



## Security Council

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### **Letter dated 16 October 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General and the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council**

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of a briefing provided by Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, as well as the statements delivered by the representatives of Belgium, China, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (on behalf of the Niger, South Africa, Tunisia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Viet Nam (on behalf of Indonesia and Viet Nam) in connection with the video-teleconference on “Identical letters dated 19 January 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council (S/2016/53)”, convened on Wednesday, 14 October 2020. A statement was also delivered by Ms. Claudia Blum de Barberi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia.

In accordance with the procedure set out in the letter dated 7 May 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council (S/2020/372), which was agreed in light of the extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, that briefing and those statements will be issued as a document of the Security Council.

*(Signed)* Vassily Nebenzia  
President of the Security Council



**Annex I****Statement by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, Carlos Ruiz Massieu**

I thank you, Sir, for the opportunity to present the latest report of the Secretary-General on Colombia (S/2020/943). It is a pleasure to do so in the company of Foreign Minister Claudia Blum de Barberi.

Almost four years after the conclusion of the negotiations that led to the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, it is important to recall the main objective of that Agreement — ending more than five decades of confrontation between the Colombian State and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP), as well as the opening of a long and complex phase of building lasting peace. This peace would be based on fundamental processes provided for in the agreement, some of which are already complete and irreversible, such as the laying down of arms by the FARC-EP and its transition into a political party; and others that are still under construction, including: the effective reintegration of FARC-EP members into civilian life; the search for truth, reparations and restorative justice for victims; and the transformation of rural Colombia. There have been historic and undeniable achievements along the way, but enormous challenges still remain. A continued commitment by the parties to the implementation of the Agreement is required, as well as the active participation of Colombian State entities and civil society to ensure that the achievements are built upon and truly sustainable.

Despite continued attacks and stigmatization against them, the vast majority of those who laid down their weapons remain engaged in the reintegration process, with nearly one third of them having received funding for productive projects through mechanisms created by the peace agreement. Former combatants are currently working alongside their families and local communities to withstand the health and economic effects of the pandemic. I would like to highlight the recent approval of the first reintegration road map with an ethnic approach, in the indigenous community of Mayasquer, of the Pastos indigenous peoples, in Nariño department. Thanks to this agreement, the indigenous authorities agreed to support the formal reintegration process of 114 former combatants, mostly of indigenous origin, within the community and in accordance with their traditions. This development demonstrates the importance of ensuring an ethnic perspective to the reintegration process.

The issue of land continues to be one of the most pressing matters for the reintegration process. I welcome the recent purchase of land for the former territorial area for training and reintegration in Icononzo, and I trust that this will be followed by others so that the Government can fulfil its objective of purchasing plots of land for nine former territorial areas by the end of the year. As the consolidation of these areas advances, I once again draw attention to the needs of over 9,000 former combatants who are living outside of them. I trust that the Government and the Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común (FARC) will soon agree to a joint approach to provide adequate support for these new reintegration areas, whose security challenges and other vulnerabilities the Secretary-General has highlighted in several of his reports.

The transitional justice process is building momentum, as the three components of the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition take forward their crucial work. The Unit for the Search for Persons Deemed as Missing continues its important task of determining the whereabouts of victims of the conflict for their families and loved ones. The Truth Commission has brought victims and

actors involved in the conflict together in meaningful dialogue on reconciliation and non-repetition, and the Special Jurisdiction for Peace continues making progress in cases covering crimes committed within the armed conflict. Over the last few weeks, several top FARC party leaders have admitted responsibility for their role in various crimes committed during the conflict, powerfully demonstrating that the peace process is beginning to deliver on its promise to shed light on the horrors of the past, which is an essential building block to help heal Colombian society. To continue paving the way towards reconciliation, support for the work of the Comprehensive System remains fundamental, including through full respect for its autonomy and independence; cooperation from all actors; and active and authentic participation from those who took part in the conflict.

The decision by what was the largest armed group in the country to lay down its weapons voluntarily has contributed significantly to the overall reduction of violence since the signing of the peace agreement. Unfortunately, some of the areas that suffered immensely during the conflict continue to be besieged by violence from other actors, who continue attacking social leaders, human rights defenders, former combatants and entire communities. Recent massacres in various departments have served as a painful reminder of how innocent civilians, including young people, are falling victim to the actions of these groups.

Finding ways to curb this violence is imperative to deliver on the promise of the peace agreement. To that end, it remains necessary to finalize and implement public policy to dismantle illegal armed groups, criminal organizations and their support networks. The work of the technical committees and regional sessions of the National Commission on Security Guarantees over the last two years should now translate into the prompt finalization of this crucial public policy and, more importantly, its swift implementation. Similarly, timely responses to address the risks identified by the early warnings of the Office of the Ombudsman can be decisive in reducing violence.

I also take the opportunity to reiterate the Secretary-General's call, supported by the Security Council, for a global ceasefire to allow for all efforts to focus on relief from the pandemic. Reducing violence in conflict-affected areas is all the more important in the context of this public-health crisis.

Working jointly with the communities is also essential to devise effective security measures tailored to local contexts. I am encouraged by the joint work between civil society actors and Government entities in the framework of the technical committees of the comprehensive security and protection programme for communities, pursuant to Decree 660. It is now necessary to move forward to make this operational on the ground, including through the various pilot initiatives, so that we can report concrete progress over the coming months.

It is equally important to make headway on improving protection for former combatants, who continue to be killed in alarming numbers, and fighting impunity for these crimes, including by bringing intellectual authors to justice. Priority should be given to staffing and resources for the National Protection Unit to clear the backlog of pending requests for protection for former combatants. I trust that recent progress in investigations of crimes against former combatants by the Special Investigation Unit of the Office of the Attorney General will be sustained, particularly through cooperation by other State entities, including security forces at the regional level.

One of the objectives of the peace agreement that I mentioned earlier is to achieve a profound transformation of rural Colombia. The consequences of the pandemic have highlighted the urgency of taking on the historic challenge of bringing development, security and opportunities to rural areas in Colombia. In this regard,

I would like to reiterate the Secretary-General's call on all actors in Colombia to view the implementation of the peace agreement as an essential part of the recovery from the effects of the pandemic, and to take advantage of the agreement's tools to address the challenges associated with recovery. For example, the necessary public health investments in rural areas can be guided by the elements on rural health in the first section of the agreement. Economic recovery in conflict-affected areas can be enhanced by strengthening productive projects that benefit former combatants and communities. Similarly, the development programmes with a territorial focus continue to be a valuable mechanism for bringing investments and State presence to the 170 municipalities most affected by conflict and poverty.

Given the financial constraints imposed by the pandemic, I applaud the efforts to diversify funding for implementing these programmes, including the recent approval by Congress of additional funds from mineral royalties, and resources from the private sector through the Work for Taxes programme. It is important to ensure that development programmes with a territorial focus are implemented in collaboration with regional and local authorities, and with the participation of local communities, as well as to ensure that they are articulated with other programmes set out by the peace agreement, including the reintegration process and the National Comprehensive Programme for the Substitution of Illicit Crops.

Ultimately, peacebuilding and pandemic recovery efforts should be complementary, focusing on the fundamental objective of strengthening integrated State presence in the areas that have for decades needed it most.

In two weeks, the Council will commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. Few peace agreements in history have addressed gender issues as comprehensively as the final peace agreement in Colombia. The Colombian peace process demonstrates the value of ensuring the meaningful participation of women and the importance of taking into account both how women have been affected by conflict and, even more importantly, how they can contribute to conflict resolution. Challenges still remain in terms of improving security for women social leaders and human rights defenders, ensuring more robust participation of women former combatants in reintegration efforts, and addressing the scourge of sexual and gender-based violence, which has seen an upsurge during the pandemic. I encourage all actors, including the Government and the FARC party, to draw inspiration from the anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) to redouble their efforts to fully implement the gender provisions of the agreement, together with the leadership of women's organizations at the national and local levels.

Let me conclude by paying tribute to the strength and courage of Colombia's countless women peacebuilders: the leaders and members of women's organizations I have met in travels around the country; the women social leaders who are too often under threat in their communities; the victims who are participating actively in reconciliation efforts; and the women leaders of ethnic organizations who strive to protect their culture and ensure the rights of their communities. We owe it to these brave women, and to the generations that will succeed them, to ensure that peace in Colombia continues to take root through the continued implementation of the final peace agreement.

## Annex II

### **Statement by the Deputy Political Coordinator of Belgium to the United Nations, Delphine Delieux**

I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ruiz Massieu for his presentation. I welcome the participation of Minister Blum de Barberi to this meeting.

Belgium reiterates its full support for the peace process in Colombia and we once again welcome the continued commitment of the parties to the full implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace. We welcome the recent unanimous renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia.

Belgium remains deeply concerned by the continued threats, attacks and killings against human rights defenders, community and social leaders and ex-combatants. Violence in conflict-affected communities has increased. Violence against women, in particular, poses a challenge to women's active participation in the implementation of the peace agreement. Stronger measures to prevent and combat sexual and gender-based violence are needed. It is also necessary to make full use of the mechanisms for security guarantees, including early warning systems, individual and collective protection and the National Commission on Security Guarantees. The perpetrators of violence must be brought to justice. We also call on all parties to reach an agreement on the location of anti-personnel mines.

Belgium pays specific attention to the situation of children. The Security Council unanimously adopted conclusions on the situation of children in armed conflict in Colombia. We look forward to progress in implementing its recommendations. Two important topics require special attention: child-friendly spaces in former concentration areas and the convening of the technical working group on children of the National Reintegration Council.

The joint efforts of the Government and the Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común to ensure the sustainability of reintegration projects must continue. Access to land for the productive projects of ex-combatants remains an urgent necessity.

We reaffirm our full support for transitional justice institutions in their mission to guarantee truth and restorative justice. We look forward to working with the Colombian authorities to broaden the mandate of the Verification Mission to play a role in verifying compliance with the sentences of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. We hope that this can be formalized as soon as possible. We note the increase in the budget for components related to transitional justice and call on the Government to allocate sufficient resources for the implementation of all parts of the peace agreement.

I reiterate our hope that the Secretary-General and Security Council call for a global ceasefire in response to the coronavirus disease pandemic will lead all parties in Colombia to take steps to end the violence, allow humanitarian access and work towards peace. We urge all armed groups to end the violence and to seize this opportunity for peace.

Today is the last time that my country will speak on the situation in Colombia during our present term on the Security Council. To Minister Blum de Barberi, I would say that her country serves as an inspiration all around the world. Regions affected by conflict see it as a model to overcome the past and choose a peaceful future. But peace in Colombia has been hard to obtain and cannot be taken for granted. I want to congratulate her and the Colombian people for the courageous decisions they have taken, and to call for those efforts to continue, with the parties to the Agreement, towards the comprehensive implementation of the final peace agreement. She can count on the support of Belgium.

**Annex III****Statement by the Deputy Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, Geng Shuang**

China welcomes the participation of Foreign Minister Claudia Blum de Barberi in today's meeting. I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Massieu for his briefing.

The Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace will soon mark its fourth anniversary. Over the past four years, the Colombia peace process has achieved significant progress. The disarmament and reintegration process continues to move forward, and the peace dividends are bringing increasing benefits to the Colombian people. Thanks to the efforts made in the context of "Peace with legality" by the Government of Colombia, sustainable peace is taking root and building momentum.

The Colombia peace process sets a good example of conflict resolution through the joint efforts of the international community. The United Nations and the parties concerned have been committed to facilitating peace talks since the early stages of the process, and the Security Council has provided strong support and timely help by deploying the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia to monitor the implementation of the peace agreement.

Just last month the Council, by unanimously adopting resolution 2545 (2020), extending the mandate of the Mission for another year, once again showed its unrelenting support. At the same time, the report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/943) and Special Representative of the Secretary-General Massieu's briefing pointed out that there are still challenges facing the peace process.

The international community and the Security Council should step up their endeavours to help Colombia ensure a comprehensive, effective and sustainable implementation of the peace agreement, and China is fully behind all such efforts.

I would like to emphasize three points.

It is imperative to improve the security situation. Security is a priority for human rights and a prerequisite for the enjoyment of other rights. The report of the Secretary-General notes that violence and criminal activity are still taking place in some areas. We hope that State institutions and the security presence could be strengthened in high-risk areas. The policy on the dismantling of criminal organizations should be finalized and implemented in 2021.

The sustainable reintegration of ex-combatants is key to the peace process. China commends the efforts of the Colombian Government to relocate former territorial areas for training and reintegration. There are still more than 9,000 ex-combatants living outside the areas. For them, more help is needed to push forward their political, economic, social and educational reintegration.

Inclusive development should be promoted in order to eradicate the root causes of conflict. China supports Colombia's strategy to overcome the effects of the pandemic as well as the five pillars of the strategy. We hope that the Colombian Government will continue to implement the development programmes with a territorial focus and step up its efforts towards equitable, inclusive and sustainable development. The development of infrastructure for transportation, irrigation and electricity should be prioritized and strengthened in conflict-affected areas, and basic public services such as education, health care and housing should be provided in order to minimize the disparities between urban and rural areas and between various regions.

China supports the work of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Massieu and the Verification Mission. We encourage the Verification Mission and the United Nations country team in Colombia to strengthen coordination and collaboration, and to play a greater role in supporting the Colombia peace process, with a synergetic effect. China will enhance its cooperation with Colombia through both bilateral and multilateral channels so as to support sustainable peace and development in Colombia.

**Annex IV****Statement by the Permanent Mission of the Dominican Republic to the United Nations**

We thank Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu for his informative presentation and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Ms. Claudia Blum de Barberi, for joining us today. It is an honour.

Let me start by acknowledging the progress reported during this period under review despite the difficulties posed by the coronavirus disease pandemic. Likewise, I would like to highlight the efforts that have been made to mitigate the repercussions of the pandemic, while at the same time encouraging continued progress in the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace Agreement.

We support the recommendation made by the Secretary-General in his report dated 26 March 2020 (S/2020/239), which lists three priorities for the comprehensive implementation of the final peace agreement for this year.

Regarding the priority related to the situation of social leaders, human rights defenders and former combatants, we continue to be concerned about the violence that women leaders face in particular. In view of the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), we encourage the Government of Colombia to redouble its efforts towards the implementation of the gender provisions contained in the peace agreement, as well as to ensure that women, mainly indigenous women, Afro-descendants and those in rural areas, are included in transitional justice and reconstruction measures, including the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, and that the barriers that limit their inclusion in those processes are addressed.

Likewise, we share the concern raised in the Secretary-General's report regarding the recent massacres perpetrated against youth and children. That level of violence coincides with a marked increase in the recruitment and use of children by armed groups, putting them in even greater danger.

In areas such as Cali, Samaniego and Nariño, we are seeing a resurgence of the violence and massacres that we thought had been relegated to the past. That should definitely be a wake-up call. We trust that the Colombian Government will duly investigate those crimes and bring the perpetrators to justice.

Many young people are advocating and fighting for peace in Colombia; therefore dialogues with Colombian youth must continue and their protection needs must be prioritized, as well as their civic space.

In the priority area related to the long-term sustainability of the reintegration process, we understand that there is room to undertake actions that allow for more significant advances in the implementation of related programmes and in the road map for reintegration.

In that regard, we would like to echo the Secretary-General's call to strengthen the presence of the Special Investigation Unit of the Office of the Attorney General in regions where there are a high number of attacks against ex-combatants, and we encourage the National Commission on Security Guarantees to finalize its public policy with a view to its implementation in 2021.

On the priority relative to support for conflict-affected communities, we believe that the victims must be at the centre of all peacebuilding efforts. The work of the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparations and Non-Repetition in that regard is vital, which is why we encourage the parties to continue to contribute to the quest for truth and the attribution of responsibilities.

On another point, we take note of the intention expressed by the Ejército de Liberación Nacional to establish a bilateral ceasefire, and we stress that it is imperative to release all kidnapped persons and put an end to all illegal activities as a gesture of goodwill demonstrating its genuine desire for peace.

Finally, we want to highlight the work of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia for the dedication with which it is fulfilling its mandate. This being our last intervention in the Security Council on this issue, we would like to say that we are deeply proud of the fact that Colombia has become a source of inspiration and an important reference for peace not only for the region but also for the world. Colombia has our determined support inside and outside the Security Council.

## Annex V

### **Statement by the Permanent Mission of Estonia to the United Nations**

I would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Carlos Ruiz Massieu for his briefing, and I would also like to express Estonia's strong support for the work of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia.

We warmly welcome Ms. Claudia Blum de Barberi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Colombia.

We support the continued commitment of the Government of Colombia to implementing the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace. We welcome the progress made in these challenging times, especially in the field of justice. The public apology issued by the former Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP) secretariat marks a positive step forward. We also recognize the achievements registered by the Special Investigation Unit of the Office of the Attorney General. Lasting peace cannot be achieved without justice.

Meanwhile, the continued killings of civilians, human rights defenders, social leaders and former FARC-EP combatants remain alarming and must end. We reiterate the urgent need to protect these and other vulnerable groups. It is important to investigate and prosecute those responsible for the violations committed. In that regard, the work of the components of the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparations and Non-Repetition is essential. We also encourage the National Commission on Security Guarantees to proceed with its work on public policy in order to dismantle criminal organizations and their support networks.

The situation of children is particularly concerning. Children are at risk of forced labour, sexual exploitation and recruitment into armed groups. Child-protection measures must be strengthened.

Despite the Government's commitment to bringing peace, security and development to rural Colombia, such areas are suffering from the absence of State authorities. Wider structural issues need to be addressed in order to better tackle those challenges. It is vital to ensure the sustainability of the reintegration process and address all pending issues, including access to land for former FARC-EP combatants. We encourage all parties to redouble their efforts and continue cooperation in a constructive spirit to achieve lasting peace.

Finally, we remain hopeful that meaningful progress can be made. We would like to assert Estonia's strong support for the comprehensive implementation of the final peace agreement.

## Annex VI

### **Statement by the Political Coordinator at the Permanent Mission of France to the United Nations, Sheraz Gasri**

[Original: French]

I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Carlos Ruiz Massieu for his enlightening presentation. I welcome the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia.

It has been almost four years since the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace was reached. Much has been achieved thanks to the efforts of the Colombian Government and people, and we must welcome this. We must also clearly recognize that, with regard to the ambitions of 2016, a number of provisions of the agreement remain insufficiently implemented. The peace agreement is a package whose various components are inseparable. I will come back to four specific issues.

First, we regret the continuing violence in Colombia. We condemn the multiple assassinations that have taken place in recent months, including those of children and young people, as well as those of former combatants, civil-society leaders and human rights defenders. Such crimes must stop and those responsible brought to justice. As the Secretary-General's report (S/2020/943) points out, simple measures can be taken quickly. Better use must be made of the early-warning system under the Office of the Ombudsman. The National Commission on Security Guarantees should be encouraged to finalize a public policy for the dismantling of criminal organizations. In the long term, it is imperative to strengthen the State's presence throughout the country, including in the most remote areas.

Secondly, France wishes to recognize the efforts that have been made in recent months to reintegrate former combatants despite the pandemic and the impact of confinement on productive projects. Those efforts must continue, with a focus on ex-combatants residing outside the former territorial areas for training and reintegration. It is also important to resolve the long-standing issue of access to land.

Thirdly, the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparations and Non-Repitition is a cornerstone of the peace agreement, as we have regularly stressed in the Council. We would like the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia to contribute to the verification of the implementation of the sanctions of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. We stand ready to entrust it with that role when the Colombians request it.

Finally, another area in which further progress is expected is the National Comprehensive Programme for the Substitution of Illicit Crops, which represents an immense source of hope for thousands of families. It is crucial that that programme obtain the necessary resources, especially to finance alternative productive projects, which are a prerequisite for its long-term success. The chapters of the agreement dealing with ethnic and gender issues must also receive special attention.

The peace process in Colombia faces challenges that we cannot ignore. France, in its national capacity, will continue, within the Security Council and the European Union, to give its full support to all those in Colombia who are mobilized daily to meet these challenges.

**Annex VII****Statement by the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations, Christoph Heusgen**

Let me start by thanking Special Representative of the Secretary-General Carlos Ruiz Massieu for his dedication and work. I particularly extend my gratitude to the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, which is doing a magnificent job, sometimes under difficult circumstances. Germany welcomes the unanimous extension of the Mission's mandate. We look forward to the discussions with all Colombian stakeholders about the future role of the United Nations Mission in verifying compliance with the Special Jurisdiction for Peace sanctions.

I would like also to welcome Claudia Blum de Barberi. Her presence here signals that she supports the Security Council's role and engagement in the process and the importance of the Mission.

We have seen unanimity on Colombia, so I think that is very encouraging. Let me also make the point, as most members have done, that we are alarmed about the illegal armed groups and the criminal organizations that have taken advantage of the coronavirus disease to strengthen their presence. They have attacked public security forces. The targeted killing of human rights defenders, social leaders and former members continues. Extending the presence of State institutions in remote areas and ending impunity is necessary. We support the various institutions of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace. I remember that when we visited Colombia last year, we were all very impressed by the dedication of the people involved in those institutions.

Regarding the reintegration of former members of the the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo, I want to concentrate on the role of women. There is an urgent need to accelerate the implementation of the gender provisions of the agreement. A lot has been done, but we need to continue to work on this. We need to strengthen the participation and the leadership of women former combatants in economic reintegration activities and decision-making. We have to fight the ongoing sexual and gender-based violence. We have to recognize the women social leaders and the women ethnic leaders, who do a tremendous job. I recall when we were back in Colombia visiting a territorial area for training and reintegration, we met with some women who were really incredible.

This is the last time that Germany will be participating in a discussion on Colombia during our Security Council membership. Germany remains confident that the Colombians can succeed in consolidating the peace that they have begun to build, especially if they are able to overcome the distrust and increasingly work together with a comprehensive vision of the peace agreement. The international community and Germany will continue to assist Colombians to realize their aspirations to a more peaceful future.

## Annex VIII

### **Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, Vassily Nebenzia**

We thank Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the presentation of Secretary-General's report (S/2020/943) on the work of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia. We welcome the participation in this meeting of Ms. Claudia Blum de Barberi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia.

We share the Secretary-General's growing concern with regard to the continuing killings and violence perpetrated against participants of the peace process, community leaders, social activists and members of ethnic minorities. Ensuring the safety and security of the civilian population must be the top priority.

In order to effectively carry out that task, it is essential to address the vacuum of State presence in remote areas, whose residents do not feel safe, and therefore often have to leave their homes to escape the violence of organized criminal groups that produce and deal in drugs. The result is thousands of internally displaced persons.

Equally important, the peace process should be driven by the reintegration of former combatants. Comprehensive land reform remains critical for Colombia, including such aspects as land allocation and the proper implementation of crop-substitution programmes. Until that is addressed, it is hard to speak of promoting socioeconomic reintegration.

We hope that future reports of the Secretary-General contain more information on the political reintegration of peace process participants. Are there any major difficulties, or is everything proceeding smoothly?

With regard to other problems highlighted in the report, we cannot fail to mention a noticeable build-up of a repressive component in the actions of the authorities. That is reflected in particular in the use of force against civilians during the recent protests, as indicated in the report.

We would like to draw attention to the fact that the figures of victims among the protesters in Colombia are comparable to, or even surpass, the respective numbers in other countries that receive the vibrant attention of our colleagues in the Security Council and become the focus of the Secretariat and the statements of the Secretary-General's Press Secretary. We expect the Secretariat and our colleagues to use the same standards in their reactions to all disturbing events around the globe.

Decades of internal conflict in Colombia have shown that violence can never lead to lasting solutions. That is why the Secretary-General's call for a universal ceasefire amid the pandemic is so relevant for the country. In that context, we note the unilateral ceasefire initiatives. Regrettably, they have not found any support within the Government. We call on Colombian actors not to miss this opportunity to resume dialogue. After all, sustainable peace is hardly possible unless the entire range of opinions is considered.

We also must address another highlight of the Secretary-General's report — the reduced financing of State institutions in charge of the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace. Instead, there is a 10 per cent increase for bodies investigating the events dating back to the time of the internal conflict.

As we learned from the report, there has been some progress, particularly with regard to confessions by former members of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo. It must be noted that, according to the final peace

agreement, such confessions are to be heard by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, which must be fully independent. Any interference with its competencies or attempts to move particular cases outside of its jurisdiction are unacceptable. Good-faith compliance by the participants of the peace process with their responsibilities under the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace should not be used to neutralize political opponents. We would like to receive more information from the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia on similar confessions by State participants in the conflict.

We hope to see new tasks added to the Mission's mandate in order to monitor the implementation of the sentences of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. That will enhance the efficiency of that body.

As a general remark, we would like to point out that an investigation of the events of the conflict is, by all means, important, but the genuine success of the peace process depends on the work ahead, not on the grievances of the past.

In that regard, we take note of the report by Colombia's Prosecutor General, which cites some irregularities in post-conflict planning — including that 60 per cent of the funding has been allocated to only 5 per cent of the projects. As pointed out by the country's Comptroller General, under those circumstances, the implementation of the final peace agreement would take at least 25 years, as opposed to the initial plan of 15 years. Such estimates are not at all encouraging.

We followed carefully the 16 September address of Colombia's leadership to the international community with regard to progress made in the implementation of the "Peace with legality" policy.

Although we do not wish to diminish the importance of a number of achievements, we emphasize that the final peace agreement is the cornerstone of the Colombian peace process, as this document envisages the responsibilities of the various Colombian actors. It is important to remain committed to that historic document, which enjoys the support of the Security Council, the Secretary-General and the international community. We hope to learn more about the implementation of the final peace agreement from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia.

We reiterate our firm support for the work of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia under the leadership of Carlos Ruiz Massieu.

Finally, we believe that the Council should review its practice of considering reports of the Secretary-General right after adopting resolutions that extend mission mandates. The order should be the opposite. We note that the most recent report, issued on 25 September, quite adequately reflects the developments in the country.

Russia and all other members of the Security Council, as well as all the members of the international community, should continue contributing to the Colombian peace process in order to ensure its sustainable and lasting nature.

## Annex IX

### **Statement by the Permanent Representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to the United Nations, Inga Rhonda King**

It is a privilege for me to deliver this statement on behalf of the Niger, Tunisia, South Africa and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (A3+1).

At the outset, the A3+1 extends its sincerest condolences to the families of the victims who have lost their lives to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. We thank Special Representative Carlos Ruiz Massieu for his detailed briefing. We also acknowledge the presence of Her Excellency Ms. Claudia Blum de Barberi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, and thank her for consistently making time to participate in Security Council meetings.

The peace process in Colombia is at a very crucial stage. While it is concerning that the COVID-19 pandemic, alongside a plethora of other challenges, has delayed progress on the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, we welcome the positive developments, as outlined in the Secretary General's most recent report (S/2020/943).

In that regard, Colombians must continue to forge ahead with the comprehensive implementation of the 2016 final peace agreement. The position of the A3+1 is informed by its principled stance that the only viable, sustainable solution for conflict remains the implementation of the peace agreement and an inclusive political settlement led by, and in the interests of, the people of Colombia.

The Security Council has reaffirmed its steadfast support for the peace process and will continue to accompany Colombia in its efforts to fulfil the veritable goals of peace, stability and prosperity, as evidenced in the recent unanimous adoption of resolution 2545 (2020). The A3+1 therefore encourages all Colombian stakeholders to consolidate the gains achieved thus far and redouble their efforts to overcome lingering impediments.

We also offer the following observations.

First, on the issue of security, we remain deeply disturbed by, and condemn in the strongest terms, the meaningless killings of former Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP) combatants, human rights defenders, indigenous people, women, children and Afro-Colombian leaders. The main drivers of those atrocities need to be identified and addressed and the perpetrators must be held accountable. The protection of those particularly vulnerable groups will be an important yardstick for the effectiveness of the security measures in general. In that context, we appreciate the decision in July by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace to adopt protective measures in accordance with section 3.4 of the peace agreement. Additionally, we commend the steady progress made by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace despite the impediments created by the pandemic.

Furthermore, we urge the Government to bolster the State's security machinery in the departments worst affected by violence, such as Cauca, Antioquia, Norte de Santander and Nariño, and encourage the authorities to convene regular meetings of the National Commission on Security Guarantees.

Robustly dismantling illegal armed groups and crime syndicates is also pivotal to ensuring the safety and protection of the Colombian citizenry — especially the most vulnerable groups, including women and children, who continue to be victims of sexual and gender-based violence. To that end, the National Commission on Security Guarantees ought to work assiduously alongside civil society to finalize public policies to disrupt and apprehend criminal organizations and their networks.

The A3+1 notes the progress made on the demobilization and reintegration process of members of the FARC-EP, which should be commended, but is also concerned about the limited progress — due to the spread of the pandemic — on productive initiatives for former combatants. In that regard, we echo the Secretary-General's call to strengthen efforts towards longer-term reintegration, with reintegration benefits for all former combatants. That will ultimately determine the long-term sustainability of peace in Colombia.

We urge the authorities to improve the implementation of the Comprehensive Programme of Safeguards for Women Leaders and Human Rights Defenders. Women and children have a fundamental role to play in ushering in peace in Colombia and must always be protected.

In addition, the A3+1 reiterates its call for the cessation of hostilities, in strict compliance with resolution 2532 (2020). We remain hopeful that the Government and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional will fully capitalize on this peacebuilding opportunity and engage in constructive dialogue in a spirit of cooperation in order to achieve stable and lasting peace in Colombia.

Secondly, on the socioeconomic track, we recognize the Government's laudable efforts in authorizing peace-related funds from mineral royalties to facilitate the implementation of the development programmes with a territorial focus. We are, however, aware of reports that those funds are inadequate and that there is a possibility that the investment budgets of certain entities that are essential for the implementation of the final peace agreement — the National Land Agency, the Agency for Territorial Renewal and the Agency for Rural Development — might be cut. In that vein, we encourage all stakeholders to strengthen their engagement and consolidate their efforts to resolve the financial difficulties in order to guarantee the full and timely implementation of the final agreement.

The A3+1 applauds the continued implementation of the programme for the substitution of illicit crops despite the challenges posed by the pandemic. This agricultural reform programme remains critical to dissuading former FARC-EP combatants from re-entering the illegal economy and also plays a role in assisting former combatants to generate income to sustain their livelihoods and contribute to the formal economy.

At the same time, we are mindful that some aspects of comprehensive rural reform that are inextricably linked to the illicit crop substitution programme, need to be effectively addressed. Accordingly, the A3+1 encourages all parties to further rectify the situation relating to fair access to lands and address the challenges facing former combatants residing outside of the territorial areas for training and reintegration. These long-standing issues are integral to the full reintegration of former FARC-EP combatants.

Thirdly, the A3+1 welcomes and commends the progress made in the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, especially the decision of some former FARC-EP members to recognize and accept responsibility for their transgressions. Acknowledging wrongdoings during this peacebuilding stage, in compliance with the final agreement, paves the way for forgiveness and lays the foundation for justice, reconciliation and the full integration of former FARC-EP members into the Colombian society. The A3+1 emphasizes the fundamental importance of the reconciliation process, as many Member States have benefited from the positive aspects of such processes. Furthermore, we also continue to support the full implementation of all aspects of the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition, specifically aimed at ensuring that communities and victims affected by the conflict are priorities in the peace process.

We also endorse the Secretary-General's views that parties should endeavour to overcome their differences by maximizing the use of the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement to resolve disputes. To that effect, we encourage the Commission and the High-level Forum of Ethnic Peoples to meet regularly to address the implementation of the Ethnic Chapter of the peace agreement.

The signing of the 2016 final peace agreement has shown us that, when dialogue is constructive and results-oriented, and when convictions are strong and the objective worthwhile, the impossible becomes possible. It is time for Colombia to be transformed through this peacebuilding agreement and to fulfil its true potential.

The A3+1 stands in solidarity with the Government and the people of Colombia in their pursuit of lasting peace, as well as with the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia and country team in the comprehensive implementation of the final peace agreement, as their efforts continue to be invaluable in supporting its implementation.

**Annex X****Statement by the Chargé d'affaires of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations, Jonathan Allen**

Let me begin by thanking the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for his briefing. I want to say how grateful the United Kingdom is for the hard work of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia. I am very pleased that the Council has extended its mandate for a further year to continue its valuable work. I am also delighted to see Foreign Minister Blum de Barberi and welcome her today.

We were very encouraged to hear of President Duque Márquez's new commitment to Colombia in order to combat the serious impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. I want to say to him that all of our countries are struggling from the social and economic effects of the virus. We must seize this opportunity to build back better and create fairer, greener and more sustainable economies and societies. In Colombia, I think that will be impossible without the full and comprehensive implementation of the peace process. Minister Blum de Barberi is among friends and has our support today.

We believe it is important to highlight some of the positive developments since our last discussion (see S/PV.8749). Let me start with what might seem an unusual one: the recent apology of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo for the thousands of kidnappings the group carried out and the suffering it caused, combined with its claiming responsibility for the death of Álvaro Gómez Hurtado. This was long overdue. It caused new pain as well as suffering, but it was also a vindication of the very purpose of Colombia's post-conflict transitional justice institutions. Truth and the acknowledgment of past crimes, however long ago they were committed, play a powerful role in a country's ability to heal and, I am sure, in Colombia's ongoing peacebuilding process as well.

More generally, we were pleased to see the continued progress made by those institutions of transitional justice despite the challenge of COVID-19. We look forward to hearing from Foreign Minister Blum de Barberi's Government regarding a future role for the Verification Mission in supporting Colombia in monitoring compliance with the sanctions of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace.

We also welcome the significant increase in the approval of protection measures taken by the National Protection Unit. This will bring some relief to the human rights defenders and social leaders facing constant threats, although additional resources are urgently required to continue this progress and to clear the backlog of requests. These social leaders cannot afford to wait. We remain very concerned by the high rate of killings of community leaders, human rights defenders and other activists, as well as the worrisome rise in multiple killings of civilians in recent months. It goes without saying that we condemn such violence, and we condemn the armed groups responsible.

A powerful deterrent to such killings is the bringing to justice of those who ordered them and of those who carried them out. We echo the call for all relevant Colombian institutions to support the Special Investigations Unit in the Office of the Attorney General to ensure that those responsible for this violence are put on trial.

More broadly, as we have emphasized in previous statements before the Security Council, the establishment of a public policy to dismantle illegal armed groups is vital for bringing lasting peace across Colombia. It is encouraging that the National Commission on Security Guarantees met during the reporting period. This should now be followed by concrete and realistic proposals for action to be implemented as soon as possible.

The United Kingdom also welcomes the recent approval by the Colombian Congress of the use of additional funds from mineral royalties to implement the development programmes with a territorial approach, as well as the progress being made in this area. It is imperative for the remaining road maps to be finalized and for the development programmes to be implemented in order to bring peace and stability to relevant regions. The State needs to increase and strengthen its presence in these rural areas to allow peace and prosperity fully to take hold.

In this anniversary month of resolution 1325 (2000), let me echo the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. As we recall, the Colombian peace process was notable for the importance it placed on the involvement of women and the mainstreaming of gender in the Final Agreement. In fact, I would go so far as to say that it is an example for others in terms of peace processes. All that we know is that an inclusive peace process is far more likely to be a sustained, lasting and successful peace process. We encourage all the parties in Colombia not to lose sight of this and to ensure the full implementation of the Comprehensive Programme for Safeguards for Women Leaders and Human Rights Defenders.

Let me conclude by saying that we applaud the Colombian Government and the Verification Mission for the progress that they have continued to achieve despite a global pandemic. While many significant challenges remain, the need for a lasting and sustainable peace is clear, and the United Kingdom will continue to support Colombia on this journey.

**Annex XI****Statement by the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, Kelly Craft**

I thank Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu for his briefing and for the report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/943). Colombia is closer to finding a lasting peace, thanks to him and the efforts of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia. We also welcome Foreign Minister Blum de Barberi to today's briefing; it is great to see her.

We want to applaud the United Nations team, the Government of Colombia and all Colombians for their joint work in continuing to implement the peace accord during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. We praise the Government of Colombia's commitment to pressing forward with peace accord implementation while also responding to this urgent public-health challenge.

The United States continues to stand with Colombia as we confront COVID-19. The Trump Administration has provided more than \$23.6 million in assistance for Colombia's response to the disease. The United States is helping Colombians prevent the spread of the virus, deliver water and sanitation supplies, care for COVID-19 cases and provide emergency food assistance.

We also express our solidarity with the 1.8 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Colombia, who are among the most vulnerable to the pandemic's health and economic effects. As Secretary Pompeo affirmed during his September visit to Bogotá, we commend Colombia's inspiring generosity to so many of the most vulnerable, which I saw first-hand during my time in the country in November 2019. The Colombian Government's support of interim President Juan Guaidó and a democratic transition for Venezuela provides the foundation for Venezuelans to return home voluntarily and with the promise of prosperity and security.

We echo the report's strong condemnation of the multiple killings that have taken place in Colombia in recent months, including those of children and young people. Once again, we must reiterate the urgent need to protect Colombia's human rights defenders, including those who work on land and environmental issues, social leaders, former combatants, individuals in rural communities and members of indigenous, Afro-Colombian, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex and other vulnerable populations that have been most affected by the ongoing violence. We urge the Colombian authorities to take appropriate action, including by holding those responsible for these killings accountable.

While we acknowledge progress by the Government of Colombia, particularly the National Protection Unit's recent approval of 94 urgent protection measures for former combatants, more must be done in order to ensure safety, particularly in the areas formerly controlled by the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo. We welcome Colombia's continued progress in counter-narcotics efforts and reiterate our commitment to continued partnership with the Duque Márquez Administration to combat the destructive illegal drug trade. As Secretary Pompeo noted in Bogotá last month, Colombian law enforcement, even in these difficult times, has stepped up cocaine interdiction and eradication, manually clearing 57 per cent more coca fields in 2019 than it did in 2018. The United States remains fully engaged with the Government of Colombia to reduce coca cultivation and cocaine production, extend State presence and promote integrated rural development that enables Colombian citizens to pursue legitimate economic activities.

The commitment has been consistent since the establishment of Plan Colombia 20 years ago. Through the new United States-Colombia Growth Initiative, our

Governments are working to build on State Department and United States Agency for International Development long-term investments in the country to continue improving security and bring even more private sector investment into rural areas. On that note, we echo the call to encourage the parties to continue working together to develop economic opportunities and provide effective security for the new reintegration areas. Technical assistance, access to markets, greater attention to monitoring and evaluation and increased assistance to former combatants' cooperatives can all play important roles in economic development.

We continue to support implementation of the Final Peace Agreement and its transitional justice efforts, including those undertaken by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. We also note the Council's readiness to consider a potential role for the Mission in its connection with the verification of the sentences handed down by the Special Jurisdiction.

We are conscious of the significant challenges that remain. The need to protect the lives of social leaders, strengthen citizen security and provide economic opportunities in rural areas has become even more urgent owing to the pandemic. But we remain confident that, with the support of the United States, the Verification Mission and the international community, Colombia will continue to forge a durable and equitable peace.

**Annex XII****Statement by the Permanent Representative of Viet Nam to the United Nations, Dinh Quy Dang**

It is my honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Indonesia and Viet Nam, two States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and current members of the Security Council.

At the outset, we warmly welcome Her Excellency Ms. Claudia Blum de Barberi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, to today's meeting. We would like to thank Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, for his insightful briefing.

Colombia's Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace in 2016 was a remarkable achievement. While we acknowledge several positive developments that have been achieved, as well as the progress that has been generated by the Peace Agreement, it is regrettable that we have yet to see its full implementation. As a result, the peace process has remained fragile while progress on reintegration has remained a challenge. We therefore continue to call on all relevant parties to redouble their efforts to deliver on their individual commitments. Against this background, we would like to stress the following three points.

First, on the peace process, we support the three priorities recommended in the March 2020 report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/239). We highly commend efforts to increase the participation of the Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común (FARC) political parties in the political life of the country. Their participation in initiating draft legislation, constitutional reforms and the five pillars of a "New commitment for Colombia" to overcome the effects of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is welcomed and encouraged.

However, we are concerned about both the approach and progress in the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement and other peace-related programmes in the country. We also remain concerned about the delay of a 90-day bilateral ceasefire proposal by the Ejército de Liberación Nacional to the Government. In this regard, we would like to stress the importance of national unity on the way forward for the country. We call on the relevant parties in Colombia to set aside their differences and engage in constructive dialogue with a view to bringing about reconciliation and solidarity for the country as well as progress in the peace process.

Secondly, on security, the most recent report of the Secretary-General (S/2020/943) provided very worrisome information on the unabated violence and attacks against Colombian communities. Illegal armed groups and criminal organizations have continued to take advantage of the COVID-19 pandemic to strengthen their social and territorial control. Confrontations between security forces and local communities over operations of forced eradication of illicit crops have continued in various regions. We condemn all these attacks and urge all the groups concerned to immediately stop these appalling acts of violence. We reiterate that such violence and attacks are unacceptable and that their perpetrators must be brought to justice.

In this regard, we welcome the convening of a plenary session of the National Commission on Security Guarantees in August. We look forward to seeing more fruitful discussions on the dismantling of illegal armed groups, criminal organizations and their support networks. We urge all relevant parties to uphold their responsibilities in protecting civilians, especially women and children.

Thirdly, on reintegration and development, we take note of the progress on the reintegration of former combatants through individual and collective economic and social development programmes and projects, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. While efforts aimed at reintegration are highly appreciated, it is also important to note that this is a long-term process that requires patience, political will and practical steps. The reintegration process should be implemented in a comprehensive and sustained manner.

We emphasize the need for further measures to promote economic and inclusive development, social cohesion, rural development, housing, education, job creation and so on, in order to sustain the progress that has been achieved so far. The country's development plans must take into account the particular needs of its communities. We expect to see a greater role played by the Government, the FARC and the National Reintegration Council — working together with the United Nations and regional and international organizations — in developing a joint strategy for strengthened socioeconomic development, which lays out concrete measures to assist former combatants in stabilizing their lives.

Before concluding, we would like to reiterate our support for the United Nations Verification Mission in facilitating the peace process and promoting stability in Colombia. Indonesia and Viet Nam are committed to working constructively with the United Nations, regional and international organizations and relevant parties in contributing to the process of peace, security, unity and development in Colombia.

**Annex XIII****Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Claudia Blum de Barberi**

I thank the presidency of the Security Council for convening today's meeting, as well as the members of the Council for their constant support for Colombia. I also thank Secretary-General António Guterres and his Special Representative, Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, for the report presented today (S/2020/943).

I wish to reaffirm President Iván Duque Márquez's willingness to recognize the importance of the presence of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia throughout his entire term in office. In this regard, we highlight resolution 2545 (2020), adopted on 25 September, which extended the Mission's mandate for an additional year. Colombia emphasizes the work of the Mission's team and its collaborative efforts with Colombian national institutions and civil society.

On 16 September, the Government of Colombia convened a meeting to evaluate the accomplishments made during the two years in which the "Peace with legality" policy has been implemented. As Council members know, this policy is the instrument through which the 2016 Agreement is being fulfilled. On the occasion of that meeting, President Duque Márquez highlighted for Council members and other stakeholders a detailed report on the achievements made as well as the challenges we continue to face in fulfilling the agreed commitments.

President Duque Márquez also pointed out how, during our history, Colombia has been a country affected by different clashes and expressions of violence. In the last four decades, these situations have been aggravated by such factors as drug trafficking, illegal markets and terrorist attacks. In some periods, several attempts were made to overcome violence by negotiating peace agreements. However, even those that were concluded successfully have not prevented the re-emergence of violence. Based on our experience, we have learned that building and consolidating peace requires the solid application of the principles of truth, justice, reparation and non-repetition.

In the 2016 Agreement, a transitional justice system focused on victims' rights was designed. The Government has supported and continues to support this independent system and its various mechanisms. However, it is necessary to reiterate the inadequate contribution of actors who are obligated to appear before the transitional justice system yet have not contributed significantly and comprehensively to the truth. Colombia demands that members of the Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común (FARC) political party tell the truth and recognize their responsibility with regard to the recruitment of children, kidnappings, sex crimes, attacks against civilians, the planting of antipersonnel mines and forced disappearances, among other serious crimes. Likewise, they must give details on drug trafficking routes, money laundering and the links between the former guerrilla and other criminal organizations. The Government considers essential for the United Nations Verification Mission to address the lack of contribution to truth, reparation and justice by the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo. We trust that the truth about their countless crimes during more than 50 years will be revealed, so that the transitional justice mechanisms can impose proportional penalties, in accordance with the victims' expectations.

The 2016 Agreement foresees that the Mission will eventually verify compliance with the sentences to be imposed in future by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. We appreciate that in resolution 2545 (2020) the Council expressed its willingness to consider the possible addition of this task to the Mission's mandate, based on the consultation process coordinated by the Government of Colombia.

The two components of the Mission's current mandate are the reincorporation process and the security guarantees. The report highlights the progress made in the reincorporation of former combatants who remain committed to the process and the work carried out by the National Reincorporation Council. Regarding economic and social reincorporation, the report acknowledges the efforts made in the context of the pandemic and their positive impact. Despite the difficult situation, ex-combatants have received support and resources for individual and collective productive projects. Even during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) national lockdown, the Reincorporation Council approved, in five virtual sessions, 15 projects benefitting 420 people.

The report also mentions the political reintegration of former combatants. In this regard, it is important to remember that, in the 2018 parliamentary elections, the FARC party obtained 0.34 per cent of the Senate's votes and 0.22 per cent in the House of Representatives. Still, the FARC party acceded to the 10 seats granted to them in the 2016 Agreement. For any other political party, this number of congressional seats would require 4.8 per cent of the total votes. Currently, a member of the FARC party is Vice-President of the Senate. And in the local and regional elections of 2019 the FARC party participated with the required guarantees.

Regarding the transformation of the former territorial areas for training and reincorporation, the measures for their transition and consolidation go beyond the agreed commitments. This fact reaffirms the importance attributed by the Government to these spaces to guarantee the reincorporation of the ex-combatants who live there.

The safety and security of former combatants, human rights defenders and social and political leaders remains our greatest challenge. As stated in the report, on 12 August, President Iván Duque Márquez convened the National Commission for Security Guarantees. At that meeting, the Commission analysed the violent events of recent months and examined additional measures for the dismantling of criminal organizations that operate in some regions. The Government has duly considered the Mission's recommendations, with a view to strengthening prevention, risk management, security and protection strategies.

Current circumstances have not prevented the implementation of protection measures. The Presidential Office for Stabilization coordinates 15 State agencies that adopted specific actions to reinforce security, mainly in prevention. For 2,626 people located in the former territorial areas for training and reincorporation, security is provided by more than 1,200 police members and 2,400 army troops. In addition, 266 individual, collective and headquarters protection schemes are provided by the National Protection Unit. For almost 600 people living outside the former territorial areas for training and reincorporation in 579 municipalities, the State has granted individual and collective protection schemes, based on risk assessments decided jointly with five representatives of the FARC party.

The fight against impunity is a State priority. Regarding the attacks against former combatants, the Attorney General's Office has advanced in the investigations in 126 cases out of the 266 events reported since 2017. This means progress in 47 per cent of the cases, which include 100 homicides, 18 attempted homicides and eight forced disappearances. In the cases already judged, 30 people have been convicted.

We are advancing in the stabilization of the 170 municipalities most affected by violence and poverty, where almost 6.6 million Colombians reside. More than 220,000 people actively participated in the formulation of the 16 development plans with a territorial focus being implemented in these municipalities. In the last two years, 888 projects were completed in these regions. To date, close to \$600 million

dollars has been invested in these development plans. Their implementation has continued even during the pandemic. Last August, 25 projects, worth \$71 million, were approved for eight regions. Transformation in these territories must be a strong process that reinforces the eradication of illegal economies, development of infrastructure, the provision of public goods and services and more opportunities for economic progress and welfare.

The Mission's report indicates that limited women's participation in the implementation is a great challenge, although it does not provide concrete examples. I want to emphasize the priority given by the Government to women's participation in the "Peace with legality" policy, including in decision-making and implementation and as beneficiaries. Fifty-one gender indicators of the implementation plan show that more than 870,000 women have benefited from its actions. Be assured that we will continue to work committed to the empowerment of women and to the eradication of inequalities and discrimination.

Colombia condemns the violent acts against officials of the country office of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and one of its vehicles, which took place on 7 October in the Caquetá department. According to information from the Attorney General's Office, these officials, together with delegates from the Ombudsman's Office and the Truth Commission, were intercepted by armed men, presumed members of a FARC-EP dissident structure. From the moment the facts were known, the Government expressed its solidarity to the Office of the High Commissioner and has maintained permanent contact with judicial authorities to prevent impunity.

Colombia, like every other country in the world, faces the enormous challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Our Government has implemented comprehensive measures to safeguard people's health, provide support to the most vulnerable, reactivate the country's economy and promote well-being for all. In this context, we keep working and will continue to advance in the implementation of the peace with legality policy — collectively, with institutions, actors and communities committed to enhancing the concrete results achieved in the last two years.

Our plan is to keep making definitive progress in territorial stabilization, justice, security, the protection of human rights, welfare and social and sustainable development. Our goal, as emphasized by President Iván Duque Márquez, is to free ourselves from the causes, motivations and factors that have created and intensified violence in our country. We thank the members of the Security Council for helping us to advance towards that purpose.

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