping zone.⁵

ELN dialogues moved to January 12th, confrontations continue

Chief GOC negotiator for the ELN peace talks, Juan Camilo Restrepo announced that the public phase of the peace talks – postponed various times since March 30th of last year – would begin in Quito, Ecuador on Thursday, January 12th instead of the previously planned January 10th date. On the government's side, those in attendance will include Restrepo, Ex-minister Luz Helena Sarmiento, Major General Eduardo Herrera Berbel, Alberto Fergusson, Jaime Avendaño, and María Alejandra Villamizar. ELN representatives are still unknown.⁶ The unwillingness of the

guerrilla group to release high profile hostage Odín Sánchez remains a sticking point for the two parties, as does the GOC's unwillingness to pardon several current ELN prisoners. Additionally, ongoing attacks by the ELN have perpetuated uncertainty around the dialogues. A presumed ELN attack against the Colombian military in the department of Arauca on January 9th left one soldier dead.⁷