



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

The Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) celebrated its first year of operations on 16 January with an assessment of its progress and challenges. To date, 11,675 people have been brought within this transitional justice mechanism, including 9,687 former FARC combatants and 1,938 members of the Public Forces. The JEP has received 168 reports and has opened five cases: kidnapping by the FARC; extrajudicial killings or “false positives” by Public Forces; and consequences in Urabá, southern Nariño, and Cauca. The JEP will help clarify what happened and sentence those responsible over the next 15 years.¹ On 21 January, the JEP called on the 31 members of the FARC leadership to give evidence on the 6,162 events covered by Case 001. The leaders are required to appear in person between 14 February and 27 May, and the participation of the four leaders who have left their Territorial Training and Reincorporation Spaces (ETCR) is of particular concern.²

President Duque will convene the National Security Guarantees Commission on 30 January, in response to 10 social leaders having been assassinated over the first two weeks of 2019. This mechanism, created by the Peace Accord with the FARC, is responsible for designing and following up on public and criminal policy to tackle threats against social leaders and human rights defenders, as well as for dismantling criminal organizations. The Commission met twice under Santos, but had not been convened since Duque took office in August 2018.³

On 17 January, the **GOC formally launched the High Agency for Gender to support women’s rights in the implementation of the Peace Accord**. The Agency will be headed up by the High Commissioner for Post-Conflict, Emilio Archila, and will include the Vice President and delegates from the Ministries of the Interior, Housing, and Agriculture and Rural Development, the National Planning Department, Administrative Department of Public Functions, the Territorial Renovation Agency, and the Reincorporation and Normalization Agency.⁴

On 21 January, **Jesús Santrich participated in a public audience** organized to help determine whether he should lose his seat in Congress. Santrich was one of the members of the FARC political party selected to occupy the 10 seats guaranteed them through the Peace Accord, but he has been unable to take up his place due to his arrest for suspected drug trafficking in April 2018.⁵

The ELN claimed responsibility for a car bomb which killed 21 police academy students in Bogotá on 17 January. The attack garnered universal condemnation, and prompted President Duque to officially end the peace talks with this guerrilla group. Duque also reactivated the arrest warrants against the ELN’s 10 negotiators, reiterated his calls for them to cease their kidnappings and criminal actions, and called on Colombians to unite against terrorism.⁶ The activation of security protocols to bring negotiators back to Colombia is now the subject of debate, as the GOC has insisted that the delegation be handed over to the Colombian justice system, despite experts in international law confirming that they are bound by the protocols signed in the name of the Colombian State two years ago.⁷ The ELN, in turn, has claimed that the academy was a legitimate target, being a “military facility” where students are trained to “carry out combat intelligence, lead military operations, and actively participate in counterinsurgency.”⁸ The ELN has grown over the three-year negotiation process, and now have up to 2,000 combatants and fragile control over territories previously occupied by the FARC. However, they are also the GOC’s primary military objective for the first time, and relations with their grassroots have become increasingly strained.⁹ The six rounds of talks completed before their suspension in August last year had resulted in agreements on an agenda, guiding principles, several unilateral ceasefires, preparatory meetings for civil society participation, and protocols for a bilateral ceasefire.¹⁰