

## **PEACE MAIL**

March 13-19

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

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

**The Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) officially opened its doors to the public on 15 March** and will now begin to receive reports from victims of the armed conflict and the State. The JEP, which is part of Point 4 of the Peace Accord and is a principal component of the Truth, Justice, Reparation, and Non-Repetition System, delivered its first report to its 38 magistrates on Thursday. This first report included the commitment acts of 7,916 people seeking access to this type of justice, including members of the FARC, the Armed Forces, and civil State agents. It also identified 8,883 victims of the FARC and 2,926 of the Armed Forces.<sup>1</sup> The JEP is now tasked with judging when human rights violations and infractions to International Humanitarian Law were committed during the armed conflict, in order to guarantee victims' right to justice and truth.<sup>2</sup>

**Peace negotiations with the ELN resumed in Quito on Thursday 15 March.** The two sides suggested that the most pressing issues for discussion now include society participation in peacebuilding, the evaluation of the bilateral ceasefire which ended on 9 January, and the construction of a new, more stable ceasefire. They will also work towards a humanitarian agreement in the Chocó, as well as advance humanitarian demining. This 5<sup>th</sup> Round of talks, which had been suspended following ELN attacks on public infrastructure at the end of January, will comprise nine weeks of sessions before ending on 18 May, one week before the first round of the presidential elections.<sup>3</sup> Civilians continue to be caught in the crossfire between the ELN and other armed groups, however, with three injured following violent confrontations with the EPL in Norte de Santander which left six guerrilla fighters dead this week.<sup>4</sup>

### **Venezuelan displacement is a humanitarian disaster**

Between 40,000 and 50,000 Venezuelans cross the border into Colombia legally every day, and there are now more than a million Venezuelans in the country. Following his visit to Cúcuta this week, the Director of the World Food Programme warned that the situation on the border is a humanitarian disaster which is likely to get worse, and requested urgent assistance and a UN response plan.<sup>5</sup>