

United Nations Peacebuilding Commission
Ambassadorial-Level Meeting on Peacebuilding in Colombia
with the participation of H.E. Gustavo Petro, President of Colombia
11 July 2024, 10:30 a.m. (EST) / Conference Room 8

Concept Note

Background

Since taking office on 7 August 2022, the Government of H.E. President Gustavo Petro has continued Colombia's peacebuilding efforts through a policy framework of "Total Peace", encompassing a commitment to further implement the 2016 Final Peace Agreement between the Government and former FARC-EP guerrilla, especially through the transformation of areas historically affected by violence, while also seeking to broaden the scope of peace in the country through dialogue processes with groups that remain in arms. Nearly eight years after the signing of the Final Agreement, Colombia has shown significant progress in inclusive peacebuilding and sustaining peace, through efforts led by the parties, a range of state institutions, and civil society, with strong support from the United Nations and international community including the engagement of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). However, many challenges remain in consolidating peace, among others the ongoing violence associated with the presence of armed groups in conflict-affected areas characterized by illegal economies, weak governance, and a lack of development opportunities in areas of limited presence of the state. Expanding the effective presence of the state, including through efforts under the Peace Agreement to promote rural reform, are a key priority for consolidating peace in the country. The Security Council is closely engaged in the peace process through the presence of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, whose support to nationally led peacebuilding efforts is complemented by that of the United Nations Country Team. The Peacebuilding Commission has visited Colombia, provided advice to the Council, and participated in meetings of the Council on Colombia.

In 2023, during two multilateral meetings, on transitional justice and on Indigenous issues, the Peacebuilding Commission reaffirmed the UN's support in accelerating the implementation of the Final Agreement. The Commission also called for a long-term endeavor of Colombia to work on transitional justice, through national ownership and participatory, gender-responsive and youth-inclusive approaches. In line with these discussions, the strong focus on gender provisions in the Final Peace Agreement was noteworthy, as was the Total Peace policy, including in the dialogues with armed groups. The development of Colombia's first action plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325, currently being finalized, could contribute to the full and timely implementation of the gender provisions of the Final Peace Agreement and the incorporation of the women, peace and security agenda in the ongoing peace dialogues, as called for by women organizations.

The meeting of the Peacebuilding Commission with President Petro comes in the context of efforts to reinvigorate peace implementation in a challenging national context. As noted in the Secretary-General's latest quarterly report on Colombia (S/2024/509), on 14 May 2024, President Petro publicly reaffirmed the Colombian State's duty to fulfil its obligation to implement the 2016 Final Agreement. The President stressed that the responsibility for implementing the Agreement lies not only with the Executive, but with the entire State, arguing that there had been insufficient commitment by State entities in this regard since the signing of the Agreement. Three aspects of the process that required special attention were, 1) the implementation of the comprehensive rural reform, 2) the transformation of conflict-affected territories, and 3) ascertaining the truth concerning events that unfolded during the conflict. Regarding dialogues with armed groups, the Government is engaged in negotiation processes with the Ejército de Liberación Nacional, or ELN, and with two groups deriving from the former FARC-EP, known as Estado Mayor Central (EMC-FARC-EP) and Segunda Marquetalia, as well as with smaller groups in three urban settings. The peace dialogue between the Government and ELN reached an important milestone with the signing an agreement on the participation of society in peacebuilding on 25 May 2024. The ceasefire between the Government and the ELN, which begun in August 2023, has been broadly observed and has become the longest-lasting truce between the parties.

Peacebuilding Financing and Partnerships

The Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) has invested US\$ 57,345,291 in Colombia since 2014. To date, most PBF investment in Colombia are channeled through a UN Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Sustaining Peace in Colombia MPTF-Colombia, in support to the priorities established in a biannual investment plan that builds on the 2016 Final Peace Agreement. Within this context, with PBF funding, the UN System has supported efforts to meet the commitments of the Agreement around issues of reintegration of former combatants, territorial peace initiatives in prioritized regions, transitional justice and innovative finance for peace.

In 2023, the PBF approved an Immediate Response Facility (IRF) project (UNDP-OHCHR, US\$ 3 million) to support ongoing talks between the Government of Colombia and the ELN. The UN system is supporting Colombia's peacebuilding priorities with the PBF, such as supporting the Total Peace Policy with the IRF project: *Agile and flexible response mechanism to support peace dialogues and promote peacebuilding processes in Colombia*. The main objective of this project is to support peace dialogues and promote peacebuilding processes at the national and local levels through strengthening institutional and civil society capacities. The project also supports civil society organizations and contributes to the implementation of peacebuilding initiatives at the local level, particularly to guarantee effective and active participation of communities in the process.

Objectives of the meeting

The meeting of 11 July will provide President Gustavo Petro with an opportunity to present his Administration's peacebuilding priorities, share the successes and challenges of its peacebuilding

journey with the Peacebuilding Commission and mobilize international support for the government's "Total Peace" policy.

It is envisaged that the meeting will facilitate stronger collaboration between the Commission and the country, leveraging the PBC's advisory and bridging roles in support of national peacebuilding priorities and in continuation PBC comprehensive accompaniment and UN support.

President Petro will also address the Security Council the same day during its quarterly meeting on Colombia. A representative of Comunes (former FARC political party) is also expected to address the Council.

Agenda

- Opening remarks by H.E. Mr. Sergio França Danese, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission
- Statement by H.E. Mr. Gustavo Petro, President of the Republic of Colombia
- Briefing by a civil society briefer (TBC – Women)
- Remarks by Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Colombia (TBC)
- Remarks by Ms. Elizabeth Spehar, ASG for Peacebuilding Support
- Interventions from the floor
- Final remarks by the President of Colombia
- Closing remarks by the Chair