

# DDR AND CHILD SOLDIER ISSUES

A MONTHLY REVIEW  
FEBRUARY 2017

USAID supports the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Colombia through the **Recruitment Prevention and Reintegration (RPR) Program**. The RPR Program provides institutional strengthening for the Government of Colombia (GOC) to support legal, social and economic reintegration services to demobilized adults and disengaged children, as well as to prevent new recruitment.

The GOC supports demobilized adults through its **Colombian Reintegration Agency (ACR)**. The DDR initiatives of the ACR aim to fulfill the following objectives: 1) Create conditions for demobilized ex-combatants to become independent citizens, 2) Strengthen socio-economic conditions in receptor communities, and 3) Promote reconciliation.

Children and adolescents who disengage from illegal armed groups, recognized as victims, receive special attention through programs and policies led by the **Colombian Family Welfare Institute (ICBF)** through its Specialized Assistance Program, which aims to reestablish and guarantee rights with special emphasis on protection, education and health.

This monthly review, produced by IOM, provides a summary of news related to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) in Colombia, along with statistics on ex-combatant adults and disengaged children.

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## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

### FARC-EP complete movements to transitional zones

The FARC-EP finalized their movement to 26 transitional points and zones, where they will begin the formal process of laying down arms. The final group of FARC-EP combatants arrived Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, in La Montañita, Caquetá. In total, roughly 6,900 FARC-EP guerrillas now occupy transitional zones throughout the country. The mission to move the guerrillas from their 36 pre-grouping zones to 19 transitional zones and 7 points spanned 19 days from January 28<sup>th</sup>-February 18<sup>th</sup> and was coordinated by the Strategic Transition Command and the Joint Monitoring and Verification Command (Military Forces); The Special Police Unit for Peacebuilding (National Police); the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace and the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism. The operations covered 5,400 miles and employed boats, cars, buses, and stretches on foot.<sup>1</sup>

### Jean Arnault addresses CSIVI on challenges in transitional zones and timeline for laying down arms

A number of the transitional zones suffered from difficult logistical and lodging conditions, making it difficult to maintain the pre-set schedule for operations pegged to “D Day,” or December 1<sup>st</sup> of last year. In a letter dated February 17<sup>th</sup>, Chief of Mission of the United Nations in Colombia, Jean Arnault, wrote to the Commission for Tracking, Promotion, and Verification of the Final Peace Accord (CSIVI) addressing these and other challenges related to the implementation of the accords. In an effort to reinforce the ceasefire agreement, Arnault acknowledged directly the “gray zone” created by the fact that many of the transitional zones are not ready according to the commitments made by the GOC, nor are they precisely delimited. Regarding the security (juridical, physical, socioeconomic) of the FARC-EP in the transitional zones and heading into their reincorporation into civilian life, Arnault recognized the expressed concerns as legitimate and conveyed an interest in collaborating to alleviate those concerns.<sup>2</sup>

### Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) passes through Legislative Branch, receives new Selection Committee

The JEP passed in the plenary session of the House of Representatives. The Senate had previously approved the initiative 85-20. Minister of the Interior, Juan Fernando Cristo, noted that the transitional justice mechanism will apply alternative penal sanctions to those FARC-EP guerrillas in the transitional; the alternative sanctions will not apply to any dissident members of the group, who will instead be tried and punished using harsher ordinary justice mechanisms. Additionally, any former guerrillas who fall benefit from the JEP, but who later commit crimes of any kind, will be removed from the coverage of the transitional justice mechanism.<sup>3</sup>

Despite calls from the Attorney General's office that it be permitted oversight and participation in the JEP, President Santos was firm in his assertion that this would not be the case, since it was not the agreed upon arrangement set forth in the final set of accords.<sup>4</sup> However, roughly one week after the JEP passed through the House of Representatives, on February 13<sup>th</sup>, the president of the Legislative Branch, Carlos Fernando

<sup>1</sup> <https://colombia.unmissions.org/m%C3%A1s-de-6000-integrantes-de-las-farc-ep-se-movilizan-hacia-puntos-y-zonas-para-la-transición%20de-la-vida>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.indepaz.org.co/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Misio%20CC%81nONU-CartaCSIVI-170217.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.mininterior.gov.co/sala-de-prensa/noticias/este-sistema-de-justicia-transicional-no-es-un-sistema-de-impunidad-ministro-del-interior-juan-fernando-cristo-en-plenaria-de-camara-donde-se-aprobo-en-segundo-debate-jurisdiccion-especial-para-la-paz>

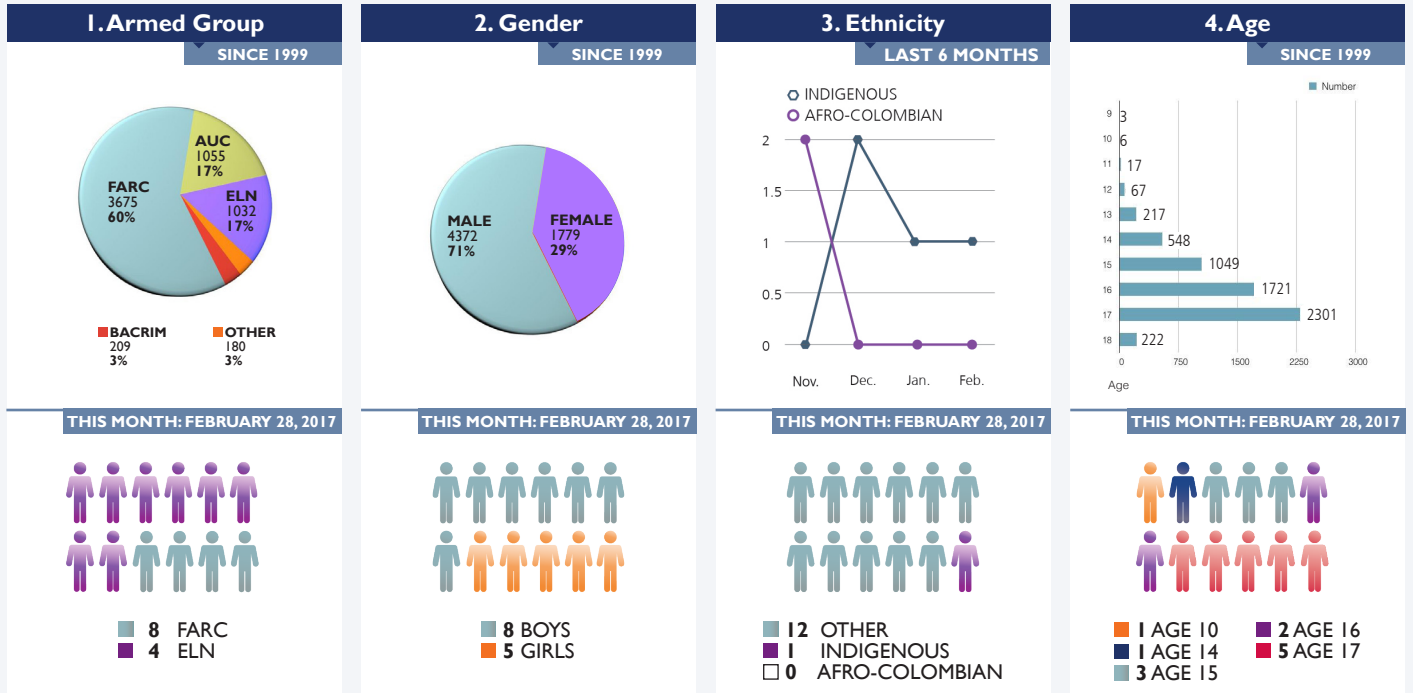
<sup>4</sup> <http://confidencialcolombia.com/es/1/actualidad/29030/Santos-descarta-participación-de-la-Procuraduría-ADa-en-la-JEP-Noticias-Confidencial-Colombia-Procuraduría-JEP.htm>

# FIGURES & TRENDS

\* These data are estimates based on the information available

## Disengaged Children & Adolescents

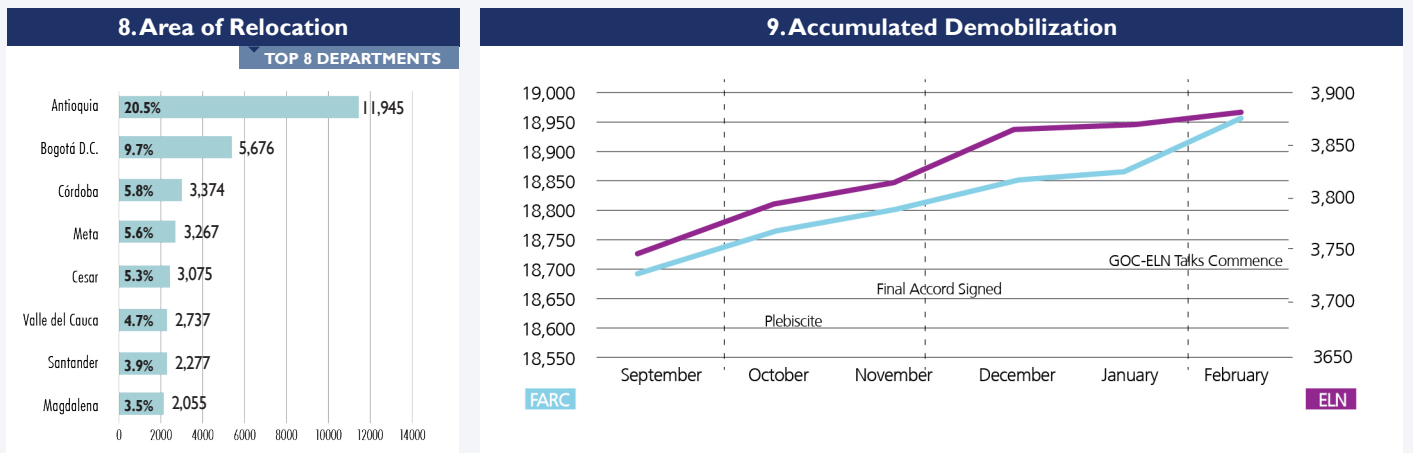
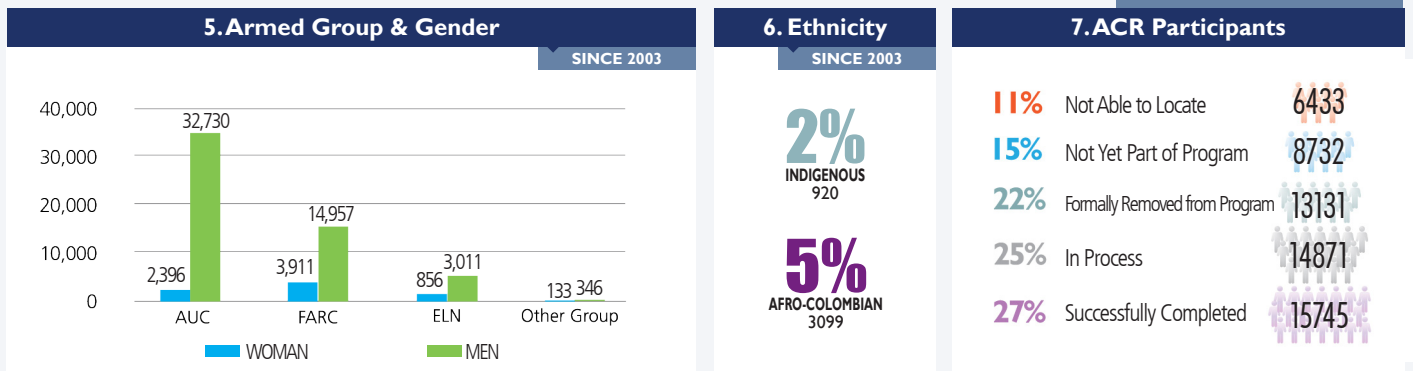
TOTAL 6,151



## 5: Victims of Forced Recruitment

Total 8,098\*\* / Month to month 54\*\*

\*\* Number of cases of child recruitment reported to the Victims Unit.



Data up to January 31, 2017

**Figure 1:** Total number of disengaged minors grouped by gender. Boys have historically been more frequently recruited than girls.

**Figure 2:** Numbers of minors who disengaged from each IAG. Most disengaged children were recruited by the FARC.

**Figure 3:** Total number of disengaged minors by ethnicity. Indigenous groups are disproportionately affected by recruitment.

**Figure 4:** Numbers of disengaged minors in each age group. The average age of recruitment is between 15 and 18 years old. Sources for figures 1-4: ICBF Database, Unified Beneficiary Registry (RUI)

**Figure 5:** Total number of male and female adults who demobilized from each IAG. The AUC had the lowest proportion of women.

**Figure 6:** The eight departments to which the highest numbers of ex-combatants

relocate for their reintegration process.

**Figure 7:** Demobilized Adults

**Figure 8:** Total number of demobilized adults by ethnicity. Sources for figures 5-7: ICBF Database and ACR Reintegration Information System (SIR)

**Figure 9:** Accumulated Demobilization

Mocoa called for a public hearing regarding the JEP with the intention of hearing perspectives from all sectors, including the Attorney General's and Inspector General's Offices.<sup>5</sup> The next day, the Selection Committee of the JEP was appointed, which is the body charged with selecting the nearly 100 of the magistrates who will comprise the JEP and who will be responsible for determining the fates of all guerrillas, military, and business leaders with crimes committed within the framework of the armed conflict.<sup>6</sup>

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PEACE ACCORDS

FARC-EP

### FARC-EP on schedule to begin laying down arms March 1

Despite setbacks in the logistical provisioning of the 26 transition zones and the arrival of storage containers, the nearly 7,000 members of the FARC-EP are on schedule to begin laying down their armaments on March 1, 2017, which are to be stored and overseen by the UN International Monitoring and Verification unit as previously agreed upon in the signed peace accords between the FARC-EP and the GOC. In keeping with the 180-day transition period outlined in the peace accord, the FARC is to lay down 30% of their arms beginning on March 1, another 30% on May 1, and the remaining 40% on June 1, 2017. After which time, the UN Verification team will remove the containers storing the armaments. In addition to laying down their arms in the transition zones, the FARC-EP also committed to release the locations of secret armament storage facilities containing mines and bombs to also be withdrawn and stored by the UN team.<sup>7, 8, 9</sup>

### FARC-EP militia members to remain in homes

High Commissioner for Peace, Sergio Jaramillo, announced on the 16<sup>th</sup> that the FARC-EP militias will remain in their homes so as not to burden the already strained infrastructures of the transitional zones, a decision justified by the argument that these militia members already have established living arrangements and routines – unlike the FARC-EP guerrillas prior to their transition to the pre-grouping and now transitional zones. He went on to emphasize the importance of a quick and effective operation to identify, register, and begin to transition to legality these members of the urban operations of the FARC-EP.<sup>10</sup>

### All minors exiting FARC-EP released by April

FARC-EP leaders, after meeting with representatives of the GOC and the senate sub-committee for tracking the implementation of the peace accords, announced that all minors will be out of the FARC-EP ranks by the beginning of April.<sup>11</sup>

### Amnesty only eligible for those crimes committed by FARC-EP members before D-Day

The GOC passed Decree 277 (2017), which regulates the way in which judges and attorneys can apply amnesty to members of the FARC-EP. Amnesty will only apply to those crimes committed before “D Day,” or December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, when the Peace Accords came into legal effect, and the individuals must have their names included on the lists that the FARC-EP hand over in the transitional zones. All guerrillas applying for amnesty will need to sign an act of commitment to not engage in future armed rebellion.<sup>12</sup>

### Voces de Paz representatives guaranteed legal standing in the Legislative Branch

The second initiative after the Amnesty Law to take advantage of the Congressional fast track process has passed 54-0. The new transitional article added to Law 5 (1992) allows for three members of the Voces de Paz movement to participate in the House of Representatives, with three additional in the Senate. They will be permitted to participate in the debates, though they will not have the right to vote. Additionally, the initiative solidified the participation of victims through the President of the National Victims' Committee in any legal or constitutional reform projects that have anything to do with victims of the armed conflict.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.elnuevosiglo.com.co/articulos/02-2017-turno-para-debatir-jep-es-el-senado>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/comision-que-elegira-los-magistrados-de-la-jurisdccion-especial-para-la-paz/515502>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/comienzo-dejar-de-armas-de-las-farc/16830657>

<sup>8</sup> <http://confidencialcolombia.com/es/1/actualidad/29609/Este%ADlunes%ADse%ADdefine%ADel%ADcronograma%ADde%ADentrega%ADdel%AD30%ADde%ADlas%ADarmas%ADde%ADlas%ADFarc%ADEntrega%ADde%ADarmas%ADAcuerdo%ADde%ADPaz%ADGobierno%ADFarc%ADONU.htm>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.laht.com/article.asp?CategoryId=12393&ArticleId=2431597>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/paz-y-derechos-humanos/farc-sin-milicianos-en-zonas-veredales-DM5943858>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/fecha-de-la-salida-de-menores-de-las-farc/16819438>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/acuerdos-de-gobierno-y-farc/ley-de-amnistia-para-las-farc-FF5979171>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.mininterior.gov.co/sala-de-prensa/noticias/aprobada-en-ultimo-debate-ley-que-permite-participacion-de-voceros-de-las-farc-en-el-congreso>

## ELN claims responsibility for recent bomb attacks putting peace talks at risk

ELN recently claimed responsibility for the bombing attack that took place February 19, 2017 in La Macarena district of Bogotá near the city's bull fighting ring killing a police officer and injuring 29 others. A Twitter message posted by the group on February 26 stated that that an urban faction deliberately attacked a police patrol by detonating the bomb in Bogotá. ELN also claimed responsibility for a bomb attack on February 14 that injured four Colombian soldiers in the department of Meta on the main highway between Bogotá and Villavicencio. GOC Minister of the Interior, Juan Fernando Cristo, said that these attacks by the ELN have put at serious risk the peace talk negotiations currently ongoing in Quito, Ecuador between the illegal armed group and the GOC.<sup>14, 15</sup>

## ELN Releases Odín Sánchez, and ELN-GOC public talks commence

As planned in the most recent set of agreements between the ELN and the GOC, the guerrilla group released 62-year-old Odín Sanchez, the former congressman who had swapped places with his sick brother who had been kidnapped by the guerrillas for two years and nine months. Current negotiators include GOC lead Juan Camilo Restrepo, who will be joined at the table by former environment minister Luz Helena Sarmiento, retired major general Eduardo Herrera Berbel, Rosario University professor Alberto Fergusson, conflict expert and former presidential adviser Jaime Avendaño, and journalist and former director of *Confidencial Colombia*, María Alejandra Villamizar.<sup>16</sup> On Monday, February 6<sup>th</sup>, Senator Roy Barreras also joined the GOC negotiating team in Quito, Ecuador. Barreras is the President of the Senate's Peace Commission and was a negotiator with the FARC-EP in Havana.<sup>17</sup> On Thursday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, the GOC and the ELN began the public phase of the peace talks between the two sides, beginning with three topics: public participation in political change, victims, and the end of conflict and implementation.<sup>18</sup>

After seven days, the GOC-ELN negotiating teams divided into two distinct sub-teams that will work simultaneously in order to address, respectively, society's participation in the dialogues and humanitarian dynamics. The latter will take on as one of its talking points the de-escalation of the conflict between the guerrilla group and the GOC with the intention of moving towards a bilateral ceasefire. Chief negotiator for the ELN, Pablo Beltrán (alias), noted that the first week of the conversations focused on laying the ground rules for how the talks would proceed.<sup>19</sup>

## INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

### Ireland President Michael D. Higgins in Colombia

Ireland President Michael D. Higgins visited Colombia on February 11<sup>th</sup> to discuss international cooperation for the post-conflict transition along with opportunities for investment, commerce, and tourism. President Higgins spent four days in the country, which included the signing of various accords and a visit to one of the transitional zones in the department of Antioquia. He also met with leaders from the National University in Bogotá, the United Nations, the European Union, and civil society. Both Presidents Higgins and Juan Manuel Santos exchanged lessons learned from their countries' peace processes.<sup>20</sup>

### British NGOs support knowledge transfer in post-conflict rural development

In a series of conversations with British NGOs in the United Kingdom, Minister for Work Clara López Obregón and Vice Minister for Labor and Inspection Relations Maiella Barragán consulted with leaders under the mandate of "Policy for employment in the rural sector in Colombia and post-conflict challenges." Participating organizations included ABColombia, Christian Aid, the Agency for Overseas Development, Caravan of Jurists, Unison Union, and the Women's Commission of Colombian diaspora.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>14</sup> <http://confidencialcolombia.com/es/1/actualidad/29613/Amago-de-crisis-en-los-Di%C3%A1logos-con-el-ELN-Di%C3%A1logos-de-Paz-ELN-Juan-Camilo-Restrepo-Juan-Fernando-Cristo.htm>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/paz-y-derechos-humanos/eln-se-atribuye-ataque-en-bogota-DE6042207>

<sup>16</sup> <http://thebogotapost.com/2017/02/03/elcolombiareleasehostageodinsanchez/>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.zonacero.com/?q=politica/senador-roy-barreras-se-une-al-equipo-negociador-en-dialogos-con-eln-en-quito-76643>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/paz-y-derechos-humanos/gobierno-y-eln-reportaron-avances-en-la-mesa-de-negociacion-ID5959219>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.elcolombiano.com/colombia/paz-y-derechos-humanos/gobierno-y-eln-reportaron-avances-en-la-mesa-de-negociacion-ID5959219>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/gobierno/presidente-de-irlanda-visita-colombia-para-apoyar-el-posconflicto/16817151>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.mintrabajo.gov.co/prensa/noticias-del-ministerio/940-febrero-2016/7555-mintrabajo-analiza-con-ongs-britanicas-temas-de-empleo-rural-y-retos-del-posconflicto.html>

## INSTITUTIONAL PROGRESS

### President Santos names Postconflict Cabinet

On February 4<sup>th</sup>, President Juan Manuel Santos created a Postconflict Cabinet in order to facilitate the implementation of the peace accord. The Cabinet will be responsible for assigning specific responsibilities to the Ministries and directors of various related Institutes. Among the responsibilities assigned to the GOC in the peace accords, is a guaranteed presence of the GOC in the zones most affected by the conflict, territorial demining, and rural development and illicit crop substitution initiatives. Additionally, the Cabinet will be responsible for ensuring GOC support of reincorporation programming, among other themes. The Ministers who form this new cabinet are those from the Ministries of the Interior, of Housing, Health, Agriculture, and of Work. The High Council for Postconflict and the Office for the High Commissioner for Peace will have representatives in the Cabinet.<sup>22</sup>

### Joint FARC-EP and ELN humanitarian demining initiative commences

High Counselor for Post-conflict, Rafael Pardo, announced the formation of *Humanicémonos*, which will be the joint FARC-EP and ELN humanitarian demining initiative. The project looks to involve roughly 20% of the disarming guerrilla population, or 1,200 former guerrillas to help support the goal of a completely demined Colombia by the year 2021. Colombia has the second highest incidence of antipersonnel mines after Afghanistan. Given that it is classified as a humanitarian operation, *Humanicémonos* is eligible to receive GOC and international aid resources.<sup>2</sup>

### Ministry of Work hosts summit to determine postconflict priorities

Early in February, the Ministry of Work convened a summit to determine its postconflict priorities. The overarching goals of the Ministry are to promote employment and social protection initiatives at the local level, promote social and solidarity economies, and to improve access to social security for all populations, among others. Municipalities prioritized in the implementation of the final peace accord are also prioritized in the plans of the Ministry. Additionally, the Ministry looks to increase the available spots in the Colombia Mayor program, in the Mobile Units of SENA, in the Victims program in 43 departments, and to create a more reliable and improved presence of Public Employment Services in the prioritized municipalities.<sup>23</sup>

### Ministry of the Interior offers technical assistance to victims throughout Colombia

During the month of February, the Ministry of the Interior's Internal Articulation Group for Victims of the Armed Conflict Policy (GAPV) conducted technical assistance seminars for victims' representatives and mayors' offices throughout the country. In these sessions, the Ministry informed attendees of the tracking, planning, and implementation tools for public policy regarding victims. They also used the time to address local challenges and opportunities with the intention of creating a coherent territorial-based understanding of addressing victims' needs.<sup>24</sup>

## DIVERSITY ISSUES

### “Youth, Peace, and Security” event forms basis for action plan around youth participation in peacebuilding

On February 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, the national consultation process for the state of UN Security Council Resolution 2250 in Colombia was held in order to determine the current role of youth in peacebuilding and security. The event was hosted by the United Nations Development and Volunteer Programs (UNDP and UNV, respectively), as well as the Office for Support for Peacebuilding, and was intended to identify the opportunities, challenges, and priorities for youth participation in peace and security agendas in the country, and including a tailored and rights-based approach.

<sup>22</sup> <http://www.eltiempo.com/politica/gobierno/santos-instalara-el-gabinete-para-el-posconflicto/16809376>

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.mintrabajo.gov.co/enero-2017/7535-cumbre-con-todas-las-entidades-del-ministerio-del-trabajo-define-prioridades-para-el-posconflicto.html>

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.mininterior.gov.co/sala-de-prensa/noticias/mininterior-realiza-jornadas-de-asistencia-tecnica-en-todo-el-pais>

## Record number of women included in tripartite Monitoring and Verification Mechanism

In the first mechanism of its kind, the tripartite Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (MM&V) – comprising representatives from the GOC, the UN, and the FARC-EP – has 12% women members. Of the 138 women working in the MM&V, 53 are foreign military and police representatives, and 85 are Colombians. In a 2013 study, only 4% of all global peacebuilding forces were women, so the composition of the MM&V represents a considerable advance along these lines. One of the logics driving the increase in female participation is the hope that a more robust female presence will help to prevent the practices of sexual exploitation and abuse that have occurred in other comparable missions around the world, such as those in Africa, Bosnia, and Haiti.<sup>25</sup>

## Ministry of the Interior announces three month initiative for Rom inclusion in implementation of peace accord

Towards the end of February, the Ministry of the Interior announced that it would hold dedicated sessions with the Roma/Gypsy communities in Colombia over the next three months in order to ensure their inclusion in the implementation of the peace accord. The period of discussion will also include revision of the consulta previa processes for ethnic communities and ways to promote economic development in the country. Roma/Gypsy representatives from the following communities will have representation in the dialogues: Kumpaíy Rom de Sampues, Sahagún, San Pelayo, Sabana Larga, Girón, Cúcuta, Envigado, Ataco, Ibagué, Pasto, and Bogotá.<sup>26</sup>

## FURTHER READING

### Future FARC-EP political power likely tied to local positions

The final peace accord guarantees FARC-EP members 10 congressional seats in 2018, but analysts predict that their political power will be much more rooted in local positions in areas of concentrated influence than in the national ones. The accords are clear in their provision that all FARC-EP members are eligible to run for public office, no matter the charges levied against them related to the armed conflict. While some critics have expressed concerns over potential illegal armed group control of formal political organizations – a systemic problem that emerged in tandem with the collective demobilizations of the AUC in 2003 and 2006 – most experts feel that this is not likely at the national level. However, in historically FARC-EP controlled areas, there may be a greater risk for political control by the guerrilla group's emergent political party. Nonetheless, the emerging political presence has a long road ahead: although group's favorability rating has risen from 6% to 18% according to a recent Invaer-Gallup poll, the 18% rating is still quite low for a political party. The FARC-EP, however, is already mounting its public relations campaign, and has been clear that it understands the importance of changing public opinion to gain favor in popular vote scenarios.<sup>27</sup>

## Concerns grow of the rise of narcoparamilitarismo

The Bogotá-based NGO *Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris* released a report mid-February reflecting on the rise of new illegal armed groups in Colombia. It noted that, in 2016, 13 illegal structures operated in 351 municipalities within 31 departments in the country. In the last month alone, large-scale displacements have occurred at the hands of paramilitary groups in Norte de Santander, Chocó, and Nariño – chief among these groups are the *Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia*. Additionally, there has been a recent push by these narcotrafficking groups to take up the illegal trade structures in areas where the FARC-EP had traditionally had control, but that are now experiencing a power vacuum due to the guerrilla's movement to the transitional zones for disarmament. Illegal operations run and overtaken by these paramilitary groups include narcotrafficking, illegal mining, money laundering, human trafficking, contraband, private security services, micro trafficking, micro-lending, prostitution, local-level espionage in government institutions, and prostitution, among others. The Ministry of Defense has taken a hard line stance against these groups, saying that it will not negotiate with them.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>25</sup> <http://colombia2020.elespectador.com/pais/las-mujeres-que-verifican-el-cese-del-fuego-con-las-farc>

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.mininterior.gov.co/sala-de-prensa/noticias/pueblos-rom-concertaran-normas-para-la-implementacion-del-acuerdo-de-paz>

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.insightcrime.org/news-analysis/political-future-colombia-farc-resides-local-positions>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.arcoiris.com.co/2017/02/la-amenaza-del-narcoparamilitarismo/>