



Security Council

Seventy-seventh year

9151st meeting

Wednesday, 12 October 2022, 3 p.m.

New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Adamo/Mr. Biang	(Gabon)
<i>Members:</i>	Albania	Mr. Spasse
	Brazil	Mr. Costa Filho
	China	Mr. Geng Shuang
	France	Mrs. Jaraud-Darnault
	Ghana	Mr. Osei-Mensah
	India	Mr. Raguttahalli
	Ireland	Mr. Mythen
	Kenya	Mr. Kimani
	Mexico	Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez
	Norway	Ms. Huitfeldt
	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/2022/715)

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted

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Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia (S/2022/715)

The President (*spoke in French*): 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. Álvaro Leyva Durán, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia; His Excellency Mr. Muhammad Abdul Muhith, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, in his capacity as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission; and Ms. Elizabeth Moreno Barco, Legal Representative of the Community General Council of San Juan.

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/2022/715, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ruiz Massieu.

Mr. Ruiz Massieu (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to present the most recent report of the Secretary-General on Colombia (S/2022/715) and to update the Security Council on major developments since the date of its publication.

It is an honour to be at this meeting for the first time with Foreign Minister Álvaro Leyva Durán, who

has dedicated a good part of his life and his career to the search for peace in Colombia. I greet the new Permanent Representative of Colombia, Ambassador Leonor Zalabata Torres. I thank the Government of Colombia for the constructive work with the United Nations during the first two months of the new Administration. Likewise, I welcome the participation of Elizabeth Moreno Barco, an Afro-Colombian leader from the department of Chocó who knows first-hand the harshness of the conflict and embodies the will of the communities to end the violence through dialogue.

Colombia is experiencing a moment of renewed expectations, product of the audacious approach of "total peace" advanced by President Gustavo Petro Urrego. That policy is anchored in the comprehensive implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace with the former Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP). In addition, it seeks to deepen peace through the resumption of dialogues with the Ejército de Liberación (ELN) and through rapprochements with other armed actors to put an end to the multiple manifestations of violence that continue to hit communities in various regions of the country.

As the Secretary-General states in his report, we are encouraged that the new Government's approach prioritizes dialogue as the main resource to resolve the social and armed conflict, that it focuses security strategies on the protection of vulnerable communities and that it recognizes the interdependence between lasting solutions to violence and overcoming historical inequalities, especially in rural and impoverished areas, as well as its emphasis on the active participation of broad and diverse sectors of Colombian society.

As we will soon commemorate another anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, it is necessary to remember that the peace process in Colombia has been a benchmark in the matter. The search for "total peace" is therefore an opportunity to continue building on those foundations while ensuring the broad and effective participation of women. From Chocó to Catatumbo, from Putumayo to the south of Bolívar, it is women and their communities who confront and resist the violence caused by different armed actors who dispute territorial control. I therefore echo the Secretary-General's message urging those actors to demonstrate their will for peace and respond positively to the call for a ceasefire proposed

by President Petro Urrego. That would increase the chances of ending the violence through dialogue and would open up an opportunity for those communities to build a life in peace and dignity.

In addition to the dialogue efforts, the consolidation of peace requires materializing pending commitments in the implementation of the Final Agreement. In that connection, it is positive that in these first weeks Congress has debated key reforms with enormous potential, such as the bill to create the agrarian jurisdiction and the proposal for a political reform. Likewise, this week Congress advanced the process on the law that provides a legal framework for the “total peace” policy and ratified the Escazú Agreement, a fundamental step, among others, for the protection of environmental defenders.

In addition, Congress is moving forward in the discussion of the national budget for 2023, in which the Government has proposed greater resources for comprehensive rural reform and the illicit crop substitution programme. Those are essential elements for the implementation of the Final Agreement. I am confident that Congress will approve the necessary resources for the entities responsible for implementing the Agreement. I would also like to highlight the importance of the recent agreement between the Government and the Cattle Ranchers Association for the purchase of land to be distributed among peasants through the mechanisms established by the peace agreement. Its implementation will be an unprecedented boost to agrarian reform, addressing one of the structural causes of the conflict.

(spoke in English)

Bringing the promises of the agreement to fruition requires continuous and constructive dialogue between the parties and with civil society, including women’s and ethnic organizations, within the framework of the institutions created by the Final Agreement. Importantly, the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement and the National Commission on Security Guarantees met recently for the first time under the new Administration, with both being chaired by President Petro Urrego. I truly believe that the full use of those mechanisms will be key to helping to resolve the many urgent challenges facing the work of implementing the peace.

It will also be important for the Government to appoint a new Director of the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization as well as representatives to the National Reintegration Council, so that important forum can fully resume its work in supporting more than 13,000 ex-combatants on matters ranging from gender and ethnic affairs to land and housing. That would definitely help to provide former combatants with some certainty and continuity in their dialogue with the Government with a view to consolidating the process, starting with the pending discussions on how to guarantee the sustainability of reintegration.

Recent developments within the Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition illustrate the centrality of victims to peace and reconciliation. The report of the Truth Commission, whose recommendations the new Administration has committed to implementing, was inspired by the voices of thousands of victims. The Unit for the Search for Persons Deemed Missing has responded to the calls of indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities and has reached important agreements with them to strengthen search efforts in their territories. The Special Jurisdiction for Peace continues to make progress on issuing its first restorative sentences. Important steps in that direction include the holding of public hearings for the acknowledgement of truth and responsibility, as well as discussions involving both perpetrators and victims regarding proposals for tasks, work and activities with reparative and restorative content. The Special Jurisdiction has also opened new cases aimed at addressing crimes committed by all parties, as well as their impact on ethnic peoples and territories, and has announced an upcoming case on crimes related to gender-based and sexual violence, as called for by civil society and women’s organizations.

(spoke in Spanish)

In my recent visits to a number of regions of the country, community representatives expressed their concerns about the constant threat posed by the presence of illegal armed actors and their frustration at unmet expectations regarding the State’s slow delivery of basic services and development opportunities. I therefore welcome the Government’s willingness to adopt a new approach to human security aimed specifically at strengthening the comprehensive deployment of State services, citizens’ trust in civilian institutions and the security forces, and gradually eliminating the causes of violence. I am confident that thanks to the measures

taken by the Government in that regard — among them an emergency plan for the protection of social leaders, human rights defenders and ex-combatants — the communities in the regions most affected by the conflict will see improvements in terms of security and quality of life.

The decision announced last week by the Government of Colombia and the ELN to resume peace talks is encouraging. With the will of the parties and the support of Colombian society and the international community, it will be possible to bring an end to a conflict that has lasted for decades and whose resolution is essential to expanding the reach of peace in the country. We are confident that Colombia can once again demonstrate to the world that the best way to end conflicts is through dialogue.

The support of the Security Council has been decisive in securing important achievements and overcoming countless obstacles. In view of the new scenario of renewed opportunities for peace, the Council's firm and unanimous commitment to Colombia will continue to be of vital importance.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Ruiz Massieu for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Muhith.

Mr. Muhith: I thank you, Mr. President, for inviting me to this important meeting to share the views of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) on Colombia.

In the past few years, at the request of the Government of Colombia, the Peacebuilding Commission has sought to mobilize support for the country's efforts to build peace following the ratification in 2016 of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace. The Commission reiterates the importance of Colombia as a successful example of inclusive peacemaking and expresses its appreciation to the Government of Colombia for its strong engagement with the Peacebuilding Commission and for sharing its experiences with conflict-affected countries and regions. Drawing on the Commission's engagements with Colombia, I would like to bring following points to the Security Council's attention.

First, the Commission commends President Petro Urrego and his Government for their commitment to peace, including the full implementation of the Final Agreement. That includes its four elements of comprehensive rural reform — political participation, a

solution to the illicit drugs problem, the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition and mechanisms for dialogue on implementation. Progress in its transformative chapters will help consolidate peace, narrow the development gap in rural Colombia, contribute to reconciliation based on a shared understanding of the past, ensure justice and the rights of victims, and bring closure to the many Colombians who lost loved ones. The Commission expresses its recognition of the Government's determination to reactivate the dialogue between the signatory parties and civil society.

Secondly, the Commission also welcomes the Government's commitment to reducing inequality, governing with and for women, ensuring zero tolerance for corruption and holding regional dialogues, as critical steps towards building lasting peace in Colombia.

Thirdly, the Commission underlines the importance of inclusive approaches to addressing inequalities as drivers of conflict, and in that regard commends President Petro Urrego for appointing a gender parity Cabinet and for his announcement that he is creating a Ministry of Equality to address issues related to gender, ethnic communities, youth and children, among others. In line with its gender action plan, the Commission encourages the full implementation of the gender provisions of the Final Agreement and the inclusion of the women and peace and security agenda in all discussions relevant to peacebuilding in Colombia.

Fourthly, the Commission encourages the full and effective use of mechanisms that draw on the inputs of Colombian civil-society actors, victims and former combatants to build consensus towards the success of peace efforts, and in that regard welcomes the installation of the National Youth Council in July and encourages further dialogue with young people in all aspects of peacebuilding.

Fifthly, the Commission welcomes the invaluable and complementary support that the Verification Mission and the United Nations country team provide to peacebuilding in Colombia, as well as the catalytic contribution of the Peacebuilding Fund through the multi-partner trust fund for sustaining peace. We stress the need for complementarity among the various strands of technical assistance and funding, including domestic resources, innovative financing, local entrepreneurship, private-sector investments and public-private-sector partnerships. Additionally,

the Commission welcomes consistent civil-society engagement in Colombia, including through the Peacebuilding Fund via the multi-partner trust fund for sustaining peace in Colombia and the annual Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative, which supports national initiatives to enhance women and young people's participation in peacebuilding.

Sixthly, the Commission welcomes the recent decision by the Government of Colombia and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional to resume peace dialogues, which will help broaden the scope of peace. We urge the international and regional partners of the United Nations to lend their full support to the process and the implementation of agreements to ensure a sustained path towards peacebuilding in Colombia.

Finally, the Commission reiterates its commitment, within its mandate, to continuing to accompany Colombia in its peacebuilding efforts and calls on partners to increase their efforts to support Colombia in that endeavour.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ambassador Muhith for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Moreno Barco.

Ms. Moreno Barco (*spoke in Spanish*): My name is Elizabeth Moreno Barco, and I am the legal representative of the Community General Council of San Juan (ACADESAN). I want to thank God for the life of each and every person listening to me, for my ancestors and for the leaders and communities that for decades have defended our territories and our right to a dignified life. I thank the delegation of Gabon, as President of the Security Council, for inviting us into this Chamber.

I am a Black person from the department of Chocó, a subregion of San Juan. I represent 72 communities — approximately 4,500 families — across an area of 683,591 hectares. I will speak about the communities that I represent, but also about the Black, indigenous and peasant communities throughout the entire Colombian Pacific who are undergoing a process of physical and cultural extinction. There are two main causes of the ethnocide that Colombia's black and indigenous communities are enduring, the first being the systematic violation of our economic, social, cultural and environmental rights. The State's racist and classist abandonment of us means that our human rights are not guaranteed. That has led to the destruction of

one of the most biodiverse places in the world through legal and illegal extractive industries.

The second cause is the armed conflict that has brought war to our territories. We have been massacred, displaced, confined, threatened and killed, leaving our lands to be occupied and exploited by narrow economic self-interests against our will. ACADESAN and the indigenous communities in San Juan are facing dispossession of more than 32,450 hectares by extractive industries and foreign megaprojects. Only when total peace is achieved and a comprehensive State presence established will it be possible to guarantee our rights and permanence on the land in accordance with what we have established independently in our plans for ethnic development.

The San Juan River and the Pacific are suffering because of a never-ending war in which armed actors — legal or illegal — want to subject us to their ideals. They all believe themselves to be benevolent saviours, but their actions nonetheless make us a military target. Today, as the ethnic populations of the territories, we ask that all armed actors, legal or illegal, refrain from making us part of their conflict and respect our decision to be neutral. We are neither for nor against any armed actor, legal or illegal. We are for our communities, for dialogue and for negotiations and agreements to end violence in the territories.

Behind me there are two photographs. One is of Valeria Murillo, a 10-year-old girl who was killed in January during an illegal armed group's incursion into the territories. Valeria was attending school and dreamed of becoming a dance teacher. She longed for a life of peace and freedom from violence. The other photograph is of Yuver Moreno, a boy who was recruited at the age of 12 by another illegal actor. In September 2021, at the age of 13, he died in a bombing by the security forces in which three other teenagers were also killed. But I also want to speak about the suffering of women. We endure the war in our own bodies, through sexual violence, among other forms of violence, and also as the mothers of both victims and perpetrators. War and violence are equally tragic for those who bear arms, since most people are revolted by such acts.

Today we want the entire world to know that our ancestral vision and the wisdom of our ethnic peoples are essential and must be included in the humanitarian dialogues in the quest for the peace we yearn for and

for environmental conservation in our lands. Today in Colombia, we have hope. It is a dream come true to have Francia Márquez Mina — a Black woman born poor, a victim of the armed conflict, a defender of human rights, the environment and our territories — as Vice-President. We trust that the Government of Gustavo Petro Urrego and Francia Márquez Mina will guarantee human dignity and that we ethnic peoples can be free to decide how we wish to live our lives, individually and collectively.

We have suffered in the armed conflict. We have been confined and displaced, but today we dream of returning to our lands, where we were happy, to revel in our songs and dances, tell our stories as evening falls and when night comes, tend to our animals and our plants, sow seeds for food and for peace, frolic in the river and fish and experience the joy of climbing in the mountains and walking on the beaches with the sand between our toes. We dream of living freely and enjoying life in our territories.

As we strive to make that dream a reality, we ask the international community to strengthen the direct presence of United Nations agencies and other humanitarian organizations in the territories most affected by war and violence by sending more frequent humanitarian missions to help safeguard the lives of people in the communities. We call for support for efforts to achieve humanitarian agreements and multilateral ceasefires, especially among the illegal armed actors who are in ethnic territories. We know from experience that humanitarian agreements and ceasefires save lives. We ask that more resources be allocated to strengthen grass-roots organizations and human rights defenders, especially for initiatives that allow us to build economic self-sufficiency in balance with nature and the environment and to combat climate change.

On behalf of my communities, my ancestors and the leaders of Colombia, I thank the Security Council very much for this opportunity and for allowing us to relate our story, our reality, our suffering and our hope that we experience in the ethnic territories in Colombia.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ms. Moreno Barco for her briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Gabon.

(*spoke in English*)

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council (A3), namely, Gabon, Ghana and Kenya.

We thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ruiz Massieu, Ms. Elizabeth Moreno Barco and Mr. Muhith for their briefings. We also welcome the participation of His Excellency Mr. Álvaro Leyva Durán, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Colombia.

We warmly congratulate His Excellency Mr. Gustavo Petro Urrego and Her Excellency Ms. Francia Márquez Mina on their electoral victories. We believe that their election heralds new hope for Colombia and its resilient, peace-loving people.

The election of President Petro Urrego and Vice-President Márquez Mina is a statement of Colombia's desire for fundamental change, particularly with regard to the inclusion of those who were left behind and were consigned to the margins of economic, cultural and political life. We applaud the President's inclusive efforts, as reflected in his appointment of Afro-Colombian and indigenous professionals to key public positions.

As States with a multi-ethnic, multireligious and multicultural basis, we recognize that the practical and fair embrace of inclusion by the State is a key competence. It is required by all States, no matter their wealth or might, as a foundation for their sustained peace and security. The people of Colombia demonstrated their recognition of that requirement in their country.

There are many Colombians yearning for fairness and inclusion. We focus the most on Afro-Colombians and the indigenous community because they have suffered the most historically. We also focus on them because, as the A3, we are guided by the Constitutive Act of the African Union and its embrace of our continent's diaspora.

The world over, all people of African descent whose ancestors left our shore in duress or in search of opportunity are our kin. We care for the fates that they met, and we will do our utmost to encourage all States and institutions to treat them with dignity and fairness.

Inclusion, equity and justice for all Colombians is the promise of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace.

We believe that, by raising such high expectations for themselves, Colombians have given the world a precious example to follow. We also recognize, with profound respect, the victims and survivors who suffered greatly, but who are still willing to offer forgiveness for the sake of peace.

For the agreement to truly deliver peace, it is critical that the principles and provisions of the ethnic chapter, as a cross-cutting measure, be implemented. A lack of progress in that part of the agreement and in the economic and political empowerment of the most vulnerable is an early-warning signal of future conflicts. The A3 will continue to support tangible action regarding the ethnic chapter as the clearest proof of a commitment to, and the success of, the peace process. Unfortunately, until now, the level of compliance with the ethnic chapter has been low. Its principles and goals, cutting across different parts of the Final Agreement, have not been addressed with the level of attention and seriousness that they deserve.

It is particularly important that the lands in which indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities live and their economic life involve the implementation of the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition. Safe participation in all relevant processes should be assured. The brutal killings of human rights defenders, particularly from ethnic and indigenous communities, should be aggressively investigated, and those responsible held accountable.

We underscore the need for the urgent implementation of the National Commission security guarantees extended to the vulnerable, taking into consideration specific gender needs. In that regard, we commend the Government's efforts to highlight the need for integrated State response to address persisting violence in conflict-affected areas.

We pay particular attention to the measures aimed at providing specific responses to the challenges that women, in particular Afro-Colombian and indigenous women, continue to face, whether regarding their security, their participation in political life or their economic empowerment. The initial measures taken by the new President gave us the hope that women would take a greater part in building peace in Colombia.

We condemn any attacks directed at Government security forces. In particular, we are concerned by the attack in the Huila department, where seven policemen were recently killed.

Beyond the Final Agreement, the A3 supports all efforts that seek to consolidate the peace process, including through the incorporation of groups that are not parties. We support the willingness of the Ejército de Liberación Nacional and other armed groups to engage in dialogue with the Government. That is a positive step in the realization of total peace.

The normalization of relations with its neighbours remains key to the continued security and prosperity of Colombia and to regional stability. We therefore welcome the steps taken to normalize relations with Venezuela.

The United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia has been instrumental in monitoring and verifying the progress in the implementation of the Final Agreement. It remains particularly critical at this moment. The A3 therefore supports the renewal of the Verification Mission's mandate for another year.

We urge the international community to continue to support the Government's efforts technically and financially. Some of that support, particularly from the United Nations, can involve mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a specific focus on their impact on the most vulnerable. The SDGs have specific goals and benchmarks. Making them part of measurable action by the Government will be key to demonstrating inclusivity, fairness, justice and sustainable development for the most vulnerable Colombians. For that to work most effectively, all efforts should be made to concretely link the coordination, deliverables and learning between the Verification Mission and the United Nations country team.

In conclusion, I would like to make a special mention of the leading efforts of Kenya in bringing a strong focus to the linkage between Africa and its diaspora in the work of the Security Council. That is particularly the case with the efforts of the A3, which has led to more delegations taking up aspects of the cause. As Kenya winds down its term, it can take pride in having tangibly contributed to the strengthening of pan-African solidarity. It is an effort that the A3 will continue into the future.

The A3 reaffirms its solidarity with the Government and the people of Colombia in their tireless pursuit of total peace and prosperity.

(spoke in French)

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway.

Ms. Huitfeldt (Norway): We thank Mr. Ruiz Massieu for his briefing and offer our congratulations to President Gustavo Petro Urrego, represented in the Chamber today by Foreign Minister Leyva Durán, on his election victory. We wish to extend a warm welcome to Foreign Minister Leyva Durán. Let me also thank the briefers for their valuable insights.

As a former Minister of Children and Equality, I would first like to commend Colombia for taking major steps towards greater inclusiveness. A cabinet with gender parity is a sign of a Government that takes equality seriously. Women's representation in Congress, where one out of three members are now women, is equally encouraging.

We also celebrate the first meeting of the Commission for the Follow-Up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Peace Agreement. The new Government and the representatives of the former Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP) renewed their unconditional commitment to the peace agreement. This and the other bilateral arenas for dialogue must be used effectively. They are crucial to the successful implementation of the peace agreement.

Peace is at the top of President Petro Urrego's agenda. His flagship policy — "total peace" — is ambitious. Yet achieving nationwide peace and security is long overdue. Norway remains fully committed to the Colombian peace process. We remain a guarantor country in the implementation of the 2016 peace accord, and we have been asked to continue in the negotiations with the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN). I would like to commend the Government for moving quickly to re-engage with the ELN, and not least for working closely with Cuba.

"Total peace" is a tall order. It will be complicated. It will take time. And it will call for approaches and methods different from the ones we are used to. But we stand ready to assist in the Government's effort to promote dialogue and the disarmament of other armed groups, if so requested.

Land reform and access to land are key to a peaceful and prosperous Colombia. I am pleased to see that the Government is working hard to find just and sustainable solutions to the root causes of the conflict.

International support has been proved to be essential for the implementation of the agreement. I applaud the United States for recently taking a special role in the implementation of the ethnic chapter of the accord. It is an important job, as much still needs to be done on questions where ethnicity is a factor.

Colombia's transitional justice system continues to impress us. The Truth Commission's final report contains important recommendations, which I am pleased to see the Government is taking seriously. We also commend the Government for convening the National Commission for Security Guarantees. This Commission has the potential to address the root causes of violence, which would in turn improve security conditions for human rights defenders and former combatants. That is vital, given the dire security situation of these groups. More than 340 former FARC soldiers have lost their lives since 2016. This cannot continue.

A specific focus on the challenges faced by women human rights defenders is also needed. And I echo the Secretary-General in urging full implementation of the Comprehensive Programme for Safeguards for Women Leaders and Human Rights Defenders. Likewise, we call upon all parties to uphold their obligations under international law and implement in Colombia the conclusions of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict.

Council members must agree on a renewal of the mandate that will enable the United Nations Mission to continue its support for peace and stability in Colombia. Norway remains committed to working with Colombia to secure lasting peace.

Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez (Mexico) *(spoke in Spanish)*: I thank Ambassador Muhith and Ms. Elizabeth Moreno Barco for their briefings. We greatly value their testimony. I am very pleased to welcome to the Security Council Minister Álvaro Leyva Durán, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia. I also welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway.

I thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the Verification Mission in Colombia, Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, for his briefing

and express my appreciation for the work he has carried out together with his team.

Mexico welcomes the resumption of the dialogue between the Government of Colombia and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional and its willingness to extend the dialogue to other groups. This is a fundamental step towards sustainable peace.

We recognize President Petro Urrego's decision to put peace at the centre of his public policies. We welcome the "total peace" initiative, which is based on the pillars of the rights to truth, justice and reparation.

The comprehensive implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace is also an opportunity to address the historical inequalities and structural factors that help explain the persistence of violence in Colombia. The reactivation of the Commission for the Follow-Up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Peace Agreement and the National Commission for Security Guarantees are concrete actions that underpin the path to sustainable peace.

We join the Secretary-General in recognizing the efforts made by local authorities and representatives of civil society — particularly those of indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities — to strengthen peacebuilding. The ethnicity chapter is a fundamental pillar for peace. With its experience as a multiethnic and multicultural country that recognizes its own challenges and which is well aware of the magnitude of the historical debt owed to the native, indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples, Mexico is fully prepared to collaborate in this area.

We also recognize the new Colombian Government's commitments to promoting progress on pending issues of the Final Agreement, including agrarian reform, and to strengthening development programmes with a territorial approach. In particular, we highlight its willingness to involve communities as key actors in the implementation of the illicit crop substitution programme. The foregoing is consistent with and supports President Petro Urrego's remarks on drug policies in his address to the General Assembly last month (see A/77/PV.4).

We share his vision: it is time to review global drug policies and the role the United Nations plays in them, and to bolster actions that protect the communities that are most vulnerable to the scourge of drug trafficking.

Mexico takes note of the progress in the work of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace and its focus on victims. We commend it for its decision to consider its first case of crimes related to sexual and gender-based violence — a historic request from victims' organizations. Similarly, we welcome the creation of a Ministry of Equality.

Mainstreaming women's rights and gender equality is essential for achieving total peace. The Cabinet's current gender parity and the nomination of Colombia's first female Afro-Colombian Vice-President, Ms. Francia Márquez Mina, is concrete proof of that commitment.

The Colombian Government's renewed push for peace is also being reinforced by actions such as the normalization of relations with Venezuela. As a member of the Latin American and Caribbean community, Mexico firmly believes that improving the relationship between the two neighbours, which share cultural, historical and economic ties, will be beneficial for addressing common challenges, and our entire region will benefit from this improved relationship.

In conclusion, we reaffirm our commitment to carefully considering Colombia's requests to the Council with a view to renewing the Verification Mission's mandate in our capacity as co-penholders on that issue, together with the United Kingdom.

Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom): I would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ruiz Massieu, Ms. Moreno Barco and Mr. Muhith, for their briefings. I warmly welcome Foreign Minister Leyva Durán. and Ambassador Zalabata Torres to the Security Council. Their presence here today is a reflection of their personal commitment to the peace process and to working in partnership with the Council. I would like to make the following three remarks.

First, the United Kingdom welcomes the renewed momentum for peace in Colombia. The new Government's commitment to implementing the peace agreement was clearly demonstrated through President Petro Urrego's attendance at the first meeting of the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement and the National Commission on Security Guarantees on 2 October. We commend the Government's focus on vital rural reforms, including the intention to accelerate the titling and purchase of land. We note the progress made by the Special

Jurisdiction for Peace, with the opening of three new cases and another due to be opened on sexual and gender-based violence.

Secondly, we encourage the Government to continue to focus on the comprehensive implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, despite the challenges. We remain deeply concerned about the ongoing threats and violence faced by former combatants and human rights defenders. We welcome the swift action taken by the Government to set up 14 command posts, as recommended in its emergency protection plan. It is clear that additional security initiatives are urgently needed. We welcome the new Government's further commitment to making additional progress on implementing the gender and ethnic provisions of the Final Agreement, including on land ownership.

Thirdly, we recognize the complexity of the instability in Colombia and the need for a multidimensional approach to address violence and ensure human security. In that light, the United Kingdom welcomes the progress made towards reinitiating talks with the Ejército de Liberación Nacional. We hope that the delegations sent to the peace talks will be representative and that lessons will be learned from the process that led to the 2016 agreement. The United Kingdom also welcomes Colombia's commitment to reinforcing international cooperation to tackle narco-trafficking and bring to justice those who profit from the misery of the drug trade, in both producer and consumer countries.

Finally, let me reaffirm the United Kingdom's support to Colombia and the Colombian people, who remain committed to implementing the peace agreement, despite the many challenges they face. In particular, we look forward to working with Colombia, the United Nations and our co-penholder, Mexico, on the upcoming renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia.

Mr. Mythen (Ireland): I would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ruiz Massieu for his briefing and for the work of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia. Ireland also welcomes the valuable perspectives of the Peacebuilding Commission and thanks Ambassador Muhith. I would also like to thank Ms. Moreno Barco for her inspiring and important testimony. I further want to recognize

the participation here today of Foreign Minister Leyva Durán and Ambassador Zalabata Torres.

At a time of significant change in Colombia, the peace process has remained steadfast. It continues to provide a shining example of inclusive peacebuilding and a comprehensive peace accord. Ireland reiterates its support to all those building a durable and sustainable peace in Colombia. We welcome the new Government's commitment to intensifying the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, and we will continue to accompany it on this journey as friends and partners in peace. I would like to focus my remarks on three key issues.

First, the true potential of the accord can only be fully realized through its complete implementation. That will require greater prioritization, in particular, of the rural reform and ethnic chapters, and renewed dedication to the gender chapters. Ireland welcomes the reinvigoration of the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement. We know from our own peace process on the island of Ireland that inclusive dialogue is essential for enduring and sustained peace.

Peace is the primary precondition for progress. Peace is integral for Colombia to advance its socioeconomic development, protect its unique biodiversity and overcome historic inequalities. We welcome the announcement by President Petro Urrego of the re-establishment of peace talks between the Government and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional, as well as ongoing efforts for a ceasefire with other armed groups. That is potentially another transformational moment on Colombia's path to lasting peace.

Secondly, Ireland reiterates its support to Colombia's transitional justice system. We welcome the commitment to victims and survivors demonstrated by the opening of three new cases at the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. We recognize the important acknowledgements of truth and responsibility by many indicted under Case 03, as well as the welcome progress made in other cases. Ireland fully supports the intention to open a macro-case on crimes related to sexual and gender-based violence.

I also want to recall the recent return of four young persons by the Unit for the Search of Persons Deemed Missing in the context of and due to the armed conflict.

This brings invaluable closure to their families and communities.

President Petro Urrego's commitment to implementing the recommendations of the final report of the Truth Commission in full is very welcome. Those processes, individually and collectively, will have a transformative impact on the lives of victims and survivors and for true reconciliation for all Colombians.

Thirdly, the continuing levels of violence are a deep stain on the tapestry of peace in Colombia. Ireland condemns the recent deaths of 20 police officers at the hands of illegal armed groups. We deplore the persistently high level of killings of indigenous people, Afro-Colombians, children, former combatants and human rights defenders. Ireland condemns in the strongest terms the killing of José Quiñones — the fourth leader of his organization killed in less than a year. The protection of all who work for peace is a critical requirement for a peaceful, stable and equal future. We welcome the recent meeting of the National Security Guarantees Commission, whose work is essential.

Recognizing the particular challenges facing women peacebuilders, Ireland encourages the full and timely implementation of the Comprehensive Programme for Safeguards for Women Leaders and Human Rights Defenders. As a country that understands the centrality of women to sustainable peace, Ireland stands ready to work with Colombia on the development of its national action plan on women and peace and security.

It is rare that we speak of hope around this table. But in the case of the Colombian peace process there are compelling reasons for such hope. The soil for enduring peace is fertile in Colombia. We must tend that field carefully. With the continued commitment of the Colombian Government and people and with the support of the Council, the harvest can be plentiful. Ireland will continue to do its part to see a peaceful, prosperous and inclusive future realized for all Colombians.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the participation of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Mr. Álvaro Leyva Durán, in today's consultations. We thank Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, for his briefing on the situation in the country and for his assessments. We also thank the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, Mr. Muhith, and Ms. Moreno Barco for their opinions.

We welcome the general course towards peace outlined by the Administration of Gustavo Petro Urrego. The new Government's first steps instil optimism and confidence that the authorities are truly committed to fully implementing the provisions of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace. This approach is drastically different from that of the previous Administration, which used various pretexts to avoid fully implementing the Final Agreement.

At the time, we saw a desire to reduce the peace process to integrating one part of society into another — in other words, to absorb rather than to merge. That was also one of the root causes of the conflict. Such an approach also did not address the issues of ensuring the physical safety of peace-process participants and community leaders, remedying the vacuum of State power in certain regions of the country or conducting comprehensive agricultural reform and crop-substitution programmes. Many public figures in Colombia believe that the past four years did nothing to advance the peace process, or even caused a regression of the security situation to the level before the Final Agreement was signed.

The incumbent President and his team are faced with a complex and ambitious goal of overcoming all of those accumulated challenges. As we noted on several occasions, the achievement of a sustainable and lasting peace in Colombia is not possible without the engagement of all major stakeholders, including the Ejército de Liberación Nacional. It is heartening that the resumption of negotiations with the Ejército de Liberación Nacional is one of the priorities of the new Administration. Meetings of the sides in Cuba and Venezuela and their mutual commitment to continue dialogue in November signal a genuine desire to move towards national reconciliation and a complete cessation of hostilities in Colombia.

We welcome that external guarantors and mediators who are trusted by all parties and can add value to negotiations have joined the settlement process. We are pleased to see Venezuela again in that capacity, as it is Colombia's most important and closest neighbour, in every sense of the word.

We note the consistent steps of Bogotá to restore dialogue and cooperation with Caracas, which is in the basic interests of both nations. We are convinced that the normalization of Venezuelan-Colombian relations will

help address the migration situation and help combat transnational organized crime and drug trafficking.

Under these new circumstances, United Nations assistance in implementing peace agreements is more relevant than ever. We note that the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, which we will have to renew before the end of this month, covers only the implementation process of the Final Agreement. We will be ready to support the renewal of the mandate after a thorough consideration of the text. At the same time, we draw the attention of the Secretary-General and the Security Council to the fact that the implementation of the peace agreement and the achievement of “total peace”, which provide for a broader interpretation of the tasks of the Government, are currently beyond the scope of the Mission’s mandate.

Russia is prepared to continue actively participating in international efforts to provide comprehensive assistance with peacebuilding in Colombia. We reiterate our full support for the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, under the leadership of Carlos Ruiz Massieu.

Mrs. Jaraud-Darnault (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Mr. Muhammad Abdul Muhith and Ms. Moreno Barco for their briefings. I also welcome the presence of Mr. Álvaro Leyva Durán in today’s meeting.

France welcomes the commitment made by the President of Colombia to implement the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace in its entirety. The reduction of inequalities, agrarian reform, governance by and for women, dialogue with local communities and environmental protection are all essential to the full implementation of the agreement and are positive steps. The resumption of negotiations with the Ejército de Liberación Nacional is encouraging, as is the willingness of other armed groups to engage in dialogue. We support President Petro Urrego’s call for a ceasefire with all armed groups.

France remains very concerned about the level of violence in many parts of Colombia. Security guarantees for former combatants who have laid down their arms and for human rights defenders and social leaders must be strengthened. The approach proposed by the Colombian authorities, based on local dialogue, is promising. To be effective, it must be accompanied

by a strengthening of the State’s presence in areas historically neglected by the agreement.

In order to build peace, viable socioeconomic opportunities must be offered to the populations that have suffered from the conflict. We welcome the Government’s commitment to do more on land access and rural reform. The authorities’ new approach to illicit-crop substitution is also welcome.

Finally, France welcomes the progress made by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. The opening of three new cases is a positive step. The report of the Truth Commission was a crucial advancement towards reconciliation and is truly commendable. All parties to the conflict must commit to these efforts to ensure justice and truth, which are essential for the return of lasting peace to the country.

France welcomes the progress made by Colombia since 2016. The peace agreement is a historic achievement. We call on the Colombian authorities to continue and accelerate its full implementation and to dedicate the necessary resources in that regard. That is the surest way to entrench peace in Colombia.

Mr. Spasse (Albania): I would like to join others in expressing our appreciation for the work that Special Representative of the Secretary-General Massieu has accomplished with the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia and for his briefing today. I also thank Ms. Moreno Barco and Ambassador Muhith for their insights.

It is not very often that the Security Council deliberates on cases where real progress is made, where conflicts are resolved and not simply managed, where hope prevails in bringing hard-won solutions that shape human life. Colombia is an example of courageous choices for peace, for the path of dialogue and genuine recognition of the grievances and aspirations of all parties.

Peace never falls from the heavens. It is a result of the hard work of leaders who show courage, determination and vision. We welcome the commitment shown by President Gustavo Petro Urrego and his Administration to further deepen the accomplishment of the peace agreement by reinforcing the dialogue and reconciliation among all political forces, including marginalized ethnic groups and civil society. The peaceful electoral process in Colombia is a major accomplishment and a clear demonstration that the Colombian people have

made the choice of upholding and implementing the agreement as the right investment to consolidating their democracy and preparing their future. We welcome the support of the incumbent Government to implement the peace agreement and pursue total peace.

Achieving total peace and consolidating democracy in a country that has been ravaged by civil war for decades is not an easy task. We recognize the enormity of the challenge and are encouraged by the level of commitment and determination to move forward shown by the Colombian leaders.

There is undeniably still a long way to go, especially in improving security in conflict-affected areas. Vulnerable communities and groups, including women, indigenous communities and Afro-Colombians, must see as soon as possible the benefits of the Final Agreement. We call on the Government to maintain the momentum and proceed with the adoption of the different chapters and reforms on pending issues necessary for the fulfilment of the peace agreement. That is a process that requires the continuation and reinforcement of dialogue and cooperation at all levels.

The announcement of the resumption of peace talks with the Ejército de Liberación Nacional is a meaningful and fundamental step towards building peace. Total peace requires full inclusivity, which becomes a guarantee for a lasting solution in upholding the rule of law.

Restoring order is a necessary condition for any other socially desirable goal to be attained, but order and security alone are not enough. There is an urgent need for the newly elected Government to strengthen the judiciary in order to ensure justice, protect vulnerable groups and dismantle illegal armed groups and criminal organizations.

Impunity for serious crimes remains a problem. It must be addressed properly and in a timely manner, since the lack of accountability leads to resentment and tensions. Land reform, the ethnic chapter and gender provisions must be prioritized. They are key to restoring peace and addressing inequalities.

Finally, allow me to mention that the re-establishment of diplomatic ties with the Government of Venezuela, after years of closure, and the reopening of the border is another crucial factor in demonstrating goodwill towards the achievement of total peace.

Mr. Raguttahalli (India): I thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Carlos Ruiz Massieu for updating the Security Council on the recent developments in Colombia. I also thank the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, Mr. Muhammad Abdul Muhith, for his statement, as well as the civil society representative, Ms. Moreno Barco, for her insights. I also welcome the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia at today's meeting.

Since our most recent meeting in July (see S/PV.9094), we are happy to note that a peaceful transition has taken place in Colombia and a new President was sworn into office on 7 August. That peaceful transition is a testament to the successful implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, which we continue to support.

While the greater gender inclusivity and indigenous representation in the new Government and Parliament are welcome developments, the comprehensive implementation of the Final Agreement's interrelated elements represents an opportunity for the new Government to address the persisting inequalities and the underlying factors behind the continuing violence.

We also must be aware that the objectives of the peace agreement are ambitious and, therefore, their realization will require time.

While we appreciate the positive developments that Colombia has witnessed in the past few years, we remain cognizant of the impediments to the implementation of the peace agreement that remain. We believe that the solutions to issues such as security, rural reforms, crop substitution and the rehabilitation of ex-combatants are intrinsically linked to political reforms, decentralization, the extension of State authority and reconciliation.

We appreciate that, despite facing several challenges, the Colombian authorities are making progress on addressing the security, housing and land guarantees enshrined in the peace agreement. The new Government has also underscored the importance of broadening the implementation of the peace agreement by including more parties in the process. In that regard, we welcome the renewed initiative to engage with the Ejército de Liberación Nacional as part of the reconciliation initiatives.

We also note the recent legislation approved by Congress and the agrarian reforms. We hope that positive trend will continue in the coming months and help to consolidate the gains achieved thus far.

We believe the prioritization of rural reforms aimed at increasing employment and livelihood opportunities is fundamental to sustaining peace. There is also a need for more effective measures, both in Colombia and in the region, to tackle the issue of drug trafficking to sustain peace and stability in Colombia.

Separately, we also welcome the steps taken by the Government of Colombia to improve relations with Venezuela.

India values its bilateral ties with Colombia, with whom we share a relationship spanning more than six decades. Over the years, our bilateral relations have deepened and diversified in areas such as space, health, science, technology and biotechnology. As a long-standing friend of the Colombian people, we hope that the international community will continue to shoulder its responsibility to support the people and Government of Colombia in their journey to consolidate and sustain peace. India stands ready to play its part in that larger pursuit.

Mr. Costa Filho (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for me and my country 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. I thank the briefers for their briefings. I welcome Minister Álvaro Leyva Durán, to the Security Council and wish him every success in his work.

Today, for the first time in the Council, we have listened closely and with great interest to the new Government's plans and strategy to advance the comprehensive implementation of the peace agreement with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo. We are pleased to recognize that the Government of President Petro Urrego has expressed, since its electoral campaign, its commitment to the full implementation of the peace agreement, to stepping up efforts to guarantee the security of ex-combatants and to strengthening policies with respect to women, indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants.

We are not surprised that the Secretary-General, in his most recent report to the Security Council, praised the "renewed momentum and sharpened focus

on consolidating peace" (S/2022/715, para. 104) of the new Colombian Government. Indeed, President Petro Urrego has stated that he intends to pursue total peace and has already begun to take steps in that direction. In the context of the Final Agreement, we take note of the recent reactivation of the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement. We also note the evolution and progress of the dialogue with the Ejército de Liberación Nacional, which we hope will be successful.

We are aware, however, that total peace will be possible only when the presence of the Colombian State effectively reaches all corners of its territory. As the Secretary-General acknowledged in his June report to the Council (S/2022/513), the persisting violence in several regions of Colombia requires a full deployment of the State's capabilities and the confrontation of illegal armed groups and criminal organizations that continue to operate in regions characterized by poverty, illicit economies and ineffective territorial control by the State.

We are fully aware that improving social policies in historically neglected areas that have also been affected by decades of conflict requires time and incremental work. In that regard, as we have reiterated in our recent contacts with the new Colombian authorities, the Brazilian Government is willing to support initiatives aimed at promoting the economic and social development of those communities.

This month we will negotiate the adoption of the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia. In that context, it is our duty to underline, as we have done on several occasions, that Colombia is a special case on the agenda of the Security Council. Colombia is on the Council's agenda through its own initiative. It was Colombia that invited the Council to play a role in the implementation of the peace agreement, which was achieved exclusively by the Colombian people themselves. The Council should not lose sight of its subsidiary role in the process. Broader development and security strategies are the sole prerogatives of the Colombian State. Brazil is and will continue to be very clear on that fact during negotiations. From another perspective, the verification of the peace agreement in Colombia allows the Council to play an innovative role that is distinctly different from its part in other conflict situations. In that regard, we are pleased to reiterate that while the Council may

be important for Colombia, Colombia is also important for the Council.

Brazil congratulates the Colombian Government and people for their tireless efforts to find and consolidate a path of peace and prosperity for all Colombians. Colombia has shown that it has been able to create the political will and the conditions to halt the violence and bring development to rural areas and others that have historically lacked State support. We hope that the new Government will continue and strengthen that process. We are aware of the difficulties of the challenge but we trust in the willingness and ingenuity of the Colombian people to overcome it.

Mr. DeLaurentis (United States of America): We thank Special Representative Ruiz Massieu for his briefing and for presenting the Secretary-General's report (S/2022/715). We appreciate the vital role that the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia continues to play in supporting peace in the country. Let me also thank Ambassador Muhith and Ms. Moreno Barco for their contributions today. The United States congratulates President Gustavo Petro Urrego and Vice-President Francia Márquez Mina on taking office and looks forward to continuing its strong relationship with Colombia and its people. In that regard, we particularly welcome the presence of Foreign Minister Leyva Durán and Ambassador Zalabata Torres and their team to today's meeting.

Just last week, our Secretary of State, Antony Blinken, visited Bogotá, and at a signing ceremony with Vice-President Márquez Mina marked the fact that the United States has become the first international accompanier to the ethnic chapter of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace. As Secretary Blinken said, that chapter

“recognizes that there can be no lasting peace without justice and equality for the Afro-Colombian and indigenous peoples who have been disproportionately harmed by the conflict.”

We also want to congratulate the new Congress, which for the first time includes 16 representatives from conflict-affected areas elected through the special transitional electoral districts created by the peace accord. The United States welcomes President Petro Urrego's commitment to the full implementation of the peace accord and shares that resolve. We recognize that commitment through the variety of bills that have been

introduced into the Colombian Congress to advance those efforts, which are vital to securing the advances Colombia has made since the peace accord was adopted.

That said, all the parties must also work to improve the security situation. Several civilian massacres and police ambushes have taken place since we last met in the Council to discuss Colombia (see S/PV.9094). Several members of the Awá indigenous community were killed in the Nariño and Putumayo departments and violence against indigenous communities remains a significant problem. The Colombian National Police have been targeted, with attacks by drug cartels in which more than 20 officers were killed. Terrorist groups also targeted the police, with seven more officers killed during an attack in Huila. Former combatants have also suffered, with 11 killed in July alone, the deadliest month for former combatants since 2019. Human rights defenders continue to be targeted, with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights receiving allegations of 45 homicides, including of seven women, during the current reporting cycle from 28 July through 26 September. It is crucial for Colombia to ensure that it avoids backsliding on security, as insecurity will hamper its ability to address the other provisions in the peace accord. In our view, it is crucial that the United Nations Mission be able to continue its work and that all chapters of the peace accord move forward.

The United States remains committed to supporting Colombia and the peace accord, while also maintaining its interest in bringing drug traffickers to justice and avoiding impunity for acts committed by illegal armed groups.

Mr. Geng Shuang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, I would like to welcome Foreign Minister Adamo and thank him for presiding over today's meeting. I also welcome the Colombian Foreign Minister and the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission to this meeting. I thank Special Representative Ruiz Massieu for his briefing. I also listened carefully to the statement by the civil-society representative.

Since President Petro Urrego took office in August, the new Colombian Government has actively promoted the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace and has set forth the concept of “total peace”, demonstrating its firm determination to achieve lasting peace and stability in the country, which China commends. We support the Colombian Government in its efforts to

promote dialogue and reconciliation, foster economic and social development and pursue national peace and stability. We expect all the parties in Colombia to unite as one to meet the challenges in the peace process and continue to consolidate and expand on their hard-won peace gains.

Dialogue is an effective way to resolve differences and settle disputes. China welcomes the Colombian Government's commitment to ending the conflict through dialogue and appreciates the announcement by the Government and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional regarding a resumption of peace talks. We believe that with the support of the United Nations and the relevant guarantor countries, the two parties will reach a permanent ceasefire and a political settlement through negotiations aimed at creating more favourable conditions for Colombia to realize comprehensive and lasting peace as soon as possible. We also hope that the other armed groups will return to a path of peaceful dialogue without delay.

The comprehensive implementation of the peace agreement is key to eradicating violence and achieving peaceful development, and an integrated approach to policy implementation is needed to ensure a continued flow of inputs. It is therefore imperative to improve Colombia's security governance capabilities, bolster the presence of security forces in former conflict areas where the Government lacks effective control and crack down on violence and organized criminal activity by armed groups. It is also vital to protect vulnerable groups such as women, children and Afro-Colombian communities, while actively promoting the integration of former combatants into society by helping them to find employment opportunities and encouraging their participation in productive projects, providing technical support and training to that end. We must expedite reforms in all socioeconomic fields, address poverty, social injustice and underdevelopment in rural areas and leave no one behind. We must also continue to promote the substitution of illicit crops and focus on resolving the root causes of the drug epidemic. In that regard, agencies such as the Peacebuilding Commission, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the United Nations Development Programme should provide more support.

As Secretary-General Guterres said, the Colombian peace process is taking root. At the same time, Colombia cannot build peace without the robust assistance of the international community. We welcome and support

the improvement of relations between Colombia and neighbouring countries, and we hope that regional countries and regional organizations will make greater contributions to consolidating the momentum for peace and promoting economic and social development in Colombia.

Under the leadership of Special Representative Ruiz Massieu, the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia has played an active role in promoting the implementation of the Colombian peace agreement, which China fully recognizes. We support the extension of the Verification Mission's mandate and are willing to work with the other members of the Security Council to push for the provision of more targeted assistance to Colombia's peace process by the Verification Mission. China stands ready to work with the international community, on the basis of respecting Colombia's ownership, to support Colombia's ongoing efforts for new achievements on the path to comprehensive peace, stability and development.

Mrs. Alhefeiti (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I thank the briefers for their valuable briefings. We express our appreciation to Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, for his efforts, and we welcome the participation of the Foreign Minister of Colombia in today's meeting.

At a time of increasing tensions and crises around the world, preserving and building on the peace achievements of many countries have become an utmost necessity, such as the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, which represents an example of the importance of dialogue.

We welcome continued efforts by President Gustavo Petro Urrego to fully and comprehensively implement the Final Peace Agreement, as crucial to building on Colombia's significant progress to achieve lasting peace and stability. That includes the commitment of the Colombian Government to essential mechanisms such as the National Commission on Security Guarantees and the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement, as well as the Government's endeavours and efforts to ensure inclusivity such as gender parity reforms, establishing the new Ministry of Equality and

the National Youth Council. We look forward to the Government's continued commitment in that regard.

Initiatives such as the Community-based initiative for promoting peaceful coexistence and reintegration remain a fundamental tool to protect the hard-won achievements of former combatants and address the persistent security concerns in Colombia, including violence against community leaders. Developing local strategies that include former combatants and youth, concurrently with implementing the security guarantees of the Final Agreement, will undoubtedly contribute to securing peace among the communities. In that context, we commend the ongoing development of reintegration action plans and strategies across municipalities in coordination with local authorities, communities and former combatants. We are hopeful that those efforts, in conjunction with any other measures in pursuit of broader peace, can support Colombia on its path towards building a peaceful future.

We are encouraged by the people of Colombia in their steadfast dedication to achieve reconciliation, and the President's commitment to implementing the recommendations of the final report of the Truth Commission. That report, as well as the other elements of the Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition, constitutes an important reconciliation pillar in Colombia. That includes the expanded cases of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace.

In conclusion, the United Arab Emirate reaffirms its commitment to supporting Colombia on its journey to achieve sustainable peace and stability. We also reaffirm our full support for the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia and its efforts in that regard.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia.

Mr. Leyva Durán (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I extend my warmest greetings to the ambassadors, members of the Security Council.

As representatives are all aware, I will refer to the report (S/2022/715) submitted to the Security Council by the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia on the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, signed between the Colombian State and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-

Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP), in accordance with the provisions of resolutions 2603 (2021) and 2366 (2017), whereby the Security Council extended the political mandate requesting the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the Mission's mandate every 90 days. The report before us today covers the period from 28 June to 26 September.

I would like to express my complete satisfaction at witnessing the way in which the work has been presented, that is to say, the report that I just mentioned, which, although it appears to be a continuation of what has come before, is in fact an evocation of the title of Marcel Proust's masterpiece *In Search of Lost Time*.

I had the honour of being involved in several Colombian peace processes, particularly the most recent one in Havana under the leadership of Mr. Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, for which he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. In key moments of the process, it gave the impression that, as in Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*, it was the best of times, the age of wisdom, the epoch of belief, the season of light and the spring of hope. We had everything before us; we were direct straight to heaven.

In those days, the Security Council, as it had done at the time with the peace accord achieved in the Republic of Mali, took up the Colombian State's proposal, made by its President, to transform the agreement into a formal document. It did so. The six agreed points, in addition to the protocols and annexes to the Agreement on the Bilateral and Definitive Ceasefire and the Cessation of Hostilities and the Laying Down of Arms between the national Government and the FARC-EP, were recorded on its own pages forever. It therefore included in its core documents the special agreements to which the State and the rebels had submitted in the light of common article 3 of the Geneva Conventions and article 6 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War of 1949. Likewise, the commitment to issuing a unilateral declaration of statehood was made.

But, on a wrong day for democracy, because democracy unfortunately sometimes gets it wrong, Dickens's paradoxical quandary came to the fore: there was the worst of times, the age of foolishness, the epoch of incredulity and of darkness and the winter of despair. We stopped going to heaven to lead us to nothing. That is because on Sunday, 17 June 2008, someone who had received the order to tear peace to shreds took power. A

destructive will was expressed at the ballot box, driven by a not-so-invisible hand from beyond our borders, which did us great harm.

But, as paragraph 2 of today's report notes,

“On 7 August, Gustavo Petro Urrego was sworn in as President of Colombia and Francia Márquez Mina was sworn in as Vice-President. In his inaugural speech, President Petro Urrego reiterated his call upon political parties and Colombian society to build a national agreement in support of urgent changes. He has outlined his main priorities, notably his commitments to peace, including the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace; to reducing inequality; to governing with and for women; to ensuring zero tolerance for corruption; and to holding regional dialogues for local authorities and communities to contribute to policymaking. He has also pledged to transition towards clean energy and to protect the Amazon while also promoting a new global approach to illicit drugs. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Colombia and Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia has met with President Petro Urrego and Vice-President Márquez Mina, affirming the support of the United Nations for their efforts towards peace.”

President Petro Urrego wanted it to be understood that a special time has come for Colombia: the time of “total peace” and the time of peace beyond our borders.

With regard to the first chapter of the Havana agreements, on comprehensive rural reform, the Secretary-General's report notes, in paragraph 9, how the Government of our new President

“has emphasized that agrarian reform is one of its key priorities”

and indicated that its implementation will be fundamental. It has already demonstrated this intention by strengthening the National Land Agency, seeking the creation of the special agrarian jurisdiction, initiating the consolidation of the multipurpose cadastre and updating the rural property regime.

The purchase of 3 million hectares to be delivered to the dispossessed has already begun. We understand that it is not possible for a Government that has been in power only 65 days to amend a plan that should never have deviated from the initial road map to begin with;

still, progress in relaunching what had been agreed cannot be reversed.

With regard to political participation, as the Secretary-General's report rightly points out,

“The Government presented a draft political reform aimed at ensuring, among other things, gender parity in Congress and political campaigns funded exclusively through public funds. The Government also presented, together with electoral institutions, a draft bill to reform the electoral code” (*S/2022/715, para. 14*).

Implementation efforts in this area are very ambitious: guaranteeing rights that facilitate the exercise of political opposition (section 2.1 of the Havana agreements), democratic mechanisms for citizen participation (section 2.2), guarantees for mobilization and social protest (section 2.2.2), guarantees for reconciliation, coexistence, tolerance and non-stigmatization (section 2.2.4). The work before us is arduous but rewarding.

There is much to be said on the subject of illicit drugs. The Secretary-General's report highlights that

“[a]mong his administration's priorities, the need for a revised approach to the issue of illicit drugs, both within Colombia and internationally, is one that President Petro Urrego has discussed. He has committed to prioritizing voluntary substitution over forced eradication, as envisioned in the Final Agreement, and to strengthening the National Comprehensive Programme for the Substitution of Illicit Crops” (*ibid., para. 15*).

The fact is we have had enough when it comes to the violence caused by the infernal business of drug trafficking in the Colombian homeland. The uncontrolled international demand for drugs stemming from vice continues trouble us, as it sows death and desolation. Accordingly, in his poignant address to the General Assembly on 20 September, President Gustavo Petro Urrego evoked a national reality that is worth remembering in this regard:

“I come from one of the three most beautiful countries on Earth. There is an explosion of life there — thousands of multicoloured species in the seas, skies and lands. I come from the land of yellow butterflies and magic. Water cascades down the lush green mountains and valleys — but so do torrents of blood. I come from a country of blood-soaked beauty.

“My country is both beautiful and violent. How can beauty co-exist with death? How can the biodiversity of life flourish alongside the dance of death and horror? Who is to blame for breaking the spell with terror?” (*A/77/PV.4, p.18*)

“Narco-trafficking, narco-trafficking,” I say. We all know the vices of the world. They are what led us — the Colombian Ambassador to the United States, Mr. Luis Gilberto Murillo-Urrutia, our Ambassador to the Organization of American States, Mr. Luis Ernesto Vargas Silva, our Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Mrs. Leonor Zalabata Torres and I — to meet with Secretary-General António Guterres yesterday to discuss convening a global conference of consumer countries of hallucinogens and other drugs, in order to raise awareness and take collective measures to solve a problem that should not be allowed to bring death to the weakest in the chain of a dirty business that ends up destroying lives, mostly of the innocent. In my homeland, that would be the small farmer, the Afro-descendant and indigenous peoples, together with the defenceless members of civil society who defend human rights and total peace, including a significant number of former combatants who have laid down their arms. We agreed to submit a formal proposal to the Secretary-General, which will be accompanied by a statement of purpose that will be difficult to overlook. It will be done.

I continue to rejoice at the way in which the implementation of the accords is beginning to accelerate. Issues relating to gender equality, rights guaranteeing the free development of the person, protection of minors — girls, boys and youth — and rural women, the right to education, food independence, and the integration of regions that had previously been overlooked by the State into the nation are all exciting. We are focusing on the value of prospective justice, keeping in mind that our objectives are not limited to solving the problems of our contemporaries. We know that generations are linked in time, as the philosopher says, and that one era inevitably influences those that follow. That is why the Havana agreements are concerned with the rights of those who have yet to come.

With regard to the important section of the agreement entitled “Chapter on Ethnic Perspectives” (section 6.2). In its subsection 6.2.1, entitled “Considerations” it is recognized that

“the ethnic peoples have suffered historical conditions of injustice, resulting from colonialism, slavery and exclusion and from having been dispossessed of their land, territories and resources; that they have also been seriously affected by the internal armed conflict and the maximum guarantees need to be fomented for the full exercise of their human and collective rights in the framework of their own aspirations, interests and world views”.

Therefore, as the text further indicates, it is worthwhile in this case to uphold the principle of “non-regression” as well as the principles of

“free determination, autonomy and self-government, participation, consultation and prior free and informed consent; social, economic and cultural identity and integrity, rights over land, territories and resources, which involve the recognition of their ancestral territorial practices, the right to restitution and strengthening of territoriality, the current mechanisms for legal protection and security of the land and territories occupied or owned ancestrally and/or traditionally”.

I have placed this text on the desk of each Council member because it calls for a reflection on how, through dialogue, “total peace” can be achieved. President Petro Urrego calls it “total peace”. We want and seek it nationally, and we aspire to seek and find it beyond our borders.

Meanwhile, the planet is heating up, and we have to be firefighters. We are concerned about the conflicts that delay the Paris timeline on climate change, the Kyoto Protocol and the outcomes of the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Glasgow. President Petro Urrego has explained how Colombia can be the world’s sponge — for peace, for universal peace.

Locally, in order to continue setting an example and showing that we can do this, we resumed dialogues with the Ejército de Liberación Nacional, and we are reaching out to those who were left out of the agreement that we are implementing under the watchful eye and guidance of the Security Council. For those matters we will always turn to the Security Council.

We are also taking the opportunity make improvements to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, an

institution that the Council admires and commends. We seek make it into a court that requires the participation of all parties, combatants and non-combatants alike, as well as those directly or indirectly linked to the internal conflict, and that attends to them all. As an internationalized judicial body, it must fulfil its duty by ensuring the application of all procedural safeguards, without reversing the burden of proof. It must seek to establish the responsibility of individuals and the responsibility of the State, whether by action or omission. This will be a new chapter. A truth mechanism must be established that focuses on victims, reparations and non-repetition.

I would like to thank the members of the Security Council. We understand that peace in our country, which is in the Council's hands, has become an example for the world — not only as a lovely idea that, in principle, has not encountered any major hiccups, but also because the Council, as a body, have never failed to act unanimously on it. It can be done — yes indeed it can.

I will set aside other issues that would unnecessarily prolong my statement, since Council members can find that information in the report submitted for their consideration by the Verification Mission. Our thanks go to the Mission, and we hope that the Council will extend its mandate under the conditions requested.

I want to express my most sincere appreciation to the Council on behalf on the President of Colombia, Gustavo Petro Urrego, and my entire nation.

Allow me simply to add something that comes from my heart. We are experiencing a scale of global problems not seen since the Second World War. I ask the Council to prevent the world from being destroyed. Allow me to say, I hope not foolishly, that some judgments are rendered more justly than others, and are generally wise if they are in the realm of magical realism. They are realistic and very real, even if they are magical — as shown in the works of our Nobel Prize laureate Gabriel García Márquez.

I urge the Security Council to intervene in a united manner to prevent the world from turning into the fictional village of Macondo, in which the legendary races, falsely believing themselves to be masters of the universe, end up condemning themselves to 100 years of solitude. Because if that happens — and it can — we will not get a second chance on Earth. The time for action is now or never.

The President (*spoke in French*): 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 4.55 p.m.