

## **PEACE MAIL**

September 5-11 2017

### **WEEKLY UPDATE: Implementing the Peace Accords**

This callout box includes a weekly update on releases and work specifically related implementing the Final Peace Accord between the Government and the FARC in Colombia.

The **second verification mission of the United Nations will begin its operations on September 26<sup>th</sup>**. This mission will be responsible for verifying the reintegration of the FARC and the application of security guarantees in the areas most affected by the armed conflict.<sup>1</sup>

On Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup>, a known commander of the FARC, Édgar Mesías Salgado Aragón (alias, Rodrigo Cadete), escaped his bodyguards in the department of Caquetá and fled. “Rodrigo Cadete” was a close associate of now deceased “Mono Jojoy” and was the commander of the 27<sup>th</sup> Front of the guerrilla group.<sup>2</sup>

### **Pope visits Colombia, urges forgiveness and reconciliation**

The Pope visited Colombia September 6-11 and travelled to three cities supporting the peace process, and urging his followers, and Colombians in general, to forgive and reconcile. Among the central themes in his mass of over 1.5 million attendees in the Simon Bolivar park in Bogota, and during his national prayers for reconciliation and for victims of the armed conflict in Villavicencio and Medellin, were calls for recognizing the truth of the acts committed over the last half century. He urged Colombians not to be afraid to ask for and offer forgiveness, to heal, and the renounce cycles of vengeance and violence.<sup>3</sup>

### **ELN clashes, illegal actions continue ahead of October 1<sup>st</sup> start to ceasefire**

In the week following the announcement of the ELN-GoC bilateral ceasefire to begin on October 1<sup>st</sup>, clashes continued in the department of Cauca between the Colombian Armed Forces and the guerrilla group, negatively impacting indigenous communities in the territory.<sup>4</sup> On September 6<sup>th</sup>, the Francisco Bossio Front of the ELN also allegedly attacked an armored truck in a confrontation that left one person dead and another injured in the department of Cesar. The estimated value of the robbery was 5 billion pesos (\$1.7 million USD).<sup>5</sup> This same day, chief ELN negotiator in Quito, Ecuador, announced that the group was working on handing over the remains of the Russian animal trafficker killed by the ELN in November of last year to the Russian Embassy.<sup>6</sup>