



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.

Fifty-one days after President Duque announced his objections to the Statutory Law of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP), **the much-anticipated Senate vote on 30 April erupted in a legal debate, in which both sides claimed victory.** Discussions resumed on 2 May, but the session was adjourned unsuccessfully, **leaving the Constitutional Court to decide whether the 47 “Pro-Peace” votes constituted an absolute majority.**<sup>1</sup> Conservatives claim that 48 votes were needed to reject the bill, considering the quorum at 94 parliamentarians. On the other hand, the opposition claims that the benchmark was based on 92 Senators, given that two seats remained empty (Iván Marquez of the FARC and Aída Merlano, who is being investigated for corruption).<sup>2</sup> Thirty-four Senators voted in favor of the objections. The vote came weeks after the House of Representatives rejected the objections with an overwhelming majority.

**The GOC and the JEP have once again butted heads,** after the GOC called on the Interamerican Commission on Human Rights (IAHCR) to cancel the public hearing between the two scheduled for next week in Jamaica. The IAHCR did not cancel the hearing, in which **the JEP is expected to make a case against the lack of GOC commitment for the Jurisdiction.**<sup>3</sup>

An investigation has been launched into the assassination, torture and attempted forced disappearance of **former FARC combatant Dimar Torres** in Norte de Santander. The commander of the Vulcano Special Forces in Catatumbo confirmed that **he was indeed killed by the Armed Forces on 22 April.**<sup>4</sup> Torres, a farmer residing with his family, served five years in prison before being granted amnesty as a result of the Peace Accord.<sup>5</sup> Communities in the region have called for investigations into other cases of civilian deaths, including what they believe to be extrajudicial executions, amidst on-going conflict embroiling the EPL, ELN, and the Armed Forces.

**The attempted assassination of four social leaders, including Francia Marquez-** winner of 2018 Goldman Prize for her environmental activism- **on 4 May has once again raised flags on the continued insecurity that social leaders face.** The Ombudsperson had warned the Ministry of the Interior in a letter delivered on 26 April of early signs of the risks present in the region and requested urgent measures of protection. The letter raised concerns for the circulation of threatening pamphlets, the dispute of territory between armed groups, the existence of narco-trafficking and illegal mining, and the slow implementation of the Peace Accord, specifically with regard for crop substitution.<sup>6</sup> On the closing day of the International Book Fair in Bogotá, social leaders presented strategies for self-protection and the Ambassador of the European Union in Colombia, Patricia Lombart, launched the campaign #DefendamosLaVida.<sup>7</sup>

**Siona Indigenous communities** of southern Putumayo near the Ecuadorian border have warned that their territories **are being threatened by the emergence of drug trafficking routes** and cocaine processing facilities in the vicinity, as well as the presence of anti-personnel mines. They report that 1,000 people from three of their six *resguardos* are confined due to threats and confrontations between the armed groups operating in the area.<sup>8</sup>

The Administrative Court of Cundinamarca has granted Senator Iván Cepeda and former Minister Álvaro Leyva the case filed against President Duque for not having handed over the documents on the agreements reached between the GOC and the ELN during the four-year negotiation process to the United Nations. After President Duque ended the talks in January, he was requested to submit the documents in order to preserve advances should the process recommence in the future.<sup>9</sup>