



Security Council

Seventy-seventh year

8951st meeting

Thursday, 20 January 2022, 10 a.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Ms. Juul (Norway)

Members:

Albania	Mr. Hoxha
Brazil	Mr. Costa Filho
China	Mr. Geng Shuang
France	Mrs. Broadhurst Estival
Gabon	Mr. Biang
Ghana	Mr. Agyeman
India	Mr. Tirumurti
Ireland	Ms. Byrne Nason
Kenya	Mr. Kiboino
Mexico	Mrs. Buenrostro Massieu
Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
United Arab Emirates	Mrs. Alhefeiti
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Kariuki
United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

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)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia (S/2021/1090)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

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)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia (S/2021/1090)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Colombia to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. Emilio José Archila, Presidential Adviser for Stabilization and Consolidation of Colombia.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in the meeting: Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia; and Ms. Luz Marina Giraldo, former combatant of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo, signatory to the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace and a leader in reintegration initiatives.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2021/1090, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia.

Recalling the Security Council's latest note by the President (S/2017/507) on its working methods, I wish to encourage all speakers, both members and non-members of the Council, to deliver their statements in five minutes or less. Note 507 also encourages briefers to be succinct and focus on key issues. In that spirit, briefers are further encouraged to limit their initial remarks to seven to 10 minutes. Everyone is

also strongly encouraged to wear a mask at all times, including while delivering remarks.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ruiz Massieu.

Mr. Ruiz Massieu: I thank you, Madam President, for the opportunity to present the latest report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia (S/2021/1090) and to update the Council on recent developments.

(spoke in Spanish)

I am honoured to once again be in the company of the Presidential Adviser for Stabilization and Consolidation of Colombia, Mr. Emilio José Archila, whom I thank for his continued support to the work of the United Nations Mission. I am also pleased to be joined by Ms. Luz Marina Giraldo, an outstanding leader in the reincorporation process, who sadly lost her husband — also an ex-combatant — to violence in 2019. She is a fine example of economic, social and political reintegration and her presence in the Council today is crucial.

(spoke in English)

As highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2021/1090), the fifth anniversary of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace provided an opportunity to celebrate its achievements, acknowledge the persistent challenges and recommit to its comprehensive implementation. The visit of the Secretary-General reaffirmed the commitment of the United Nations to the success of the peace process, for which the support of the Council has been clearly instrumental.

It is important to carry that momentum forward into a key year that holds new opportunities for consolidating peace. In March, Colombians will cast their votes for a Congress that, for the first time, will include representatives from the 16 special transitional electoral districts for peace. More than 400 candidates are running to make the voices of those in regions historically affected by poverty and conflict heard. All of them are recognized as victims of the conflict, half of them are women, and many of them are indigenous and Afro-Colombians. This is a historic opportunity, envisioned in the Agreement, that must be protected in order to widen Colombia's democracy.

While political parties and organizations move forward with their campaigns, authorities are taking

steps to ensure peaceful and participatory elections. In late December 2021, the Government informed of its strategies to ensure the security of the more than 2,800 candidates running overall in these elections, as well as the general conditions for Colombians to take part in the election. An enhanced implementation of the security guarantees provisions of the Agreement is critical for these elections, especially in regions prioritized for implementation which, regrettably, continue to be hit by violence. For example, the Comprehensive Security System for the Exercise of Politics should be put into action in order to protect parties and movements across the spectrum. Ensuring security and protection for all candidates is essential, in particular for those running for the special electoral districts that I mentioned earlier. We trust that all political actors will conduct their campaigns in an environment of respect. I take this opportunity to invite them once more to engage in initiatives promoting non-violence and non-stigmatization in the electoral process.

I am glad to report that the National Council for Peace, comprised of Government and State institutions, as well as civil society representatives, has recently launched the much-needed policy on reconciliation, coexistence and non-stigmatization, provided for in the Agreement. I trust that that policy, which can contribute to non-repetition and reconstruction of the social fabric, will be adopted and implemented swiftly.

Political reintegration is at the core of the peace process. As voters, party members, local office holders or members of Congress, men and women who laid down their arms are now active participants of Colombian democracy. The upcoming Congressional elections will be yet another opportunity. I call on the authorities to ensure their political rights and their protection, especially in the light of persistent insecurity and stigmatization.

During the past five years, the socioeconomic reintegration of more than 13,000 accredited former combatants has also advanced through a myriad of initiatives. With support from the private sector and the international community, Government entities have played a major role through the provision of financial and technical assistance for productive initiatives. For former combatants settled in both the original and the new reintegration areas, access to land and housing needs to be accelerated so that their efforts can prosper, including their joint work with host communities that is so important for long-term reconciliation.

We must remain vigilant and focused on the threats still facing ex-combatants. While I acknowledge a reduction in the number of killings compared to the previous year, every single death is a blow to peace and every effort needs to be taken to protect each former combatant. That means enhancing their individual security as well as securing, in a broader sense, conflict-affected areas where illegal armed actors continue to take advantage of the limited presence of the State in parts of the country. The recent transfer of the former territorial area for training and reintegration of La Macarena, as a consequence of the deplorable actions of illegal armed actors, illustrates that point. Initiatives undertaken by former combatants and host communities are being targeted by illegal armed actors, who view the Agreement's implementation as a threat to their illicit interests.

The goal must be to prevent the need for anyone to relocate due to violence. Nevertheless, the joint efforts of the Government, former combatants, local authorities, State entities and the international community were instrumental in allowing former combatants from La Macarena to finally move without more severe consequences. Such efforts will remain indispensable for guaranteeing that they can continue pursuing their reintegration with dignity in the new area. I trust that such collaboration will also lead to progress in the relocation of other reintegration areas facing similar risks, and that authorities will guarantee security for the communities that are left behind.

I also call for greater support for the surviving families of the hundreds of former combatants killed. During his visit to Colombia, the Secretary-General expressed his condolences to Luz Marina Giraldo, who, through her foundation Sin Olvido, works for the rights of the partners, sons and daughters of former members of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP) who were slain during their reintegration process.

(spoke in Spanish)

The effects of the actions of illegal armed groups and criminal organizations continue to be felt in various areas, in particular in those prioritized for the implementation of the peace agreement. Recently, actions by the Ejército de Liberación Nacional and dissident groups of the FARC-EP led to a considerable deterioration of the security situation in the Arauca department, affecting local communities and former

combatants residing in the area. Similar to the example of La Macarena, this is another example of the urgent need to strengthen comprehensive State presence. Similarly, the approval and implementation of the long-awaited policy to dismantle illegal groups are essential. Between yesterday and today, two additional acts of violence were reported — a car bomb in Arauca and an attack on a military patrol in Antioquia.

I again condemn the actions of illegal armed actors against communities, civilian institutions and security forces and reiterate my call for them to respect humanitarian principles. Acts such as the recent murder of Breiner Cucuñame, a minor who was an indigenous environmentalist and member of the Cauca Indigenous Guard, should compel collective action to stop the senseless violence. That call has particular relevance in a year in which the country faces the challenge of holding peaceful and participatory elections. It must be stated very clearly that the spirit of the final peace agreement is precisely that there can be no justification for violence in today's Colombia, or any alternative to dialogue in resolving conflicts.

(spoke in English)

Indeed, 2022 will also be a critical year for the transitional justice system created by the peace agreement. The Unit for the Search for Persons Deemed as Missing continues the overwhelming task of finding thousands of persons disappeared during the conflict, thanks mainly to information provided by actors who took part in the conflict. The Truth Commission is preparing to deliver its final report, which Colombian society can use to collectively reflect on its past and spare future generations from violence.

In turn, the work of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace is advancing, with a view to ensuring that victims' rights are upheld through the contributions of those who took part in the conflict. The Special Jurisdiction for Peace is expected to issue its first sentences later this year. As that moment approaches, the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia continues to prepare its verification of restorative sentences, in line with the mandate entrusted by the Security Council. I thank the Special Jurisdiction for Peace and the Government for their constructive cooperation in preparing for the successful implementation of this key part of the process. The backing of the Security Council for the transitional justice system remains as important as ever.

As the Secretary-General pointed out during his visit, five years into its implementation, the peace agreement is setting down ever deeper roots. The period ahead will be crucial for the parties and Colombian society to redouble their efforts and continue following this road map for healing the wounds of conflict and overcoming its causes.

The President: I thank Mr. Ruiz Massieu for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Giraldo.

Ms. Giraldo *(spoke in Spanish)*: I send greetings to the members of the Security Council, the representatives of the countries who are with us at this meeting and all other attendees, and in particular greetings full of hope and dreams of peace for the Colombian people. I thank all members for allowing me to be at this meeting.

Through my voice, I would like Council members to hear the voices of the signatories of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace and their families, who day after day wake up and look at the sun with a prayer for peace, calling for strength and encouragement to continue in the arduous struggle for the building of peace, despite the adversities we face daily.

I come on behalf of Camila, Daniela, Esperanza, Rosa and all the women who have been widowed by the loss of their husbands and partners, who were social leaders, former combatants who were killed, signatories or included in the peace agreement. I also come today on behalf of the sons and daughters of peace. I am referring to the girls and boys who were born in the framework of the dialogue, as well as those who were born in the midst of the confrontation and who now, at last, are part of the family. But I come especially on behalf of the children of peace who lost their parents because they were social leaders or signatories to the agreement; on behalf of the victims of this armed conflict, which we want to bring to an end but which we have not been able to end; those who fled in terror from the scenes of armed confrontation, as is happening right now in Arauca and in the Yari savannah; those who continue to leave their homes to protect their lives; those who, faced with the scourge of war and economic ruin, have no other way out than to suffer the abuse of an exclusionary system; those ex-combatants who, after believing that a peace process would lead Colombia out of war, are now victims of a forever war;

and those peasants and social leaders who die without being part of the war. I fight tirelessly for them. They are the reason why I am here.

When we review the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, we discover in that 310-page document, the word “family” is mentioned more than 92 times. That is no accident. On the contrary, the Colombian State and we, ex-combatants, agree that we have a common interest in mutual recognition without any distinction and in guaranteeing the supremacy of inalienable human rights as a foundation for achieving harmony for individuals and families. The dream of having a family made up of fathers, mothers and children who did not fight was precisely what led us to abandon the armed struggle forever.

When we went to war, we carried on our backs field baggage full of opposition to the inequality that was everywhere in Colombia. Today, as we weave peace, we carry on our backs the historic responsibility of generating reconciliation, coexistence and tolerance, even though we now directly endure the inequality that we always emphasized and that led us to confrontation in the first place. Our commitment to building a lasting peace and to restitution for the victims of the conflict means that every day we live in society and every step that we take in the implementation of the peace agreement, we must not forget or make invisible all those we harmed in the war and for which we will be deeply sorry until the end of our days. Therefore, we are now committed for life to ensuring that the violence that made us suffer will never return among us.

The implementation of what was agreed on requires an indestructible commitment on the part of us all, because equality and the protection of pluralism must be guaranteed without any discrimination in order to ensure and make effective the adoption of positive measures for groups that are marginalized or discriminated against, with a territorial, differentiated and gender focus. Indeed, it is stigmatization, polarization and social discrimination that have prevented us from reaching the goals of the social rule of law and our children and young people from having effective access to public services, such as higher education, health-care systems, comprehensive and inclusive social security systems, including the financial system and the job market, despite the fact that, within the framework of this great agreement, equality, forgiveness and reconciliation were enshrined as fundamental principles.

But the harsh reality irrefutably demonstrates that there is a generalized rejection, an emptiness directed not only towards us, but also towards our children — the children of peace — who are not responsible for what happened during the conflict, and even less so the children of social leaders who were assassinated during the implementation of the agreement.

That is why I call on the Colombian nation to ensure that the unions and the private sector associations, the comprehensive social security systems, the financial system, the education sector and the civil, labour and family judges do not forget that the transitional system that will lead us to peace with legality requires from all of us an enormous commitment to ensuring that our widows and children of killed ex-combatants receive differentiated yet equal treatment, so that they can have access to some minimum guarantees, such as access to higher education, effective health-care systems, the job market, the financial system and the comprehensive social security systems and rights, for example, the right to a survivor’s pension or a basic income, even in cases where the family units or de facto marital unions of the ex-combatants did not reach the threshold of two years of cohabitation, owing to the premature and violent death of the father or mother.

I call on the Government of Colombia also not to forget that the word “family”, which is repeated 92 times in the agreement, means that it is the epicentre not only of society, but also of all of us who have laid down our arms to faithfully create democracy. The word “security”, cited in the agreement, not only refers to the means and mechanisms capable of dispelling the risks we run, but must also, according to what has been agreed, be conceived as a democratic value and from the perspective of humanism, which should inspire action by the State.

Today we recall that the agreement is made up of a series of agreements, which are nevertheless a comprehensive whole, in which the territorial focus applied should prevent us from suffering displacements in the regions and territories in order to flee from forced disappearances, murder, threats and the lack of opportunities.

The widows and orphaned children in the post-agreement period are a special population for whom a robust plan with a differentiated and gender focus must urgently be drawn up to prevent them from falling into the trap of poverty, so that they will never be objectified or

be victims of any stereotype of gender violence or discrimination.

For that reason, the family must be a comprehensive part of the concept of security and cannot remain a dead letter written 92 times in the agreement, and neither can the women, girls, boys and leaders who are being killed or are suffering for that reason continue to be considered as figures by a technocracy that believes that the killing of social leaders and its impact on the families are merely the cost of an agreement that they have tried to tear to shreds through the violence that continues in the territories.

The peace that we seek and that we all want is in our hands, because, as my husband used to say, peace is born in our souls.

I have suffered war. I have grown up in hope and love. We signed our Peace Agreement in 2017 in the Mariana Páez territorial area for training and reintegration, which led us to dream of seeing our Colombia become a territory without war. I went there holding the hand of my dear partner and spouse, Alexander Parra. We signed our commitment to peace as a couple lighted by love. Our eyes met there in a sustained moment of passion, tenderness and dreams of peace, far from the anxiety of confrontation. We hoped that peace would give us the possibility of reuniting with our family and our children — the possibility of loving each other and expressing and translating into reality our ideas and convictions free of the anguish of combat, bombings, hate and persecution. Yet, unfortunately, the war reached him, and that is why I have come before the Council today.

Lastly, today is an important day, and I would like to thank the United Nations Verification Mission for its work. It has played a key role in guaranteeing the implementation of the agreement. I also thank the guarantor countries and the Norwegian presidency for this invitation. I take this opportunity to ask the international community, from the bottom of our hearts, not to leave us alone.

The President: I thank Ms. Giraldo for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom): I extend my thanks to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ruiz Massieu for his briefing and, as ever, for his work

and that of his team. I also thank Luz Marina Giraldo for sharing her important personal perspective with the Council as a former combatant and now an active participant in the reintegration process. I also welcome Presidential Adviser Archila, whom I thank for joining us today and for his tireless efforts on behalf of peace in the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace.

As the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2021/1090) notes, the fifth anniversary of the signing of the peace agreement, in November, was an important opportunity for all stakeholders in Colombia's peace process to reflect on the historic progress achieved to date and to take stock of the challenges that remain.

The United Kingdom was proud to play our part in the commemorations, with our Minister for the Americas joining the events in Antioquia, alongside the Secretary-General and President Duque. Following those commemorations, we now look ahead to the next five-year implementation period. It is important to maintain momentum towards realizing the full promise of the agreement and ensure its continuous and comprehensive implementation, including through the upcoming election period.

The transitional justice system continues to be vital to that process, and 2022 will be a crucial year for its three components to deliver on their mandates. We reaffirm our ongoing support for their important work. We look forward to seeing the final report of the Truth Commission, and the first sentence is to be handed down by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. Those will mark an important milestone in Colombia's reconciliation process and securing justice for victims.

We welcome the preparations undertaken by the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia in readiness to assume its mandate to verify the implementation of the sentences handed down by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace.

The Secretary-General's report notes a reduction in the number of killings of former combatants from 2020 to 2021. While that downward trend is positive, we all agree around this table that one such killing is one too many. We express concern at the increased threats by illegal armed groups, which have resulted in the relocation of former combatants and their families from former territorial areas for training and reintegration.

We remain concerned by the persistent killings and threats targeting social and environmental leaders, human rights defenders, women leaders and those from indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities. Just this week we were shocked and saddened to learn the tragic news that an indigenous environmental activist aged just 14 years old was killed.

We urge the Colombian Government to continue to step up its efforts to increase protection and security and improve State presence in conflict-affected areas and to strengthen the institutions that can investigate and prosecute the criminal actors responsible for that violence. We also reiterate the need for all institutions to act on the early warnings of the Office of the Ombudsman.

As we look ahead to the elections, we call on all political stakeholders to take steps to ensure that they will be peaceful and inclusive. In particular, we are hopeful that the 16 congressional seats for victims will provide a new opportunity to increase their voice in legislative processes and peace implementation.

The parties to the agreement have shown what can be achieved in five years through constructive dialogue and cooperation. We cannot take for granted the gains achieved thus far. We must protect and build on them.

The United Kingdom remains fully committed to working with the Colombian Government and other partners and stakeholders as they work towards securing a lasting peace.

Ms. Byrne Nason (Ireland): I want to start by warmly welcoming Presidential Adviser Archila to the Council. It is good that he is joining us here today; he is very welcome. I express my renewed appreciation also to Special Representative Ruiz Massieu and his team. In addition, the powerful words of Ms. Giraldo to us today will not be forgotten, and, in response to her last point, neither will she, and I thank her very much indeed.

I also wish to congratulate the parties to the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace for standing together in November to commemorate peace and the impressive results of five years of communal effort. Above all, I want to congratulate the Colombian people for their continued commitment to peace, justice and reconciliation.

Today I will focus my intervention on three important and interconnected aspects of Colombia's ongoing journey to sustainable peace.

First, the year ahead will see important advances in transitional justice. We stand with the institutions as they deepen their work on truth, justice and reconciliation in a manner that is centred on victims and survivors. In particular, we acknowledge the Special Jurisdiction for Peace and look forward to the final report of the Truth Commission. The healing engendered by truth and reconciliation is essential to, and will offer a foundation for, an inclusive, stable and lasting peace for all Colombians.

Secondly, ahead of the upcoming elections and forthcoming transition, we cannot overstate the importance of the ongoing implementation of the peace accord being recognized as a non-negotiable, non-partisan common value. We urge the continued prioritization of the comprehensive implementation of the peace agreement, including through the adoption of urgent legislation in its support. There is no time to lose.

The creation of the transitional electoral districts for peace is an important moment as well as, we believe, a truly powerful expression of self-determination for victims and survivors. We are pleased to see 202 women stepping forward in those districts. That is encouraging.

Recognizing just how complex the process can be, we welcome the Government's support for those new districts. We also encourage the Government and all relevant stakeholders to intensify their efforts to ensure the smooth functioning of the elections and the safety of all participants. We further recommend that the Government convene the high-level mechanism to that end.

Thirdly, we continue to be concerned at the unacceptable levels of insecurity in too many areas of Colombia. Threats and intimidation by those who profit from insecurity and crisis cannot be allowed to undermine democracy and imperil the hard-won building of long-lasting peace. We condemn in the strongest terms the recent attacks on Colombian security forces by illegal armed groups.

We categorically condemn the killing of 10 more former combatants, including indigenous woman leader Maria Muñoz, who had already endured the killing of

her husband just last June, and the killing of a further 34 human rights defenders.

The shocking killing last Friday of a teenage indigenous environmental activist, Breiner David Cucuñame, a 14-year-old boy, is really a travesty. The continued targeting and killing of human rights defenders and former combatants simply cannot be countenanced. Such brutality must be addressed, and impunity ended.

It may sound cliché to say that the comprehensive implementation of the peace agreement will not provide all the solutions required to end insecurity. However, it does have the power to address many of the contributory challenges. The agreement can act as a road map to address many outstanding issues of concern and ensure State presence in historically neglected areas. Above all, it provides much-needed space for continued dialogue, fundamental to ensuring a sustainable and peaceful future for all Colombians.

In conclusion, I recall the Secretary-General's words following his recent visit: the international community has a moral obligation to ensure that this inspirational peace process is successful. As Colombia now moves to the next phase of implementation, Ireland reiterates its continued support as a partner in peace.

Mrs. Broadhurst Estival (France) (*spoke in French*): I would also like to begin by thanking Special Representative of the Secretary-General Carlos Ruiz Massieu for his briefing. I would also like to acknowledge the poignant testimony of Ms. Luz Marina Giraldo and the presence among us of Mr. Archila, Presidential Adviser for Stabilization and Consolidation.

A few weeks ago, we celebrated the fifth anniversary of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, and this agreement is a historic achievement. Colombia has set an example for the international community. After half a century of deadly conflict, the former guerrillas laid down their arms and became a political party. Today 13,000 former combatants are working to build peace on a daily basis. The Special Jurisdiction for Peace and the Truth Commission are paving the way for the reconciliation of an entire society and placing victims at the heart of the process.

The fifth anniversary is an opportunity to take stock of the implementation of the agreement and to

highlight the progress made but also the challenges that remain. Allow me to review a few aspects.

First, elections are approaching and with them the risk of increased tensions. It is therefore important that the authorities do everything possible to ensure that the elections are held in a safe and inclusive manner. This includes ensuring the security of polling places and the candidates, particularly in the 16 electoral districts for peace.

Secondly, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court closed the preliminary examination on Colombia, active since 2004, which is very encouraging. It commits Colombia to continuing its own investigations, and we welcome the steady progress of the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparations and Non-Repetition in this regard, especially in cases 01 and 03. We encourage all parties to engage in the process of establishing the truth.

Thirdly, the continuing violence in Colombia is the main obstacle to peace. Several hundred former combatants, human rights defenders and social leaders have been assassinated since 2016, as was noted. Each of these assassinations weakens the implementation of the peace agreement. It is therefore important to strengthen the presence of the State in remote areas and to strengthen the institutions that can investigate and prosecute criminals. We call on the authorities to convene the National Commission on Security Guarantees with greater frequency and to implement the policy of dismantling armed groups.

Fourthly, winning peace requires, of course, viable and just socioeconomic opportunities for all. There has been progress, which we welcome. More could be done on rural reform and access to land and housing. It is important to allocate significant and appropriate budgets to these areas. The chapters of the agreement that deal with inclusiveness and women's issues are essential in this regard and must be implemented. In general, the institutions under the agreement are built for dialogue and need to meet more often.

The peace agreement is gradually taking root, and we want it to become irreversible, which is why we believe that its full implementation is the best guarantee of this.

Madam President, you may rest assured that France, as well as the European Union, will continue to give its

full support to all those in Colombia who are mobilized on a daily basis in favour of peace.

Mr. Biang (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Carlos Ruiz Massieu for his updated report (S/2021/1090). I also thank Ms. Luz Marina Giraldo for her moving testimony. I welcome the presence among us of Mr. Emilio José Archila, Presidential Adviser for Stabilization and Consolidation.

Five years after the signing of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, which opened up great prospects for peace and gave Colombia a better political and economic dynamic, we note that the dialogue between the parties to the agreement continues to be the reference point for its implementation, despite the persistent challenges, the effects of which have been aggravated by the coronavirus disease pandemic.

This year marks a turning point in the implementation of this historic agreement for Colombia, with the organization of the second elections since it was signed, to be held in March, for the legislative elections, and in May, for the presidential elections. We note with interest the establishment of the institutions permitted by the agreement to allow for the proper development of these elections, including the transitional electoral tribunals designed to guarantee the transparency of the process. We encourage the actions that are being taken on the ground to promote the participation of all populations, including ethnic minorities, particularly in regions that were excluded because of armed conflict.

We welcome the encouraging results of the innovative transitional justice system created by the agreement. This system is proving to be a promising foundation for lasting reconciliation and peace. The recent agreement signed between the Colombian President and the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court marks the commitment of the national authorities to pursuing the implementation of this important component of the peace agreement, in close cooperation with the United Nations.

With respect to the comprehensive rural reform component, which is one of the key pillars of the Final Agreement, my delegation commends the significant investments made by the Colombian State — over \$2.6 billion for rural programmes for numerous projects representing 58 per cent of the total provisions in this sector. We encourage the Colombian Government to

move forward with the expected reforms, particularly in the area of land tenure. These reforms have a key role to play in accelerating the reintegration of former guerrillas and in ensuring their economic conversion.

My delegation is concerned about the resurgence of acts of violence and crime that continue to be reported in certain localities and that are hindering progress in the implementation of the agreement, to the detriment of the population in localities where endemic violence is already a factor of fragility. These acts mainly target political leaders in the ranks of former combatants, and in particular minorities and people of African descent. In recent days there have been reports of the killing of up to 100 human rights defenders. It is therefore essential that the security of former combatants be strengthened in order to consolidate the implementation of the Final Agreement and avoid the insecurity resulting from the massive displacement of people fleeing the violence.

With that in mind, we support continued dialogue between the parties within the framework of the National Reintegration Council in order to resolve the practical aspects that will allow for the effective reintegration of former guerrillas, including the judicial mechanism for resolving land disputes, reform of the agreement, reform of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace in Colombia, and reforms of the land restitution process. We call on the two dissident FARC-EP groups and their leaders to lay down their arms and participate actively in the peace process.

We express our appreciation for the gender approach taken in the peace agreement and encourage Colombia's efforts aimed at providing adequate responses to the problems related to implementing gender-related provisions and to increasing women's participation in the implementation of the agreement. We must take urgent action to put an end to sexual and gender-based violence committed against women and girls by ex-FARC-EP members and public security forces and to address the continuing very high femicide rate. Such acts are unacceptable, and we call on the authorities to take firm action against the perpetrators.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my country's full support for efforts thus far to implement the peace agreement and hope that the momentum generated during the process will be amplified as a result of the inclusivity and good faith of all parties.

Mr. Costa Filho (Brazil): Let me begin by expressing our deep appreciation to Mr. Carlos Ruiz

Massieu, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his update today, as well as to Ms. Giraldo, who has shared heartfelt testimony. I also welcome Mr. Archila, Presidential Adviser for Stabilization and Consolidation of Colombia, to the Council.

It is a particular honour to take the floor to comment on the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace in Colombia. As a neighbouring country, Brazil commends the Colombian people for the remarkable job they are undertaking of healing old wounds and cementing a path of peace and prosperity to unify the whole country. Peace in Colombia is an achievement of its society. The Colombian decision to involve the United Nations in monitoring the implementation of the peace agreement and the transparency the country has been showing along the way are a testimony of Colombia's commitment to peace. On the Council's side, strict adherence to the mandate is necessary to foster trust between the international community and the parties in Colombia.

The Security Council has indeed been playing a very important role in increasing confidence that peace is possible and will be duly implemented. In our view, the Council cannot lose view of that aspect in its involvement in the dossier. This exemplary case should be seen as providing the Council with tools and principles that it may have recourse to in its future work. Among the lessons learned in Colombia is that the Council can be a catalyst to bring parties to the table and that without the due involvement and ownership of the parties to the conflict, there are fewer chances of enduring peace — even with years of military presence on the ground.

As mentioned in the Secretary-General's report (S/2021/1090) and emphasized by the Special Representative Ruiz Massieu, and of which Ms. Giraldo has given eloquent testimony, peace has indeed taken root in Colombia. As we approach a new presidential election, Brazil is confident that the agreement has succeeded in instilling institutional stability and that its implementation will therefore remain a priority for Nariño Palace during the incoming Administration.

The report further stresses that the root causes of conflict in Colombia need to be properly addressed so that Colombian society can truly turn this page. In that regard, we are pleased that Colombia has shown willingness to enhance social policies in previously

neglected areas, which were strongly affected by decades of conflict. Although much remains to be done, Brazil is confident that Colombia is on the right path. Of the 15 years envisaged for its complete implementation, only five years have elapsed since the agreement was signed.

Colombia has already shown and consistently demonstrated its political will to advance and increase the presence of the State where needed. For example, it has invested \$2.6 billion so far in rural reform and crop replacement. Brazil is fully cognizant of the socioeconomic, geographic and logistical problems the Colombian Government faces in order to reach the totality of its territory, as we share many of the same challenges in reaching the population throughout our own territory. Brazil is sure, however, that Colombia has the knowledge, means and resources to overcome the challenges.

It is also worth mentioning that Colombia and the International Criminal Court signed a cooperation agreement that defines mutual responsibilities related to transitional justice — the first agreement of its kind between the Court and a State party. Brazil trusts Colombian efforts to guarantee the safety of ex-combatants, strengthen its policies regarding women, indigenous populations and Afro-descendants and ensure the due functioning of the transitional justice system, with which we are sure the Colombian Government will keep cooperating fully.

Mr. Tirumurti (India): At the outset, let me join others in welcoming the participation of Mr. Archila, Presidential Adviser for Stabilization and Consolidation of Colombia, in today's Security Council meeting. I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ruiz Massieu for his briefing. We appreciate his involvement and contribution to the ongoing process in Colombia. I also thank Ms. Giraldo for her briefing.

This is the first time we are meeting since November 2021, the fifth anniversary of the historic Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace. We join others in congratulating the people of Colombia on the rapid strides they continue to make on the path to peace and development since the signing of the agreement to end the conflict and forge a lasting peace.

The progress made in the implementation of the agreement, especially in the past three months, is reassuring. As Colombia heads for congressional

elections in March, the enactment of the law creating 16 special transitional electoral districts for peace has provided an important opportunity for historically excluded populations to participate in the elections. It is also heartening to see that a record number of 202 women candidates have filed their nominations for the elections. We are pleased to see that political alliances have included the implementation of the peace agreement within their policy priorities and agenda platforms. It is also encouraging to witness renewed activism in the legislature, with ruling coalition members and opposition presenting draft bills on issues related to the implementation of the peace agreement.

The first indictments from the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, new convictions by the Special Investigations Unit and continuing protection measures by the National Protection Unit reflect the progress made in the sphere of transitional justice. That has been duly recognized with the closure of International Criminal Court's preliminary examination on Colombia, active since 2004. We are hopeful that these developments will permit increased support for the peace process, including for the reintegration of former combatants.

The implementation of the peace agreement and the reintegration process have maintained an overall positive trajectory. For that, we appreciate the Colombian Government for its strong commitment to giving effect to the provisions of the peace agreement.

However, there are still certain aspects of the peace agreement that face impediments in implementation. The disputes between illegal armed groups, including various Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo dissident groups over territorial control and strategic illegal trafficking routes, remain a concern. Those disputes have aggravated violence, particularly in areas affected by the conflict, and this needs to cease completely.

Threats, killings and subsequent displacement of cooperative members is having disruptive effects on the reintegration initiatives. It is reassuring that the Colombian authorities are taking suitable measures to implement the security, housing and land guarantees enshrined in the Agreement.

For India, Colombia is an important bilateral partner in Latin America. The visit of Colombia's Vice President and Foreign Minister, Ms. Marta Lucía Ramírez, to India in October, preceded by the visit of India's Minister of State for External Affairs

and Culture, Ms. Meenakshi Lekhi, to Colombia in September, has further contributed to strengthening and expanding India-Colombia bilateral ties. As a long-standing friend and partner of Colombia, India will continue to stand in solidarity with the people and the Government of Colombia.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that, while the peace process in Colombia continues to be a source of inspiration, the international community needs to continue with its responsibility to support the Government and the people of Colombia in their journey to consolidate and sustain peace.

Mr. Agyeman (Ghana): I thank Special Representative Carlos Ruiz Massieu for his informative briefing on the recent developments in Colombia and for bringing further clarity to the Secretary-General's latest 90-day report on the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia (S/2021/1090). I also thank Ms. Luz Marina Giraldo, former combatant of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP) and a leader in reintegration initiatives, for her useful perspectives on the situation in Colombia, which will no doubt enrich the Council's deliberations. It is also a pleasure to welcome the participation of His Excellency Mr. Emilio José Archila, Presidential Adviser for Stabilization and Consolidation of the Republic of Colombia in this meeting.

Two months ago, the people of Colombia and the international community marked an important milestone in their worthy search for a durable and sustainable peace. The commemoration of the fifth anniversary of the signing of the historic 2016 Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace opened a positive chapter for all Colombians and cements further their commitment to ensure that the peace process takes deep root in Colombia.

The valuable lessons learned over the past five years should reinforce our conviction that peacebuilding, peace consolidation and genuine reconciliation can be achieved in incremental steps and with determined efforts. There are no magic wands. Ghana therefore commends the Government of Colombia, the leaders of the Comunes party, the heads of the transitional justice system, civil society leaders, victims of the armed conflict, former FARC-EP combatants, State institutions, academia and the international community,

as well as the wider Colombian society, for actively engaging in the peacebuilding efforts.

We are pleased to observe that the Colombian people are using State structures and institutions to foster dialogue and build trust among themselves. Strong, vibrant and inclusive State institutions, as we know, have the enduring capacity to safeguard the interest of citizens and are well placed to protect the rights and dignity of all persons, especially vulnerable persons and minorities. It is critical for all actors involved in the Colombian peace process to recognize that they have a shared responsibility to not only consolidate the peace, but to ensure that all Colombians without exception enjoy the tangible benefits and dividends of the peace agreement.

In the months ahead, the support of the Council will be vital in addressing the lingering challenges and risks to the Colombian peace process, which for many remains fragile. The full and comprehensive implementation of all the provisions of the Final Agreement will be critical. There should be no room for cherry-picking, which could be counter-productive and derail the successful implementation of the Final Agreement

In that regard, first of all, Ghana urges the prioritization of the gender provisions of the agreement. The parties to the Final Agreement must work together to protect the participation and enhance the role of women leaders involved in the peace process. Women leaders in Colombia act as peace facilitators and collaborators and are not a burden to the process.

Secondly, the economic and social reintegration of indigenous and Afro-Colombian former combatants, including all vulnerable groups seriously affected by the armed conflict, must be accelerated.

Thirdly, there must be full cooperation and respect for the transitional justice system as a key guarantor for lasting peace and reconciliation.

Fourthly, we encourage the Colombian Government and, indeed, all actors to ensure inclusive political participation and progress on all institutional and democratic reforms, as they constitute a veritable way to build a stable and lasting peace. The upcoming congressional and presidential elections this year provide yet another unique opportunity for Colombians to help drive forward their democratic aspirations. The

campaign period should be devoid of divisive acts that are conducive to violence.

Fifthly, we are concerned that, even in a post-agreement period, indigenous and Afro-Colombian former combatants, including civilians, still suffer the consequences of violence. We want to state that there is no alternative to a complete cessation of hostilities. We strongly call on all dissident groups and other illegal armed groups to abandon their armed struggle and embrace dialogue by joining the peace process without any pre-conditions to avoid taking the country back into needless conflict.

Lastly, we urge the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia and the entire United Nations country team to continue leveraging their respective mandates and programmes to support peace implementation efforts, including on matters of reintegration, security guarantees, transitional justice, rural reform and alternative livelihoods.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the first participation of Ms. Luz Marina Giraldo, a peace process participant and a signatory to the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, as well as that of Mr. Emilio José Archila, Presidential Adviser for Stabilization and Consolidation, in this meeting.

We thank the Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, for presenting the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the country (S/2021/1090) and for his assessments.

The reporting period covered a landmark occasion, namely, the fifth anniversary of the signing of the historic Final Agreement. We will never tire of repeating that the agreement not only brought a long-awaited end to half a century of internal armed conflict, but also ensured that the peace process enjoyed the support of the international community, including the United Nations Secretary-General and the Security Council.

For the long-suffering Colombian people, there was a good chance for gradual post-conflict recovery. Secretary-General Guterres' visit to Colombia last year further reaffirmed international support for the Final Agreement. As a polite guest, during his trip the Secretary-General focused primarily on what had been achieved in the five years since the agreement

was signed. However, it is no secret to members of the Security Council that the bulk of the Government's work in implementing its commitments still lies ahead. That same conclusion clearly follows from the report of the Secretary-General.

Traditionally, problematic issues include the security of the civilian population, including human rights defenders and participants in the peace process, and their economic, political and legal reintegration, as well as agrarian reform and crop substitution programmes.

The most acute issues, of course, concern security. As a result of attacks by illegal armed groups, another 12,000 people were forced to leave their places of permanent residence during the reporting quarter. In the past year alone, there have been 56 massacres with 222 victims. Since the signing of the Final Agreement, 303 signatories to the peace process who had laid down their arms have been killed. Have those responsible for such terrible crimes been brought to justice?

What we find rather worrisome is that according to the report, of the 13,000 defendants in the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, three quarters of them are former combatants of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo, while only a quarter are from State security forces.

We must acknowledge that the totality of those unresolved complex issues allows for only a cautious assessment of the results of the implementation of the Final Agreement on its fifth anniversary. At the same time, we note that some progress has indeed been achieved in a number of areas of the peacebuilding process. In that context, we express our full support for the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, as well as for the guarantor countries of the Final Agreement, namely Cuba and Norway.

At the same time, we cannot but agree with the conclusions of the report of the Secretary-General in that the peacebuilding process in Colombia remains in jeopardy. One of the key problems identified by the Secretary-General is the deep-rooted factors causing divisions in Colombian society. Those must not be overlooked by Colombians in order to avoid a recurrence of internal conflicts.

We cannot repeat enough that genuine peace cannot be achieved in the country without the inclusion of all major actors. In that context, the scant information in the report regarding the lack of negotiations between the

Government and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional is unsatisfactory. The Colombian parties must begin to seek paths towards dialogue without preconditions and on the same basis as the previous negotiations process with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia. This means that the talks must be initiated and conducted regardless of conflict's modalities, as though there were no conflict at all.

As usual, we recall that the normalization of relations with neighbouring Venezuela could also help to achieve sustainable peace and stability in Colombia.

That, *inter alia*, is needed to combat the crime surge in border areas and could provide some insurance against possible incidents with dangerous consequences.

In conclusion, I would like to address the upcoming elections in the country this year — parliamentary elections in March and presidential elections in May. Preparations are well under way and form the backdrop to the entire report. We have taken note that some political players have included the issue of the implementation of the Final Agreement in their election manifestos. However, it is not enough. It is important that the United Nations convey to all election candidates and political forces the importance of strictly implementing this historic document.

Colombians, independently and without external interference, must exercise their democratic right to choose the leaders of their society. However, we urge potential candidates for key State positions to recall that the global community will form its own opinion of them by assessing, first and foremost, the importance and feasibility of their peacebuilding programme. That is their primary responsibility to Colombian society.

The imperative for any Government must remain the scrupulous implementation of obligations under the final peace agreement. Replacing the agreement with unilateral programmes that have not been agreed upon by all participants in the peace process could lead to backsliding and have negative long-term consequences. As a permanent member of the Security Council, Russia will continue to provide support to the Colombian peace process to make it sustainable and irreversible.

Mrs. Alhefeiti (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, for his valuable briefing. I

would like also to welcome the Presidential Adviser for Stabilization and Consolidation of Colombia, Mr. Emilio José Archila, and Ms. Luz Marina Giraldo to today's meeting.

We commend the delegation of Norway for using advanced technology to provide Security Council members with a deeper understanding of the situation on the ground. We encourage similar initiatives that serve international peace and security.

As we have heard today, Colombia has achieved tangible progress in the implementation of the historic peace agreement with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP). We recently marked the agreement's fifth anniversary and reviewed the progress made so far to support the peace process in Colombia. However, several challenges remain. I underscore the full support of the United Arab Emirates to the Government and the people of Colombia in their quest for sustainable peace. The United Arab Emirates also affirms its support for the United Nations Verification Mission and its important role in Colombia.

With regard to maintaining progress for lasting and sustainable peace in Colombia, we would like to focus on three priority areas.

First, the necessary and secured conditions must be created to ensure that the upcoming elections in March and May are successful and inclusive and that constructive dialogue among the parties be ensured. In that context, we note the adoption by the Government of Colombia of the recent law to include 16 special transitional electoral districts for peace. That has facilitated broader participation by Colombians in the elections across the country. We also commend the steps taken by the Government to develop a range of prevention and protection strategies to ensure safe elections. Those steps will undoubtedly help protect the sustainable and comprehensive implementation of the peace agreement.

Secondly, national strategies must continue to guarantee the inclusion and participation of women and youth. The broad participation of young Colombian voters in municipal youth council elections provides them with a stronger voice in their communities. In turn, that strengthens their role in making decisions about their future. However, crucial steps must be taken to protect women in Colombia and promote their full, meaningful and safe participation, especially women

former combatants who play a critical role in achieving peace. Progress can be made by implementing the security guarantees and gender provisions noted in the peace agreement.

Lastly, addressing persistent threats and violence against community leaders, former FARC members and members of political parties must remain a priority so that efforts to achieve lasting and comprehensive peace in Colombia are not undermined.

Despite the decrease in the number of killings in 2021 as compared to the previous year, the Secretary General's report (S/2021/1090), notes that acts of violence persist and can severely threaten Colombia's chances for reconciliation and reintegration of previous combatants. Acts of violence include recent clashes in the Arauca region. Therefore, efforts must be strengthened to prevent the recurrence of such acts of violence, including improving early-warning mechanisms. The United Arab Emirates commends the measures taken by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace to advance the implementation of security guarantees and provide better protection for former combatants.

Support for Colombia must not be limited to the political aspect, but it is important to include support for humanitarian and development aspects, particularly in the light of the repercussions caused by the coronavirus disease. That would preserve the progress made by Colombia towards promoting peace and stability. We look forward to more progress in cooperation with Council members.

Mr. Hoxha (Albania): Let me welcome Mr. Emilio José Archila, Presidential Adviser for Stabilization and Consolidation of Colombia, to today's meeting.

I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Carlos Ruiz Massieu for his briefing and Ms. Luz Marina Giraldo for her insights. We appreciate the work and contribution of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia.

Last November, Colombia marked the fifth anniversary of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace. That landmark act of courage and wisdom represents a true commitment of hope and inspiration, not only for Colombia. It set an example of how true commitment can produce concrete and genuine results. We welcome the visit of the Secretary-General in commemorating that benchmark to show the strong support of the

United Nations, which Colombia rightfully chose to involve, and to take stock of the implementation of the agreement.

No one has any doubt that building peace is a long, complex and always demanding road. The briefers pointed out several difficulties. However, we believe that the efforts and progress made by the Government and the people of Colombia thus far deserve due recognition and our praise. The agreement outlined a clear path to deal with the root causes of the conflict, heal the profound wounds caused by more than five decades of conflict and prevent atrocities from recurring. The transitional justice system put in place ensures justice for victims and survivors. We see it as an important investment for lasting peace. In that context, we welcome the work of the Truth Commission, whose mandate was extended by the Constitutional Court until August 2022, in order to continue to deal with individual responsibility for crimes committed during the conflict. We support that process.

As we heard today, many challenges lie ahead. We must redouble efforts to counter violence against communities and individuals participating in the transitional justice process. State authority must be fully established and strengthened where it is challenged by dissident groups of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo. More must be done, such as the successful action taken against the Clan del Golfo, to break any links between illegal armed groups and criminal organizations for social, territorial and strategic control, which aggravate violence against civilians, including former combatants, hinder implementation and governance and alter the lives of entire communities. Ensuring accountability remains essential for the overall success of the security guarantees provisions of the Final Agreement.

Authorities in Colombia must continue making full use of their institutional toolbox of constructive dialogue with various parties to sustain progress in addressing challenges in efforts to put an end to conflict and build lasting peace. There is no alternative to continued engagement and continued dialogue, especially in the context of the National Reintegration Council regarding key issues, including security, land and housing, productive projects and the other priority concerns of former combatants. As we heard, political reintegration remains essential.

We would like to highlight the importance and role of women in peacebuilding. We were happy to hear from Ms. Giraldo — a leader in reintegration initiatives. The fact that 64 per cent of women former combatants participate in productive projects is both testimony to the gender-based focus in the implementation of the agreement and highlights the undisputed role of women.

(spoke in Spanish)

Colombia has shown a concrete example of how to bring a terribly long and bloody conflict to an end. Today it is showing what is needed to build peace through reconciliation, reintegration, justice, investing in people's lives and building a common future together, in peace and security. Colombia and Colombians should be proud of their achievements, and we support their efforts.

We hope that the upcoming elections in May will bring another boost to the successful implementation of this crucial process for the Colombia of today and the Colombia of tomorrow.

Mrs. Buenrostro Massieu (Mexico) *(spoke in Spanish)*: I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, for his briefing, and I extend my appreciation to the members of the Mission.

I also thank Luz Marina Giraldo, civil society representative, for sharing with us her experience as a former combatant and peace advocate and for her heartfelt testimony. We also acknowledge the presence of Mr. Emilio José Archila Peñalosa, Presidential Adviser for Stabilization and Consolidation of Colombia, and we are also grateful for the virtual reality experience of the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace. That brings us closer and more directly to what is happening on the ground.

In the words of the Secretary-General, the signing of the peace agreement is an example of how “societies can heal the wounds of war and bring about development opportunities to those most in need” (*S/2021/1090, p. 17*). The recent visit by Secretary-General António Guterres to Colombia, in the framework of the fifth anniversary of the agreement, reflects the commitment of the international community to support Colombia in this process.

Mexico, my country, welcomes the report of the Secretary-General (S/2021/1090) and, while sharing his optimism for the future, we join in his call for the Government and relevant entities to spare no effort in the full implementation of the Final Agreement. We agree that progress is needed on all points, including the pending provisions on security guarantees and an increased presence of the State to unleash the transformative potential of the agreement.

Without detracting from the progress made over five years, work must be done on the challenges ahead. Violence is the main challenge to peacebuilding, in particular in view of this year's electoral processes. The security of those participating in the elections must be a priority, including in the 16 special transitional electoral districts for peace.

At the same time, attention must be paid to the victims of displacement, and we are particularly concerned about the more than 25,000 children in that situation. We trust that this year the Commission for the Follow-Up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement will improve its coordination and dialogue with the ethnic peoples and with the gender body, and that the specific needs of the indigenous, child and Afro-Colombian populations will be addressed. The peace process will remain incomplete if the 42 gender indicators, which are still pending, are not met.

Mexico also stresses the importance of the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparations and Non-Repetition. As we await the sentences about to be handed down by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, we reiterate that the transitional justice system in Colombia should serve as an example for other processes in the rest of the world. The acknowledgement of responsibility, the corresponding convictions and clarification of past actions may be painful processes, but they are necessary to build the future to which all Colombians aspire.

Lastly, in the framework of the elections process and with full respect for the robust discussion and debate that are a part of democratic society, Mexico reiterates a call for strengthening the implementation of the peace agreement in order to achieve sustainable peace for our kindred people of Colombia.

Mr. Kiboino (Kenya): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Carlos Ruiz Massieu for his briefing, and I welcome the participation of His

Excellency Mr. Emilio José Archila, Presidential Adviser for Stabilization and Consolidation of Colombia. I also thank Ms. Luz Marina Giraldo for her insightful presentation. We commend her leadership in the integration initiatives.

We recognize that Colombia has given itself one of the most comprehensive and bold peace agreements since the founding of the United Nations. I congratulate Colombia's leaders for the innovative ways in which they have cooperated with the United Nations and the Security Council in delivering the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace. Multiple presidents have been involved and, even when they have not agreed on specific and important means of consolidating the agreement, they have been united in their sense of duty. The people of Colombia must be commended most of all for the decades of suffering they endured with resilience and their continual insistence that they retained a common destiny as Colombians.

Our hearts reach out to the victims and survivors. They are the moral glue that the peace requires to hold and grow into harmony and unity. Their patience, their insistence on accountability and their willingness to forgive where it is possible are the shining lights of their country's peace process.

Mr. Archila can be assured of the immense respect his country draws in New York for its insistence that peace is possible and can be claimed, defended and sustained.

This past Monday, the world celebrated Martin Luther King Day. That towering figure of fairness, courage, justice, anti-racism and anti-colonialism left us many profound sayings. One particular passage, delivered just four days before his assassination, in our opinion, is particularly relevant to Colombia. In that passage, Martin Luther King said,

“We are tied together in a single garment of destiny, caught in an inescapable network of mutuality. And whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. For some strange reason, I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be.”

This single line — “I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be” — is like an anchor to the rock of truth, despite all the gales of politics, convenience and even cynicism that blow when peace beckons, threatening to uproot it.

Since we joined the Council, we have continually urged for determined implementation of the “ethnic chapter” of the Final Peace Agreement. We have done so conscious of the unfortunate centuries of suffering by African peoples as they were ripped from their villages and towns and loaded onto ships crossing the Atlantic. To this day, we bear witness to their continued marginalization and impoverishment in the Americas.

The African Union has proclaimed the descendants of Africa, wherever they may be, to be the sixth region of our continent.

Colombia, unlike many other countries to which the African diaspora belongs, has taken a bold step in the direction of fairness, equality and justice. We admire its Constitution’s embrace of multi-ethnicity and its guarantee of respect for the language, cultures, property and well-being of all ethnicities. That is the foundation of the ethnic chapter of the Final Peace Agreement.

Our concern, as we celebrate significant milestones on this fifth anniversary of the Final Peace Agreement, is that the implementation of the provisions of the ethnic chapter continues to be disproportionately slow compared to other chapters, as recently reported by the Special High-level Forum of Ethnic Peoples.

We appeal to the Government of Colombia to prioritize the implementation of the chapter’s provisions and to spare no effort in addressing the historical injustices suffered by those communities, on the understanding that a nation derives its strength from diversity and that whatever affects one always affects all, even though indirectly.

We are encouraged by the continued progress in the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparations and Non-Repetition, which remains pivotal in ensuring justice, reconciliation and sustainable peace for the victims. We encourage all parties to continue to fulfil their responsibilities to the victims by fully supporting the work of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace as well as the Truth Commission.

We call on the Government and other armed groups, including the Ejército de Liberación Nacional, to engage in dialogue so that the whole country can move forward together towards peace and prosperity.

Finally, as the country prepares for the upcoming national elections, Kenya wishes the people of Colombia well and urges all stakeholders not to lose sight of the prize of peace and to remain committed to the process

so as to consolidate the gains made. I reiterate Kenya’s full support for the people of Colombia and to the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia.

Mr. Geng Shuang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ruiz Massieu for his briefing and to welcome Presidential Adviser Archila to this meeting. I also listened attentively to the statement made by the civil-society representative.

Last November, Colombia solemnly commemorated the fifth anniversary of the signing of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace. The agreement put an end to the more-than-half-a-century-old conflict in Colombia. Not only is it of great significance to peace and stability in Colombia and Latin America as a whole, but it also exemplifies efforts to resolve conflicts and rebuild peace through dialogue and negotiation.

China welcomes the positive progress achieved in the Colombian peace process and highly commends the efforts made by all parties in Colombia to implement the peace agreement.

Colombia will hold legislative and presidential elections in March and May this year, respectively. The relevant political parties and presidential candidates have included the further implementation of the peace agreement in their campaign platforms. The Communist Party has endorsed 41 legislative candidates, including former combatants.

China supports Colombia in advancing preparations for the elections in an orderly manner. We hope that the elections will be held without incident and that all parties concerned will continue to work hard after the election to consolidate the hard-won gains of peace and jointly address the difficulties and challenges in the implementation of the agreement in a continued effort to comprehensively move the peace process forward.

We note with concern that the frequent clashes between illegal armed groups vying for territorial control in some parts of Colombia not only seriously threaten the safety of the local people but also disrupt the peace process. We welcome the Colombian Government beefing up military deployment and the security presence in remote areas that lack effective control and cracking down on illegal armed groups and organized crime, with a view to effectively protecting civilians and former combatants.

The former combatants' social reintegration and their enjoyment of peace and development dividends is crucial to the realization of lasting peace. We appreciate the efforts of the Colombian Government and the National Reintegration Council in providing support to former combatants in terms of housing, employment and land distribution.

It is hoped that the Colombian Government will overcome the difficulties related to the coronavirus disease, help ex-combatants tackle economic and social challenges, carry on with rural reform and scale up development and crop-substitution programmes so as to eliminate the root causes of violence and conflict as soon as possible.

The peace process in Colombia has made remarkable progress, yet the people of the country still need robust assistance from the United Nations and the international community in their journey to build peace. China will, as always, support the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia working in accordance with its Council mandate. It is hoped that the Mission will step up coordination and cooperation with the United Nations country team, sustain its vigorous support for the implementation of the peace agreement and make greater contributions to comprehensive peace, stability and development in Colombia.

Mr. DeLaurentis (United States of America): I thank Special Representative Ruiz Massieu for his briefing and for the ongoing efforts of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia in supporting peace in that country. We welcome Presidential Adviser for Stabilization and Consolidation Archila to the Council. I also thank Ms. Giraldo for her intervention.

Colombia has made demonstrable progress in its efforts to implement the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, and we have seen important steps taken during the past year. Sixteen seats for victims of the conflict have been established in Colombia's House of Representatives. The Special Jurisdiction for Peace issued indictments against the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) and Colombian military officials for war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Special Jurisdiction for Peace has also received information and acknowledgments by members of the FARC and the military that they engaged in atrocities and abuses.

Five years into the accord, more than 13,000 former FARC combatants remain committed to

peace. Their commitment has been complemented by the Government's provision of economic and social benefits, as the majority of those ex-combatants are now able to access Government and financial services: 99 per cent are enrolled in Colombia's health-care system, 95 per cent have bank accounts, and more than 30 per cent have enrolled in educational programmes or vocational training.

We also note that the Office of the Prosecutor at the International Criminal Court (ICC) closed its preliminary examination into Colombia. As the ICC's preliminary examination had been open since 2004, those actions by the Prosecutor demonstrate increased confidence in Colombia's transitional justice institutions.

On 30 November, the United States announced the lifting of its terrorist designation of the FARC. However, we remain vigilant against those who threaten Colombia's peace and refuse to lay down their arms. Accordingly, the United States has designated Segunda Marquetalia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo, composed heavily of FARC dissidents who have abandoned or rejected the peace process, as terrorist organizations.

While we laud the progress that Colombia has made to date, we must also acknowledge areas for improvement. Gender provisions continue to be implemented and financed at a slower rate than other parts of the peace agreement. Ethnic communities face a deteriorating security situation, with indigenous communities and Afro-Colombians being disproportionately victimized by the violence. More broadly, progress on the implementation of rural economic plans and rural security has been slow.

While we understand that the full implementation of rural economic plans will take years and significant and sustained investment, inadequate security and judicial protections have threatened land reform, voluntary coca substitution, and landmine clearing.

Inadequate security and judicial protections have threatened land reform, voluntary coca substitution and landmine clearance. Those efforts are vital to the long-term success of the peace agreement. We encourage the full utilization of the various forums created to support agreement implementation, including the Commission for Monitoring and Verification, as well as gender and ethnic forums.

By working together, the Government and the people of Colombia can ensure the protection and promotion of human rights for Colombia's most vulnerable groups, address the ongoing urgent need for rural development and made continued progress in ensuring justice and representation for the victims of the conflict. It is vital that Colombia succeed in these efforts, and we know that with renewed effort such success is possible.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Norway.

We thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ruiz Massieu for his briefing. We are also pleased to hear from Ms. Luz Marina Giraldo, who has provided the Security Council with valuable first-hand testimony on the key issues related to implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace. I also welcome Emilio Archila, Colombian Presidential Counsellor, for joining us today.

Allow me to start by congratulating the parties and the United Nations for the historic commemoration of the five-year anniversary of the peace agreement. The events showed the support the agreement enjoys in Colombia and served to further consolidate its position nationally and internationally.

Women, peace and security is a priority we share with Colombia. Implementing the agreement's gender provisions is essential to ensuring lasting peace. We acknowledge the work done and encourage the parties to step up efforts to ensure women's full, equal and meaningful participation.

We remain troubled by the high levels of violence suffered by ethnic communities, human rights defenders, social leaders and former combatants of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo. We strongly condemn the recent killings of human rights defenders Luz Marina Arteaga and 14-year-old Breiner David Cucuñame. This sadly once again demonstrates the need for enhanced security guarantees.

While the number of ex-combatants killed has been reduced compared to the previous reporting period, no effort must be spared to sustain and reinforce this trend. Violence undermines people's faith in the agreement.

I would also like to draw the Council's attention to the security situation during the upcoming elections. We are especially concerned about the candidates

running for the 16 seats allocated to the victims, and we call on the Government to implement its prevention and protection strategies to guarantee safe elections.

We are pleased that the parties are taking steps to make better use of the Commission for the Follow-Up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement, and we encourage the Commission to engage frequently with other entities like the Women's Special Instance and the Special Instance for Ethnic Peoples. Likewise, we are pleased to learn that the number of former combatants who participate in productive projects increases steadily and to know of the efforts made to ensure the sustainability of these initiatives. Furthermore, we encourage the parties to make more effective use of the National Reintegration Council to reach agreement on such key issues as access to land and adequate housing. We also urge the Colombian Government to continue its efforts aiming at guaranteeing the effective reintegration of young adults.

The Special Jurisdiction for Peace also continues to make progress, and the recent recognition by members of the armed forces for their responsibilities for crimes committed during the conflict is an important step forward — one that is essential for the victims. Similarly, we are pleased that the United Nations Mission and the Special Jurisdiction for Peace have agreed on the composition, objectives and functions of the Monitoring and Verification Mechanism in order for the restorative sentences to be issued. This is vital for the legitimacy of the Special Jurisdiction. We would also like to commend the Special Jurisdiction for Peace for its special focus on children.

In the observations section of his report (S/2021/1090), the Secretary-General reiterates his call on the Government to spare no effort in comprehensively implementing the agreement. He calls it a missed opportunity if we fail to unleash the agreement's transformative potential and overcome the deep-rooted factors underlying Colombia's cycles of violence. We could not agree more. The Security Council may rest assured that Norway remains committed to accompanying Colombia in its efforts to ensure that the peace agreement is comprehensively implemented.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

I now give the floor to the Presidential Adviser for Stabilization and Consolidation of Colombia.

Mr. Archila (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I greet the members of the Security Council, especially the new ones, and thank them for their continued support to the peacebuilding process in my country. I thank you, Madam President, in particular for convening this meeting, and I thank Ms. Luz Marina Giraldo, formerly known as Yesenia, in particular. I am pleased, Madam President, that you chose a person as illustrative as Luz Marina to inform the Council about the reintegration process in Colombia.

Luz Marina has had the legal guarantees required under the process. Luz Marina was incarcerated when the process began, at which time she left jail. Throughout the process she has been assisted by a lawyer paid for by the Colombian State, which is an example of the political guarantees in place. Marina ran for municipal council in her hometown and today she is a candidate for the Congress of the Republic of Colombia.

For three years, we have provided assistance to Luz Marina to help her raise her children. She has two children. Following the death of Luz Marina's husband, they received assistance from the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare. Both are students. One is studying engineering, and the other wants to be a social communicator and has been accepted to the University.

Luz Marina has received full economic support from the Government, contrary to what was provided for when our Government came into office. Under our Government, the amount of financial support provided has been expanded.

Luz Marina has led three productive projects. Today, like 13,000 other former combatants, she participates in the Colombian pension system, and like almost 13,000 former combatants, she participates in the Colombian health system. Luz Marina has received support for her housing, which was not contemplated in the agreement or in subsequent legislation. President Duque Márquez included it in the national policy, and now Luz Marina owns an apartment.

Luz Marina has also been a beneficiary of the education guarantee. Like half of the former combatants,

Luz Marina has, in just three years, attended university and obtained two graduate degrees.

She has also been a beneficiary of our efforts to provide protection. The unfortunate death of her husband and the deaths of 70 other incarcerated convicts have allowed us to keep in jail the material and intellectual drivers of the conflict.

Let me reiterate, on behalf of President Iván Duque Márquez and the Colombian people, our gratitude to the Secretary-General for his recent visit to Colombia and for the witness he bore to the commitment and the multiple actions of our Government to make progress on a truly stable and lasting peace.

We thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2021/1090), and we thank Special Representative Carlos Ruiz Massieu for his briefing today and for his commitment to our country.

I appreciate the statements we have heard from members of the Council.

The year 2021 was a one of definitions for Colombia. At our request, the Security Council renewed the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia by adopting resolution 2574 (2021), which extended the mandate to include the monitoring of compliance with sanctions issued by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace.

In addition, on his visit, the Secretary-General was able to witness progress in the implementation of our policy of peace with legality, which is to say progress in compliance with the peace agreement. By order of the Constitutional Court, each Government has a free hand to implement the agreement in accordance with its other policies, including those related to legal guarantees, political guarantees, support for victims of the work of reintegration, voluntary substitution of illicit crops — which became successful after three and a half years of enormous efforts — and developing a territorial approach through comprehensive rural development, in which multipurpose cadastral and land registration has made progress without having any precedent on which to rely. At the end of the term, we will have registered 50,000 land titles, which is equivalent to what has been done over the past 16 years. We have also made progress in humanitarian demining. All of those advances have integrated cross-cutting gender and ethnic perspectives.

The Secretary-General visited one of the territorial areas for training and reintegration and noted our focus on the security of ex-combatants and their families and the leadership that has enabled the private sector and the international community to focus their efforts. We are fulfilling all of the guarantees offered in this model, which is unprecedented because we extended the period and ensured a minimum to provide them for the 13,000 ex-combatants. At the conclusion of his visit, the Secretary-General acknowledged to President Iván Duque Márquez the historic advances in each area of implementation and declared that the prospects for peace dividends in Colombia were very promising.

I take this opportunity to reiterate, on behalf of President Duque Márquez, that we will continue to honour the agreement, as we have been doing, guided by our vision and policy of peace with legality. The President continues to believe that this is a unique opportunity to resolve the structural difficulties that we should have confronted decades ago, with or without an agreement. To that end, we have followed the guidelines of making explicit our political will, to conduct robust long-term planning and to deliver achievements that will make the process irreversible, as the Russian Ambassador stated. And we should succeed.

The implementation duration is 15 years. In other words, the next three Administrations must continue along the path charted by our Constitution. This Administration is responsible for approximately 26 per cent of the implementation, and we have far surpassed that level in all relevant indicators. Nevertheless, I want to underscore what Special Representative Gilmore said, that the foundation has been laid so that we can continue to build on what has already been built.

I am pleased that the Council, like us, appreciates the importance of the visit of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, as it served as an affirmation regarding Colombia's preliminary examination and as recognition that the Colombian institutional framework has met international standards and is sufficiently transparent.

The Council and the Secretary-General's report touch upon other forms of violence. We reiterate that, although what we are doing what is necessary for the implementation of the agreement, and that is, without a doubt, a great step forward, we should not deceive ourselves by insinuating or believing that those sources of violence are due, in any way, to non-compliance

with the agreement. The agreement did not guarantee the identification of all drug trafficking routes, or the deactivation of the cartels that have been operating in Colombia since before the signing of the agreement, or those operating in other countries, but have an impact on Colombia. With regard to the previously existing illegal groups that have always fed off the drug trade and other illegal economies, which are, among other dreadful things, the main perpetrators of the murders of social leaders and others, we are working to address that issue in parallel to the implementation of the agreement.

Arauca is an example of that, as noted by Mr. Ruiz Massieu. In Arauca, it is members of the Ejército de Liberación Nacional who are having an impact, carrying out attacks. The relevant department, comprising seven municipalities, is handling investments of \$450 million. The four municipalities with development programmes with a territorial focus alone manage investments of \$125 million. For those municipalities, that sum corresponds to 100 years of investment, were it not for the implementation of the agreement.

Last week, President Duque Márquez met with his entire Cabinet last week, and I am scheduled to meet, on 25 and 26 January, with all the agencies responsible for the implementation of the policy of peace with legality.

With regard to reintegration, Colombia continues to be an inspiration in terms of implementation, as the Secretary-General has termed it. One of the areas in which that is so is the process of reintegration of more than 13,000 demobilized men and women, having enshrined in our national development plan that we will support each and every one in all guaranteed areas until these have reached an appropriate level for their reintegration into society.

As of December 2021, three and a half years in to our Administration, we can speak of achievements that make this reintegration process irreversible — 70 per cent of reintegrated people are economically self-sustaining, that is to say, more than 9,000 ex-combatants. Obviously, the sustainability of those productive projects, in some cases, depends on people having legal ownership of the land. In order to ensure the sustainability of the projects from a business perspective, we have invested and embedded \$20 million in the form of technical assistance. Almost 4,000 projects are receiving that support.

In addition, almost 60 per cent now have access to the education they sought, and 77 per cent are

linked to work programmes. More than 88 per cent are covered by health care and social security, including psychosocial support. That level of coverage cannot be found anywhere else in Colombia.

Along the same lines, the Government has made a voluntary commitment to provide housing for that population through various means — loans, subsidies and home improvement funds, for those with homes, in addition to the investment of \$2.2 million in housing benefits for the approximately 1,800 people on the territorial areas.

It is also worth noting that, since 2019, when the former territorial areas for training and reintegration were set to legally conclude, we carried out a sound and detailed analysis of each area. Many such areas, we concluded, could not continue to exist, some of them for security reasons, as their location was envisaged only for the short term. That is the case for the areas in La Macarena and El Yarí. There was no surprise there, no unexpected threat. That is not our plan. In that case, we had been recommending those relocations. Both of the relocations were negotiated and agreed upon. All State entities participated and security considerations were taken, including biosanitary and physical security measures. In both cases, the final locations were acquired by the Colombian Government, and the housing and productive projects are beginning and, in our view, are successful relocations.

Political participation is an essential guarantee, both for those being reintegrated and for the victims. Members of Congress and Comunes party representatives have been carrying out their functions as party representatives. We note that this year's elections are not our first elections. We have already held some local elections, which were some of the most peaceful elections in the past 60 years. Thanks to the special protection we provided the candidates of the Comunes party — formerly the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia party — none were killed or kidnapped, and neither did any withdraw their candidacy. We are now using that experience to plan the security and protection of the Comunes party candidates and, obviously, the 16 seats, which, in accordance with enacted legislation, are guaranteed for the victims and their representatives, as is the will of the Colombian people.

For the Colombian Government and all State entities, the security of ex-combatants and their families

has always been, and will continue to be, a priority. As the President has said and as I have reiterated, the sole objective of all the efforts we have made is for there to be zero threats and zero deaths. Every single death causes us great pain, and not one of them can be justified.

Thanks to those efforts — and in its worth putting it into context that Colombia has gone through many disarmament processes — the present disarmament process is the one in which we have witnessed the fewest such adverse effects. Precisely half as many ex-combatants in the reintegration process have been affected. And that decrease was not just for the past year, but for the past three years.

Nevertheless, we must continue with those efforts, as it is not as a result of the instructions or precautionary measures issued by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace that such work began. The work that has been going on for as long as President Duque Márquez has been in office. For those more than 60 special measures, we have the largest pro rata budget in the National Protection Unit as compared to the rest of the protected populations. The measures taken by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace in that regard were not for the adoption of further measures, but to finance those that had already been decided upon.

We have a deep respect for transitional justice and its independence. From day one, victims have been the cornerstone of our policy of peace with legality. Guaranteeing their right to truth, justice and reparation, as well as non-repetition, is a governmental and a national purpose.

The Government of President Duque Márquez remains steadfast in its allocation of the necessary resources for the functioning of the three components of the transitional justice system and ensuring progress is made in the clarification of crimes under the jurisdiction of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. That is something that all Colombians desire and in which we have great confidence. To that end, we have already been working with Mr. Ruiz Massieu and the Special Jurisdiction for Peace on an operational road map to monitor sanctions.

In relation to the issue of women and peace and security, we have gender provisions in each of the chapters of the implementation process. There are 3,265 women included in the reintegration process, almost 80 per cent of whom are already involved in

productive projects. Many of those projects also offer care spaces — environments that allow mothers to participate in productive activities without sacrificing their caretaking duties.

I recall the Council's visit to Cartagena with the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund. That model is one in which we comply with the standards set because it is led by three United Nations agencies focusing on women and children, as well as the United Nations Development Programme.

Of the 51 gender indicators in place, 57 per cent have already been met or show significant progress. The average record of compliance on the gender front stands at 47 per cent, while taking into account that it is part of a 15-year implementation process. Without any prior legal obligation, our Government established a peace and gender earmark so as to know exactly which resources are being allocated in that regard.

Furthermore, beyond the provisions of the Final Agreement and its implementation plan, we have made significant achievements in our women's equity policy, where we have drawn up a road map of what we must do over the next seven years.

Finally, I would also like to highlight that we continue with our robust implementation of the ethnic chapter of the agreement, promoting 97 commitments, 14 of which — nearly 14 per cent — have been completed. At the end of last year, the President was recognized by the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia. That was the first time a public entity or official has been recognized for their contribution to the development of a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

We have noticed that the report of the Secretary-General mentions aspects that do not fall within the scope of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia's mandate, one such aspect being the Ejército de Liberación Nacional, which is of great concern to us all. For that reason, I cannot fail to lament the events that took place in Arauca and in Cali a fortnight ago. In addition to other serious terrorist acts on the part of that organization, those incidents once again demonstrate the lack of willingness of the group towards achieving peace.

I am immensely grateful for the comments made during this meeting as a representative of my country, a member of the Government and a spokesperson of the President, as well as in my personal capacity.

As the Secretary-General said, we continue to bet on building peace in Colombia. With our accomplishments, we are showing the world that conflicts and violence can be resolved not only by signing agreements but by implementing them with political determination, with strict planning and a focus on results. I invite members of the Council, as the Ambassador of India and others did, to continue supporting us on our journey, including in the face of the change of Government that will take place in August. Let us continue to build on what has already been built.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.