

GOC and FARC, already on the last point of the agenda

On April 29, the GOC and FARC delegations issued a joint statement emphasizing a “productive and intense” round of negotiations¹. Although no specific details were revealed, the advances are related to the gender revision of the points of the agenda “Political participation” and “Solution to the problem of illicit drugs.” In addition, the GOC and FARC continued discussing the “End of Conflict” point, and began “Implementation, verification and legalization of accords.”² The delegations will continue their work on May 4.

No formal dialogues until ELN shows willingness for peace, GOC

President Santos ordered the military offensive against the ELN to be maintained until the guerrilla stops kidnapping, attacking oil infrastructure and releases all hostages.³ In response, the illegal armed group denied its participation in some of the recent kidnappings that occurred in the department of Norte de Santander,⁴ but not one that occurred in the department of Chocó⁵. The guerrilla also asked civil society, the Catholic Church and the Ombudsman's Office of Colombia to monitor acts of violence against the civil population.⁶ At the request of the insurgent group, the Catholic Church will advise the peace dialogues and, according to one bishop, will help with the release of hostages.⁷

Humanitarian demining extended to 44 municipalities

The Direction of Integral Action against Antipersonnel Mines, a government body, is already explaining to local authorities the demining plan for the most affected areas of Colombia. Once the peace accords between the GOC and the insurgency are signed, the second phase of the plan will involve local communities in the strategy⁸.

International support for peace

Representatives of the U.S. and Colombian governments gathered to discuss the strategy to implement the second phase of “Plan Colombia,” known as “Peace Colombia,” with an initial investment of 450 million dollars.⁹ Although the resources have not been yet approved by the U.S. Congress, members of the Senate have recognized and supported efforts in Colombia to end the armed conflict through the peace dialogues.¹⁰ Moreover, the UK Minister of Foreign Affairs¹¹ and

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the Foreign Affairs Council of the European Union¹² announced an increase in the funds for peacebuilding.