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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 Constitutional Court closed another discussion on the Peace Accord this week, voting 7 to 0 that the controversial Amnesty Law (1820 of 2016) is indeed constitutional. They clarified, however, that sexual violence, recruitment of minors, and human rights violations do not come within its remit, and that these cases should go through the JEP. They also acknowledged the conflicts between the JEP and Special Indigenous Jurisdiction or normal justice, and said they should be resolved through the Revision Section, part of the Special Peace Tribunal¹. The Minister of the Interior, Guillermo Rivera Flórez, assured Colombians that the Court's conditions guaranteed victims' rights, and reasserted that the Amnesty Law is a key factor in the political reincorporation of the FARC².

There is considerable public indignation following the **ELN attack on a military convoy in Norte de Santander on 27 February**, which left 5 soldiers dead and injured 10. The attack took place a day after the ELN announced a ceasefire to cover the legislative election period (10 to 13 March), and hours after President Santos had reopened the possibility of resuming a political dialogue with the guerrilla group³. The President reiterated his call for coherence from the ELN, whilst also announcing an intensification of military operations against them⁴.

Threats and attacks against the presidential candidates intensified this week, with an attack on Gustavo Petro's convoy in Cúcuta, Norte de Santander, on 2 March. The Inspector General opened investigations into the Mayor of Cúcuta, César Rojas, and into the local police force, whom Petro accuses of leading him into the area where he would be most vulnerable. There are also suggestions that the former Mayor of Cúcuta, Ramiro Suárez, may have orchestrated the attacks from the La Picota prison in Bogotá, where he is serving a 27 year sentence in relation to a murder carried out in 2003⁵. Former president Uribe and candidate Ivan Duque also confronted violent protests as they campaigned in Popayán, Cauca. These events continue the trend of intimidation against the presidential candidates, something which Rodrigo Londoño Echeverry, the FARC candidate, had already denounced⁶.