## Release of child soldiers and judicial shield for final peace accord with the FARC

This past week, two new agreements were reached by the delegations of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the Government of Colombia (GOC) in Havana.

On May 12, the parties announced a mechanism to secure compliance with the Final Agreement and provide a **judicial shield** against future changes by national or international actors. At an international level, the Final Accord will be presented to the United Nations Security Council and deposited as a 'Special Agreement' under the Geneva Conventions of 1949[1]. At the national level, the Final Agreement will be debated and voted on by Congress through a legislative 'fast-track' process, after which the Constitutional Court will check the constitutionality of the text[2].

On May 15, a framework was announced for the **release of child soldiers** and the development of a comprehensive assistance program. The FARC agreed to provide information to identify and locate children and facilitate their release[3]. A Technical Committee will lead the development of protocols and plans, composed of the National Ombudsman's Office and the Advisory Office on Human Rights of the Presidency of the Republic, along with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), UNICEF, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM)[4]. According to the Attorney General's Office, the FARC 'systematically' recruited almost 11,500 minors between 1975 and 2014[5].

## Armed hostilities by the FARC's Eastern Bloc

Hostilities recent took place between the FARC and the Colombian Armed Forces in the eastern department of Meta. The FARC's Eastern Bloc, responsible for the actions, announced that they will no longer 'study' the peace accords, implying a lack of control by the FARC leadership and potential opposition to the peace process among some FARC units. The GOC stated that the FARC have violated the unilateral ceasefire three times since its official declaration in July 2015[6].

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