



Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

8511th meeting

Friday, 12 April 2019, 10.45 a.m.

New York

Provisional

President: Mr. Heusgen (Germany)

Members:

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| Belgium | Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve |
| China | Mr. Wu Haitao |
| Côte d'Ivoire | Mr. Ipo |
| Dominican Republic | Mr. Singer Weisinger |
| Equatorial Guinea | Mr. Ndong Mba |
| France | Mr. Delattre |
| Indonesia | Mr. Djani |
| Kuwait | Mr. Alotaibi |
| Peru | Mr. Meza-Cuadra |
| Poland | Ms. Wronecka |
| Russian Federation | Mr. Nebenzia |
| South Africa | Mr. Matjila |
| United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Ms. Pierce |
| United States of America | Mr. Cohen |

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/2019/265)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 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/2019/265)

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. Carlos Holmes Trujillo, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia. It is wonderful to have him here.

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. Rosa Emilia Salamanca, Executive Director, Corporación de Investigación y Acción Social y Económica.

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/2019/265, 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: It is an honour to present to the Council the latest report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia (S/2019/265) and to update the Council on developments since its publication. It is a pleasure to do so in the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Mr. Carlos Holmes Trujillo, and the Presidential Counsellor for Stabilization and Consolidation, Mr. Emilio Archila, who are both vital partners of the Verification Mission.

I also welcome the participation in today's meeting of Rosa Emilia Salamanca, representative of Colombian civil society, which plays a critical role in the peace process.

As the Council has acknowledged, Colombia's Final Agreement for the Termination of Conflict and the Construction of a Stable and Lasting Peace is a historic achievement. It has helped to end decades of armed conflict and provides an example to countries around the world that negotiated solutions are possible. At the same time, we know that it is during the long and often difficult process of implementing such agreements that peace is truly forged. Today, a diverse array of Colombian institutions, as well as community leaders, rural families, former combatants and members of civil society, remain actively engaged in the process and count on the international community's continuing support and engagement.

Colombia's final peace agreement is a broad agreement that includes interconnected commitments to ending the conflict as well as to foster rural reform, political participation, the reintegration of former combatants, security for conflict-affected communities, illicit-crop substitution and transitional justice. It is therefore key to implement the agreement in a comprehensive, integrated manner so as to ensure that all areas of its implementation are adequately resourced.

Many of the connections across those areas of the peace agreement were evident last week on a visit, during which I had the honour of joining President Duque at a territorial area for the training and reintegration in Icononzo, in the mountains of central Colombia, where 200 former combatants and their families live. That was his third visit to a territorial area. At that time, the former combatants conveyed a range of concerns, including Government support for their productive projects, security and uncertainty regarding their legal guarantees and with respect to the status of 24 territorial areas after the current legal status expires on 15 August. President Duque's message on that visit was to reassure the former combatants about the Government's commitment to their reintegration. Those are valuable opportunities to sustain dialogue and address the continuing insecurity and uncertainty that are highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General. Additional visits by members of the peace commissions of both houses of Congress to the territorial areas have also helped convey the commitment and engagement of Colombian institutions in the peace process.

With regard to reintegration, individual and collective projects for 1.774 former members of the Fuerza Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP), including 520 women, have now been approved. A recent census completed by the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization identified more than 10,500 former FARC-EP members within the reintegration process. Nearly two years after they laid down their arms, a critical challenge is to maintain their optimism in the face of continued uncertainties about their future. In that respect, I respectfully encourage the Government to accelerate the approval of more projects and the prompt disbursement of funds, as well as the implementation of a gender-sensitive approach and timely decisions on access to land.

Former combatants are undertaking productive initiatives as diverse as establishing bakeries and restaurants, producing clothing, shoes and agricultural products, and opening tourism projects in areas of the country that were previously inaccessible owing to the conflict. For most of those projects, a key challenge remains access to markets. The Government, together with the Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común (FARC), regional authorities, the private sector, the United Nations country team and, of course, the Mission continue to facilitate opportunities to connect the markets to products and services offered by former combatants, in partnership with local communities.

In its latest press statement on Colombia (SC/13676), the Council encouraged timely decisions concerning the future of the territorial areas, once their current legal status expires, to help provide greater certainty and reinforce the confidence of former FARC-EP members in the peace process. I welcome the recent efforts of the Government to formulate proposals for each of those territorial areas. It is also important to ensure an inclusive discussion on those proposals that involve former combatants, as well as local authorities. Those decisions should be taken and communicated to the former combatants as soon as possible so as to ensure a smooth transition. As always, the Mission stands ready to support the Government and the FARC in the transition process.

With regard to security guarantees, the killing of community leaders, human rights defenders and former FARC-EP combatants continues and remains a grave concern. The deployment of Colombian military and police near the territorial areas has been and remains critical, but violent competition among illegal armed

groups for territorial control in areas outside those security perimeters continues to threaten the security of former combatants and communities, as well as to undercut the overall peace-implementation efforts.

During a recent visit to Tumaco on the Pacific coast, I had a sobering discussion with a group of courageous Afro-Colombian social and community leaders, several of whom are under direct threat from armed groups and criminal organizations. All of them have friends, family members or colleagues who have been assassinated, displaced or threatened by criminal elements, including groups involved in illicit economies. They shared with me specific proposals and ideas for ensuring their safety that should be taken into account in devising local protection strategies.

In that regard, I welcome the Government's efforts to hold sessions of the National Commission on Security Guarantees in the territories. One such session actually is being held today in Cúcuta. I encourage the Government to ensure that those sessions translate into prompt decisions and concrete actions tailored to local dynamics. The leaders with whom I talked in Tumaco were also emphatic that security in the territories demands an integrated and coordinated presence of State authorities — civilian institutions and security forces alike. This is a message that I have heard consistently across the country. In that regard, I welcome the approval of the 16 development plans, with a territorial focus that will benefit 170 municipalities affected by the armed conflict, and I encourage the Government to devote the resources necessary to ensure the implementation of those plans. More than 200,000 community members contributed to the formulation of those plans, which is a positive example of effective dialogue between communities and State institutions.

Recent weeks have been dominated by divisive debates regarding transitional justice, which is a contentious issue in most peace processes. Last month, President Duque objected to six articles of the draft statutory law of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. Following a vote against those objections in the Chamber of Representatives earlier this week, consideration of the objections is still pending in the Senate. The Secretary-General has called for prompt action by all concerned to ensure that a statutory law consistent with the peace agreement is adopted as soon as possible. That statutory law is the last missing element of the legal framework for the Special Jurisdiction for Peace and is needed to ensure that the institution can operate

with the necessary independence and autonomy. The Special Jurisdiction for Peace, under the leadership of its President, Patricia Linares, continues to advance its work with impressive results. It has now initiated seven large cases that are examining significant violations affecting 820,000 victims. Moreover, close to 9,700 former FARC-EP members and almost 2,000 individuals from the armed forces have subjected themselves to its authority.

President Duque has also announced his intention to propose three constitutional reforms to the articles underpinning the transitional justice framework of the peace agreement. In introducing the first of those proposals, the Government assured that they would be applicable in the future. Indeed, no such initiatives should be applied in a retroactive manner to those who laid down their arms in good faith and on the strength of commitments made under the agreement. As the Secretary-General has stated, the principle of non-retroactivity is critical in preserving confidence in the process going forward. In a climate of uncertainty for victims, those subject to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, FARC members awaiting funding for social and economic reintegration and communities that have suffered from the conflict, the greatest uncertainty would be to reopen core elements of the underlying peace agreement itself.

As the peace process continues, it is fundamental to bring Colombians together and to heal divisions, just as President Duque signalled on the day of his inauguration. The path to consolidating peace requires consensus, and consensus can be achieved only through dialogue. I strongly encourage all such efforts in that regard. I am encouraged that at the local level Colombians throughout the country are engaging with one another across ideological lines to embrace the opportunities provided by the peace process. In the territorial areas I have visited, I have seen soldiers and former combatants playing football and living and working together, when only a few years ago they were fighting against each other. A few weeks ago in Cali, Colombia's third-largest city, the Mission participated in the launch of the Municipal Pact for Peace, Life and Reconciliation, which was signed by all political forces in the city, as well as civil society. In the Mission's ongoing work on youth, peace and security, we have been inspired by young Colombian men and women coming together across political, geographic and class

divides to embrace reconciliation and support former combatants in their reintegration into society.

In those and all their efforts to consolidate peace, Colombians, as always, can count on the unwavering support of the United Nations. The Security Council's firm and unified support to the peace process remains as crucial as ever.

The President: I thank the Special Representative for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Salamanca.

Ms. Salamanca (*spoke in Spanish*): My name is Rosa Emilia Salamanca. I am the co-Director of the Corporación de Investigación y Acción Social y Económica. I have been working for years in peacebuilding and in defending human rights. I welcome the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations and the other members of the Colombian Government.

For us this forum is of great importance in our dialogue with the international community and with the Colombian Government in addressing the challenge of peacebuilding in my country. We, together with many civil society organizations and very diverse women's organizations, continue to help transform Colombia with resilience and determination. In addition to being a time for us to speak of hope and faith in the future, this is also a challenging time when it comes to implementing the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, as I will explain later, and we are being asked to remain unwavering in our focus on and support to a process that will continue to be an example of innovation and contributions to the entire world.

Let me recall that the agreement is designed based on a comprehensive approach and its greatest asset lies in its interconnected approach to peace and the way it places victims at its centre. Its transformational potential is to be maintained and is an opportunity for change in order to put an end to the cycles of violence, conflict and pain we have experienced. I would therefore like to underscore some issues that, although they are not the only issues, we believe are important when it comes to implementing the agreement in the current environment.

With regard to the reintegration of former combatants, as expressions of civil society, we

recognize that, if we invest in people who are in the process of reintegrating, that is a security issue and is a way of preventing new conflicts and moving forward in the reconciliation process. We speak of issues that will benefit society as a whole and foster effective and sustainable peace. For that reason, we must accelerate the decision and routing of territorial areas and reduce uncertainty about their stabilization and future. We must accelerate the implementation of a gender perspective towards reintegration with financial and technical resources, with the understanding that projects that involve women ex-combatants guarantee that they and their families can live free from violence. At the same time, we must also count on measures to address the barriers to political participation that have been noted inside and outside the party formed following the peace agreement.

As civil society, we want to see women reintegrated as full citizens and with recognized leadership. We must reduce the uncertainty surrounding the physical and legal guarantees for male and female ex-combatants by accelerating the disbursements for productive projects that should be operational. We must operationalize and accelerate the implementation of the national strategy through the national policy for the social and economic reincorporation of former members of the Fuerza Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo, document 3931, and allocate sufficient resources for that phase through the national development plan and departmental and municipal plans. We must stress the psychological and psychosocial components, which are critical to the transition of men and women who lay down their arms in order to stabilize the deep cultural, social and political changes that this entails. We must disseminate the value of community reintegration experiences as good practices and share their examples and lessons learned as a basis for joint reconciliation processes.

With regard to the comprehensive system of truth, justice, reparation and non-repetition, which was highlighted at the global level for the balance it struck between peace and justice, there must be support for democratic institutions and respect for the division of powers, which, in spite of the historic difficulties in Colombia, has been a treasure that we cannot afford to lose. We must ensure that there is not a feeling of loss of constitutionally defined rights, whether because of objections or other setbacks. It is crucial to ensure sustainable peace and genuine confidence

in the strength of the institutions — and they must be respected to reduce the lack of trust and fear throughout the country.

With regard to sexual violence, that must not be used to jeopardize the agreements that have been reached. It has been committed by all actors involved in the internal conflict in the country. Therefore, the guarantee of truth and justice, and above all the non-repetition in those cases, must give the victims the security that they can bring action against everyone involved, and that will enable the system and the Special Jurisdiction for Peace and the Commission on Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition to exist and be effective. We must provide certainty for those who seek the Special Jurisdiction for Peace and want to tell the truth, because that is fundamental to reducing doubts and disincentives to come forward.

The international community and the Colombian Government must understand that the recent lawsuit brought before the Commission of Accusations of the House of Representatives against the President of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace reinforces the fiction of a prosecution of that court and does not contribute to dialogue among and with civil society, but rather to polarization.

With regard to leadership, the defence of human rights and peacebuilding in the country, in Colombia there are deep-rooted inequalities and discrimination, and the defence of human rights seeks to promote more rule of law. However, it is a high-risk activity that sometimes costs lives. In that environment, women human rights defenders, leaders and peacebuilders face risks when it comes to their participation, as they encounter a culture that attacks bodies, goods and dignity. We must therefore ensure that whoever defends human rights defends everyone's human rights without distinction, as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As such, that endeavour deserves our highest respect.

We must implement the comprehensive guarantee programme for women leaders and human rights defenders, thereby activating the respective Permanent Intersectoral Commission for the Coordination and Follow-up of the National Policy on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law to ensure its development. The reactivation of the national guarantee process is crucial, and even more so with its long history of local and national participation.

The National Commission on Security Guarantees and Non-repetition should be highlighted and supported. The diversity of institutions and organizations, along with the experience and expertise gathered, offer an opportunity for the Government to make progress in designing policies to dismantle the so-called successor structures of paramilitarism, which is a risk factor for social leadership and could have other serious consequences on the country's security. Social protest is a legitimate mechanism in all democracies. And, therefore, within the social collective thinking, that message, as opposed to its stigmatization, must be clear.

Increasing the presence and response capacity of the State at the local level is a challenge that cannot be resolved with military presence. It implies redistribution, the guarantee of rights, social reconstruction, the reduction of fear and trauma, the provision of services and the prevention of dangerous situations so as to allow for prosperity.

The focus on gender is an aspect that is implemented more slowly. However, actions included in the gender approach have the potential to accelerate the benefits of peace, not only for women in their diversity but for society as a whole. Investing in women generates peace dividends, as has been demonstrated through many examples around the world.

Let us not forget that when we speak of peace in everyday life, for women and for men, it means accepting diversity and differences, meeting in the town square, being treated well by the police, employment, health, a cow grazing without being tethered, women walking alone free from danger of being raped, participating in the country's decision-making without feeling threatened on account of their beliefs or thoughts, and children and young people playing and studying without fear of being recruited, without fear of losing a loved one and having an active role in building their future. That would entail a future that does not cost people their lives.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia for its work. Its role has been key in helping ensure the implementation of the agreement.

The President: On behalf of everyone, let me thank the briefers so that when we go around the table there is no need to repeat that. Members will then have more time to ask questions. Members also do not necessarily have to repeat what others have said.

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

Ms. Pierce (United Kingdom): I would like to welcome the Foreign Minister since that was not prohibited in the list of things you said we could talk about, Mr. President.

With respect to the briefing, I think that it is a very good thing that we have Ms. Salamanca here today because it is an important reminder of the role that women's organizations have played in the peace process. What we have heard today from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General shows that the peace accord continues to set a positive example for the rest of the world. The commitment of the Government is very welcome, as are the steps taken towards the reintegration of former fighters and rural development crop substitution. The Government is clearly trying very hard to find national consensus on issues that are deeply polarizing. There are three areas we would like to highlight, which we believe deserve the Government's urgent attention.

The first is one is the transitional justice system. We agree with the Secretary-General that the discussion surrounding the Special Jurisdiction for Peace has become more polarized. We hope now that the Jurisdiction will get legal and political support to build on the progress it has made. We also hope there might be a stronger legal footing for it in order to boost public confidence in the peace process and bring about the national consensus to which President Duque Márquez is rightly committed.

Secondly, I would like to echo the concerns about human rights defenders and social leaders and the fact that they continue to face killings and threats at the hands of armed criminal groups competing for territory. That is something in which the Council has been interested before. The recent regional sessions of the National Commission on Security Guarantees are a positive step forward, but I think we need to see more concrete actions in order to improve security on the ground. That might include the views of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General with regard to stronger State presence in rural areas.

Thirdly, we welcome the initial successes of the territorially focused development plans and crop-substitution initiative. But I think that our overall point is that we would like to see the pace of implementation of the peace process increase across the country. There

have been some delays, as set out in the Secretary-General's report (S/2019/265). I think that everyone is very well aware that the sustainability of peace depends on transforming the Colombian countryside and meeting citizens' needs for viable and legal livelihoods. But it is also important the international community support Colombian efforts.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General because the areas of progress identified in the Colombian peace process are a very important part of how we view these regular meetings. For the British Government's part, we recognize the progress the Government has made and are fully committed to working alongside it as it builds sustainable peace. We will continue to support it. The Foreign Minister was here a few weeks ago and we talked about the recent objections that the President had outlined (see S/PV.8450). I know that there have been developments on that issue, on which I am sure the Foreign Minister will update the Council on.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We appreciate the two briefings delivered by Mr. Ruiz Massieu and Ms. Salamanca, which we believe complement each other. We thank Mr. Carlos Holmes Trujillo García, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, and Mr. Emilio Archila, High Counsellor for Post-Conflict, for being here today.

Three days ago, on 9 April, Colombians commemorated the National Day for Memory and Solidarity with Victims of the Armed Conflict, with the slogan "For the Victims, For Peace". Peru joins in paying tribute, first and foremost, to the goal of reconciliation. We would like to again underscore the example the peace process in Colombia set for Latin America and the international community. At the same time, we acknowledge the complexity of task and the many challenges encountered in its implementation phase. In that regard, we would like to address three elements that we believe could help build trust in the process of consolidating a shared vision of a future of hope and belief in sustaining peace, as sustaining peace is inseparable from sustainable development.

We first want to welcome the commitment of the Colombian Government to implementing the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace on a basis of national consensus, and we reiterate our recognition of the Colombian people's

resilience and commitment to peace. In that regard, we stress the importance of promoting and strengthening the inclusive and coordinated dialogue between the Government and all the parties involved in building a peaceful future. It is particularly crucial to listen to the voices of women, young people and indigenous communities. We therefore support the assistance of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, and we want to emphasize the excellent cooperation that has been established between it and the Government. We especially welcome the efforts to reactivate the National Commission on Security Guarantees in order to address a fundamental element of the peace agreement concertedly.

Secondly, the timely implementation of the peace agreement is essential, and we should welcome the words of President Duque Márquez, who has reaffirmed his commitment to the transition, to freeing the country from violence and seeking a life for the people of complete coexistence, with income and opportunities. We emphasize the importance of restoring the economy, which is why we are pleased with the approval of the 16 development programmes with a territorial focus, which will help to promote regional and community development, and that the necessary resources have been allocated for those initiatives within the framework of the 2018-2022 national development plan. In that regard, we would also like to highlight the vital role played by the territorial areas in training and reintegrating more than 3,500 former members of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias del Común-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP) and their families, particularly with a view to ensuring the progress of the transition process after 15 August.

We also consider it a positive that the transition strategy addresses the issues of land, security, the provision of basic services and productivity. We emphasize how important it is to decide on the future directions for those areas as soon as possible and with the full participation of all the parties concerned. Their implementation also involves dealing with the issue of security guarantees for former FARC-EP members, social leaders and the communities in general, which requires coordinated action on the part of all stakeholders on the ground, especially in the most vulnerable rural areas. The deplorable persistence of a pattern of killings and violence against social leaders and human rights defenders means that the well-timed Action Plan for the Protection of Social and Community Leaders,

Human Rights Defenders and Journalists should be fully implemented and complemented by the new “peace with legality” plan. In that connection, we also want to highlight the programmes for the substitution of illicit crops established under the peace agreement, which promote sustainable rural development as well as voluntary and peaceful eradication. Our own experience with alternative development has shown its effectiveness, and we consider it important to ensure that the new national strategy to combat drugs, “the path to the future”, continues to promote those measures.

Lastly, we want to reaffirm the spirit of the peace agreement and to thank all the parties for their commitment to respecting it in its entirety. In that regard, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, which we recognize as a fundamental pillar of the agreement and its commitments, not only plays a key role in promoting access to justice, trust and national reconciliation in Colombia, but also warrants a statutory law enacted in accordance with Colombia’s internal institutional processes.

In conclusion, Peru reiterates its full support to the authorities and the people of Colombia in the implementation of the peace agreement and to the Verification Mission team for their invaluable and tireless work in this process.

Mr. Cohen (United States of America): I would like to welcome Foreign Minister Trujillo García to the Security Council.

Since the signing in 2016 of the historic Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, Colombia has taken several important steps and has become an inspiration for peace, not just in the region but around the world. The United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia has been vital to that success, and we welcome the Colombian Government’s continued support for the United Nations. Colombia’s implementation of the accord is now at a critical juncture, and much of the most difficult work lies ahead.

Effective Government agencies that provide security and Government services in remote areas are critical to sustained peace. We support the Government’s efforts to expand its presence in the conflict-affected areas to keep illegal armed groups and criminal organizations from taking the place of the Fuerza Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP) and creating new sources of

violence. We also urge the Government to strengthen institutions and programmes to prevent the recruitment of children into armed groups.

We too remain deeply concerned about the continuing attacks on social leaders and human rights defenders, and we encourage the Government to redouble its efforts to protect these vulnerable members of society and to continue to protect, support and empower recently displaced Colombians. Ensuring meaningful justice for victims and accountability for the crimes committed during so many years of armed conflict is also vital to reconciliation. We welcome efforts to strengthen accountability for war crimes and human rights violations and abuses. Colombia must ensure that those responsible are held accountable, including, when appropriate, by the prosecution and imposition of sentences proportionate to the crimes committed. All who committed crimes — whether the FARC-EP, paramilitaries or State agents, including the Colombian military — should be held accountable. The United States considers the accord’s transitional justice system, including the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, to be critical to meaningfully addressing war crimes and human rights abuses in Colombia. We welcome the Colombian Government’s efforts to ensure that the law implementing the Special Jurisdiction for Peace complies with the 2016 peace accord and Colombia’s Constitution, democratic institutions and obligations under international law. We reaffirm the importance of ensuring that Colombia passes a statutory law on the Special Jurisdiction for Peace as soon as possible in order to ensure that it has a solid legal framework in which to operate effectively and independently.

The partnership between Colombia and the United States has never been stronger. The United States continues to work with the Colombian Government to dismantle criminal organizations and curtail narco-trafficking, including by halving coca cultivation and cocaine production in Colombia by the end of 2023. Colombia has also demonstrated its strength as a regional leader by supporting the legitimate interim Government in Venezuela led by Juan Guaidó in hosting more than 1.5 million of the Venezuelans who have fled the man-made crisis in their country. More than 700,000 of those Venezuelans have been granted temporary residency permits, facilitating their access to social services and granting them the right to work. We are grateful for those efforts.

The people of Colombia know better than most that peace is precious but fragile. The United States stands firmly with the people of Colombia as they build a strong and prosperous future.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the personal participation in today's meeting of Mr. Carlos Holmes Trujillo García, Colombia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, which we consider extremely important given the Secretary-General's assessment that the peace process in Colombia is at a very critical stage.

At the risk of attracting your ire, Mr. President, I would nonetheless like to thank Ms. Rosa Salamanca and Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, for the presentation of the Secretary-General's report (S/2019/265) and the substantive description of the work of the Mission and the developments in the country's situation in the past three months.

Russia has always been a friend of Colombia and Colombians. As a permanent member of the Security Council, we have unfailingly provided support to the Colombian peace process and intend to continue doing so. We are very encouraged by the fact that Colombia's first steps towards a sustainable peace have already become an inspiration for many other problem regions. However, in calling ourselves friends of Colombia, we do not define a friend as somebody who says only nice things. We will therefore be honest about what we believe it is important to say, which is that we are concerned about the situation of the Colombian peace process, and we are in full agreement with the opinion of the Secretary-General's report that the country is at a major crossroads.

Much has been done in the two and a half years since the signing of the life-changing Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace to consolidate peace in the country. Now it is important not to go backwards or allow any reversals in the country's national reconciliation process, which is a difficult one but the only right way. In that regard, we were extremely alarmed by the worrying assessments in the Secretary-General's report and by other international stakeholders in connection with Bogotá's decision to return the bill for the statutory law for the Special Jurisdiction for Peace for changes. We know that the decision has caused more than 150 public organizations to call on the people to stage a

nationwide strike. We share that concern, and support the Secretary-General's call for enacting the statute for the Special Jurisdiction for Peace as soon as possible.

We unquestionably appreciate the explanations of Mr. Trujillo, who has come to New York to meet with Council members in person and who has informed us in detail about the motives behind the proposed changes. We respect that, and we certainly do not intend to interfere in Colombia's internal proceedings. However, in turning to the Security Council, the Colombians have entrusted us, the members of the Council, with a major share of the responsibility for the success of the peace process and a common duty to live up to that trust.

That is why the Security Council and the Secretary-General made the decision to use their authority in support of the specific text and all the key provisions of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, including on the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. And it is now extremely important to ensure that the agreements that were reached remain unchanged. I will not go into detail about the report's critical assessments, of which there are a considerable number. For example, one of the pivotal elements of the peace process, comprehensive rural reform, has still not been fully realized. There is a complex tangle of problems related to ensuring security in areas where the central Government's presence is weak.

The crop substitution programme is also delayed. Regrettably, we saw no optimistic signs in the report about a dialogue between the Government and the armed groups. Needless to say we condemn the terrorist act of 17 January, but we also firmly believe that a lasting solution can be achieved only through direct dialogue with those who are ready to talk and reach an agreement. We are not seeing enough progress in the legal, socioeconomic and political reintegration of former combatants. The issue of their security and employment remains urgent, and all of this leads to growing numbers of dissidents. The humanitarian demining programme is stalled and there are reports that mines have again been planted in previously cleared areas.

There are other worrying developments that for whatever reasons are omitted or given inadequate attention in the Secretary-General's report. Thus we are beginning to see pockets of discontent among the population about the delays in the implementation of

key provisions of the peace agreement. In south-western Colombia, for example, the indigenous population has been blocking one of the country's main transport arteries, the Pan-American Highway, for nearly a month. The illegal armed groups that have resorted to using terror against the Indian population are trying to exploit the situation and thereby fuelling popular discontent. The problem of the internally displaced remains serious. Half a century of conflict has displaced more than 7 million people, that is, one in six of the population, and that figure has unfortunately continued to worsen. We realize that Colombia is dealing with an additional burden in the form of the influx of refugees from Venezuela, and we believe that the international community should help Bogotá to address that. The developments regarding Venezuela should not become a factor that hinders the implementation of the peace agreement.

We have also noted the opinion of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights that Colombia's human rights problems are also directly related to the setbacks in implementing the final peace agreement. Nor can we ignore the view of the International Committee of the Red Cross that the current situation in the country is even more problematic than when the Havana peace agreement was signed. There are at least five internal conflicts in Colombia that are still going on and are even intensifying. Four significant anti-Government groups are involved in them, and according to Colombia's Ministry of Defence they involve as many as 10,000 combatants. We should point out that according to the Secretary-General's reports, the number of ex-combatants who had taken up arms again by the end of 2018 was up to almost 2,000, including five top military leaders and a significant number of field commanders.

In this highly sensitive situation, it is very important to restore trust in the peace process among those who have met their share of obligations under it in good faith. As friends of Colombia, we have to say straight out that the international community, the United Nations and the Security Council expect the current Colombian Administration to comply strictly with its obligations under the peace agreement. We are of course pleased with the Secretary-General's assessment that Colombia's political leaders are committed to the peace process, but we urge them not to stop there. It will be essential to consolidate and build on the progress that has been made, consulting with the signatories to the

agreement at every stage. It will be difficult to bring an end to the armed conflict without that.

In conclusion, I want to reiterate that the Security Council has frequently pointed out that Colombia is the poster-child for how international support can and should be provided, through close cooperation with a host Government in the leading role, and a responsible attitude on the part of the whole of society. It is the national ownership demonstrated by the Colombian people and their desire to seek a sustainable political solution that have made peace in their country possible. We hope that the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, which we support, will continue to contribute to the implementation of the peace agreement and play a major role in facilitating the reintegration of former members of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo into civilian life and political activities.

Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I want to welcome the presence of Mr. Trujillo García, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, here today. I would like to make four points.

First, Belgium welcomes the renewed commitment of the Colombian Government to the peace process, which represents a unique opportunity to break the cycle of violence, ensure the rights of victims and create momentum for change. Many indicators point to significant progress and the country can be rightly proud of its achievements. The finalization of territorial development plans is an important step. It is no exaggeration to say that the peace process in Colombia is a true source of inspiration for the whole world. In that context, it is worrying to note the increase in polarization and tensions in recent months. Some measures could ease those tensions, particularly accelerating the socioeconomic reintegration process, promoting better access to land and clarifying the future of the areas of concentration, with the full participation of the Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común in the forums established under the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace.

Secondly, we would like to draw attention to the role of women. The gender aspects included in the peace agreement represent some of the world's best practices. Belgium calls for implementing the national gender-related reintegration strategy and forming the intersectoral commission of guarantees for women,

leaders and human rights defenders as soon as possible. Particular attention should also be paid to protecting the rights of children and combating violations against them such as their recruitment and use by non-State armed groups.

My third point concerns the ongoing violence against human rights defenders and social leaders outside the security perimeters. We strongly encourage the Colombian authorities to affirm the State's presence throughout its territory, including through social programmes. Such measures will also help to address the issue of violence against former combatants of the Fuerza Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP). The reports of an increase in forced displacement are also very worrying. We therefore echo the appeal launched by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in his latest report regarding respect for human rights and international humanitarian law by all parties.

My fourth point is about transitional justice, the cornerstone of the peace agreement. In order to be implemented as well as possible, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace must be able to operate in complete autonomy and independence. Belgium therefore echoes the call of the Secretary-General and urges all the relevant parties to take steps to ensure the speedy enactment of the statutory law for the Special Jurisdiction, in accordance with the peace agreement. This is important not only for the legal authority and credibility of the Special Jurisdiction, but also to ensure the legal security of former FARC-EP members and military officers who have already appeared before the Special Jurisdiction or plan to do so.

Finally, Belgium is concerned about the situation in Venezuela and understands that the crisis there is having serious consequences in Colombia. We welcome the solidarity shown by Colombians towards the many refugees and migrants arriving from Venezuela.

In conclusion, 2019 will be a crucial year for peacebuilding in Colombia. We are firmly convinced that the comprehensive implementation of the peace agreement will enable Colombian society to achieve its objectives in an inclusive and sustainable manner.

Ms. Wronecka (Poland): Let me thank Special Representative Carlos Ruiz Massieu and Ms. Rosa Emilia Salamanca for their very valuable contributions to today's discussion. Let me also extend a warm

welcome to Minister Carlos Holmes Trujillo for his presence at the Security Council.

The signing of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace by Colombia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP) in 2016 marked the beginning of a very successful transformation period. It is hard to point to a brighter example of a success story on the agenda of the Council. However, in our view, further action is required to maintain lasting peace. While many positive aspects remain undeniable and seem irreversible, such as the unprecedented drop in levels of violence and the successful elections with the participation of the People's Alternative Revolutionary Force political party, some challenges still persist. We recognize President Duque Márquez's right to fulfil his obligations made to those parts of society that are not satisfied with the peace agreement, but in doing so he must make sure that the actions taken will not cast a shadow on the foundation of the fragile political process.

Poland views Colombia's transitional justice system, including the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, as a cornerstone of the peace process and a model that could be relevant in other parts of the world. We regret that, two years after the signing of final agreement, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace still lacks a statutory law. We urge the Government, Congress and all entities to take swift action to reach consensus in order to adopt the statutory law as soon as possible, in line with the peace agreement and Colombia's international obligations. The Special Jurisdiction for Peace should be given all the political and practical tools required for its effective functioning under conditions of independence and autonomy.

That brings us to highlight the need for the full political, legal and socioeconomic reintegration of former FARC-EP members to create trust and confidence in the peace process. Despite the efforts of the Government, there is still need for greater guarantees of protection for human rights defenders and social leaders. There is a clear role to play for the National Commission on Security Guarantees to safeguard the focus of its action plans.

Land ownership remains crucial in maintaining the reintegration process moving forward. Regrettably, despite initiating steps to purchase plots in some

regions, no land has been granted to former FARC-EP members.

We look forward to the holding of peaceful local elections in November, and we recognize the work that needs to be done in order to ensure an undisturbed process. Last year's elections were the most peaceful in the country's modern history. We therefore believe that the relevant authorities will use it as an example.

Pointing to the unstable security situation in the region, caused by the man-made crisis in Venezuela and migration crisis that it has triggered, we want once again to extend our thanks to the Colombian authorities and society for being so generous in keeping their borders and houses open, despite having to deal with their own difficulties. There is no clear solution to that stalemate, but Colombia, with other regional actors, is playing a very positive and constructive role.

In conclusion, Poland supports the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia and the United Nations country team. We look forward to continue working with such a dedicated team.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to warmly thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, for his briefing, as well as for the excellent work that he and his team carry out in service of Colombia. I also thank the Co-Director of the Corporación de Investigación y Acción Social y Económica, Ms. Rosa Emilia Salamanca, for her and her organization's commitment. Allow me also to warmly welcome the presence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, His Excellency Mr. Carlos Holmes Trujillo. His presence here with us is especially important and appreciated.

Colombia is at a turning point in its history. Two years after the disarmament and political reintegration of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP) began, in the context of a historic peace process for the country, the continent and the United Nations, it is essential to successfully complete the reincorporation process.

The Colombian President has repeatedly reaffirmed publicly his commitment to implement the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, which is, of course, a key point. We welcome that commitment, as well as the political will and ambition to build broad consensus, bringing together all political trends, including political

actors that are sceptical about the 2016 peace agreement. Success — and dare we say the model — in Colombia is also a source of expectations from the international community, which stands firmly at Colombia's side in that process. Allow me to mention three aspects that are of importance to us all.

First, it is essential that transitional justice, at the heart of the Colombian peace process, be preserved. As such, the early adoption of the statutory law on the Special Jurisdiction for Peace will help that institution fully assert its authority. At this juncture, we call on all political actors to respect the decisions taken by that Jurisdiction. As the Special Representative mentioned, significant work has already been done, with several cases under review that likely involve more than 800,000 victims. Caught between the resentment of part of the population and feelings of legal and physical insecurity among former combatants, the Colombian authorities face the difficult task of maintaining and strengthening bonds of trust that unite all actors in the peace process. The success of the Colombian model depends upon it. Among the issues that may raise concerns, I would like to mention the constitutional reform process; it is essential to reiterate it is not retroactive.

Secondly, economic and social reintegration is the other key to a successful and lasting peace process. Progress has been made under the leadership of the National Reintegration Council to approve more collective and individual projects. The challenge now is to accelerate the overall implementation of the reincorporation process and address the issue of access to land. The plan of the Office of High Counsellor Archila is therefore to be commended. Clarifications are also expected on the future of the regrouping and reintegration areas, which must be decided on in conjunction with former FARC-EP members. As I mentioned earlier, bonds of trust, which are strengthened by such consultations, must be the central to all efforts.

We also encourage the Colombian Government to fully integrate the gender equality dimension, as well as the role of youth, in the reincorporation process. The peace process will gain legitimacy if it is representative of the diversity and vitality of Colombia's civil society, which Ms. Salamanca perfectly embodies. The projects carried out by the Verification Mission to implement the women and peace and security and the youth and peace and security agendas also contribute to that end.

Finally, and this will be my last point, the fragile security situation in the former conflict areas must be an obvious priority. Despite the measures announced by the Colombian authorities over the past two years, human rights defenders, particularly women, as well as former combatants, remain the main targets of criminal groups. As part of the ongoing efforts of the Colombian authorities, the deployment of basic State services appears essential to stabilizing the areas in question. As the departmental and municipal elections approach next October, the necessary measures must be taken to ensure that this democratic exercise is conducted under the best possible conditions.

I would say to Foreign Minister Trujillo that his country is taking a new path towards peace and national reconciliation, which is also a historic chapter in its history. The courage and ambition that he expresses day after day is a source of pride for Colombia and a source of inspiration for the whole world. In that context, we hope that the challenges that remain to be overcome, of which I have mentioned three, will be seen in the near future as great achievements of the Colombian Government. Whatever the difficulties encountered on this demanding path, Colombia knows that it can always count on the fraternal support of France.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): We welcome the Colombian Foreign Minister, Mr. Trujillo García, to today's meeting.

At present, the overall situation in Colombia is stable. The peace process has produced an early harvest. Crop substitution and rural development have made progress. At the same time, the full implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace continues to face challenges, which requires the ongoing tireless efforts by the Colombian parties and the international community.

Colombia experienced a long civil war. The implementation of the peace agreement in a comprehensive manner touches on numerous issues, including politics, security, development and social integration. It is therefore a system-wide project. China hopes that all parties in Colombia will give priority to the peace process, further broaden consensus, continue to promote the full implementation of the peace agreement, strengthen inclusive political dialogue and accelerate socioeconomic reconstruction so as to ultimately realize peace and development.

We have taken note of the recently emerged divergent views held by certain Colombian parties on the legislation on the mechanism known as the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. We hope that the parties concerned will step up dialogue and consultation to facilitate the appropriate resolution of this issue.

China commends the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ruiz Massieu, and the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia for their work. We hope that the Mission will continue to perform its duties as mandated, help the Colombian parties enhance communication and build mutual trust and push them to create synergies to jointly move the peace process forward.

Together with other members of the Security Council, China stands ready to make its contribution to furthering the Colombian peace process and the early realization of comprehensive peace, stability and development in Colombia.

Mr. Djani (Indonesia): I would also like to welcome the Colombian Foreign Minister, Mr. Carlos Holmes Trujillo García. The presence of the Minister is, as always, and once again, a demonstration of Colombia's partnership with the United Nations in support of durable peace.

Indonesia welcomes Colombia's continued commitment clearly set out by President Duque Márquez to implement the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace. As has been said many times in this Chamber, the agreement represents an opportunity for lasting peace in Colombia. Indeed, the agreement is also a positive example for the rest of the world that, through dialogue and diplomacy, conflicts can be brought to an end. In the light of that, I would like to address three issues: the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, reintegration and international support.

First, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, together with its objective, is one of the key components of the peace agreement. It is important that the Special Jurisdiction for Peace receive the full support and cooperation of all the parties involved. Its independence and autonomy, as well as the judgments it arrives at, also need to be respected fully. We continue to support the work of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, as it is playing a critical role in promoting access to justice and national reconciliation. We hope that the statutory law on the jurisdiction will soon be passed and that swift

action on this democratic exercise between the executive and Parliament will be taken to ensure that this legal foundation is put into place as soon as possible, with a view to protecting the rights of victims and providing legal security for all the parties concerned.

Secondly, reintegration is key to the successful implementation of the peace agreement, and we underscore the need for progress at all levels. It is essential for us to show former combatants who have laid down their weapons that it is in their interest to be on the right side of history. Access to legal revenue sources and to land is at the heart of effective reintegration. In that context, as pointed out by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2019/265), Indonesia is pleased that approximately 94 per cent of the families concerned have received the financial benefits from the illegal-crop-substitution programme.

Based on our past experience, we also believe that reintegration is a long process that requires patience, but it needs to be done as swiftly as possible, bringing reassurance, certainty and hope for the future. Reintegration should not only focus on former combatants but also receiving communities, which is not solely the responsibility of the central Government, but also the provincial and local Governments, community leaders, civil society and others.

We welcome the many projects reported by the Special Representative geared towards accelerating the reintegration process. We also appreciate that those reintegration projects also include women, as Ms. Salamanca mentioned. We believe that women are important drivers that ensure reconciliation. This is an important fact. In our experience, the healing process not only involves the feeling of security and safety but also involves concrete reassurances of livelihood and the belief that there is a brighter future ahead. Nonetheless, every country and society has specific characteristics and traditions, and we trust the Colombian Government knows what is best for its people.

Thirdly, we would like to stress international support. After half a century of conflict, healing the wounds of war will not be easy. Therefore, support from a united international community and the Security Council is an important factor. We believe that international organizations, including financial institutions and the private sector, should support Colombian efforts to consolidate peace. This also an important factor.

In conclusion, Colombia has travelled far on its path to peace. It is crucial that it now stay the course, and that all parties continue to play their role befittingly. The unity of the Security Council is of vital importance. We must collectively ensure that this historic opportunity will pave the way for an enduring peace in Colombia.

And I must say, Mr. President, that this is not a sad day today.

Mr. Ipo (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): My delegation welcomes His Excellency Mr. Trujillo García, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, whose presence at today's meeting reflects the commitment of the Colombian authorities to the peace process. We congratulate the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ruiz Massieu, and Ms. Rosa Emilia Salamanca, representative of Colombian civil society, on their outstanding briefings.

My country takes note with satisfaction of the encouraging results seen in the implementation of the Final Agreement for the Termination of Conflict and the Construction of a Stable and Lasting Peace, signed on 24 November 2016. However, this positive momentum should not obscure the remaining challenges, as outlined in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2019/265), regarding security issues, socioeconomic reintegration and traditional justice.

On the issue of security, my delegation remains concerned at the resurgence of killings of social leaders, members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (FARC-EP) and human rights defenders. These assassinations and other forms of sociopolitical violence seriously jeopardize the peace progress, which has offered a ray of hope to millions of Colombians. My country therefore urges the Colombian authorities to redouble their efforts to further reduce the level of violence and ensure better protection for leaders and FARC-EP members in areas affected by insecurity. In addition, in view of the upcoming regional and local elections, my delegation welcomes the reactivation of the National Commission on Security Guarantees, with a view to developing a comprehensive plan of measures aimed at ensuring the protection of all candidates.

Regarding socioeconomic reintegration, my delegation welcomes the measures taken by the Colombian Government to ensure access to land ownership for former combatants, which is a key element of the economic reintegration process. It is also important to step up the process of approving

revenue-generating projects and of disbursing funds to those that have already been approved. In that connection, Côte d'Ivoire calls on donors and bilateral partners to support the Colombian Government in funding that programme, whose success will have a positive impact on the peace process. It also urges the Colombian authorities to take the appropriate measures to ensure the social reintegration of former combatants gathered in areas for training and reintegration areas, which will be functional only until 15 August.

Regarding transitional justice, my delegation supports the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the urgent measures to be taken by all stakeholders in order to swiftly put in place the statutory law of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace and ensure the provision of adequate resources to the Jurisdiction so that it can function efficiently and autonomously.

To conclude, Côte d'Ivoire commends the commitment and dedication of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia teams and of the various United Nations agencies that are working tirelessly to build peace in Colombia. It reiterates its full support for the reconciliation process currently under way and calls on all Colombian parties to work together to overcome all obstacles and build mutual trust.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): We wish at the outset to welcome His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Mr. Carlos Holmes Trujillo and to wish him an enjoyable stay here in New York.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea expresses its unwavering and full support for the implementation of the Final Agreement for the Termination of Conflict and the Construction of a Stable and Lasting Peace of 24 November 2016, aimed at bringing about a definitive solution to the conflict and the building of a stable and lasting peace, as well as for the work of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, focused on ensuring the reintegration of former combatants of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia — People's Army (FARC-EP), into civilian life, and also ensuring personal and community security. Equatorial Guinea also encourages the Government of Colombia to operationalize its "Peace with Legality" plan, which is key to the process of reintegrating former FACR-EP combatants.

Social reintegration is a central pillar of the peace process. Former combatants who feel alienated from society and without economic and social opportunities could end up taking up arms once again, and all the efforts made over the years to achieve peace in Colombia would be in real danger of collapse. While the action plans are important and very positive, they will have an impact only insofar as they are actually implemented on the ground. An absence of tangible results could lead to mounting tensions within Colombian society.

Equatorial Guinea is of the view that, given all the actors and elements that make up the peace process, it is only normal that many challenges remain on the path to achieving an effective peace throughout the Colombian territory. For that reason, it calls on the international community to continue to support and closely cooperate with the Government and the people to promote peace, stability and security there.

Consistent with this approach, we congratulate President Iván Duque Márquez on his genuine efforts to ensure the implementation of the final agreement. In his most recent briefing, on 23 January (see S/PV.8450), the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, Mr. Ruiz Massieu, recognized the progress made, including the "Peace with Legality" plan drawn up by the Colombian Government. That is why the Republic of Equatorial Guinea offers its support to President Duque and encourages him to reaffirm his commitment to continuing the peace process within the framework of a broader Government programme that focuses on equality, legality and entrepreneurship.

The legal aspect is key to the process of the reconciliation and stabilization of the country. For that reason, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace must begin to operate on the basis of an agreed statutory law, because the failure of any component of the peace process to function properly could jeopardize the entire process. The actions of the National Liberation Army represent a major obstacle to the process, and we call on the Government and the National Liberation Army to resume their negotiations and agree as soon as possible on a renewed ceasefire. The National Liberation Army must refrain from any acts of violence against the population and take steps to show its commitment to a peaceful solution, beginning with the release of all hostages whom it is holding.

We wish to conclude with words of appreciation for the noble support work being carried out by the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia to ensure the reintegration of young people, and we commend it on its efforts in that respect.

Mr. Matjila (South Africa): As per your directive, Mr. President, I will not thank the briefers, but I will join my neighbours in welcoming the Foreign Minister to the Council.

The briefing and details provided by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, led some of us to relive the difficult past in South Africa and the very similar processes taking place in Colombia. That is why we pledge our utmost support to Carlos and his team as they implement the mandate with which the Council entrusted them in contributing modestly to the peace process in Colombia.

Consolidating peace after decades of conflict and mistrust is not an easy task. We wish to commend the efforts of the Colombian Government in trying to address issues such as social security, basic services and land and rural development, as well as economic opportunities and legal protection, particularly for former combatants and members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia — People's Army (FARC-EP).

In addition, the visits and engagements by high-level officials of the Colombian Government, including by President Iván Duque Márquez, to the territorial areas for training and reintegration represent a positive development. We also wish to commend the efforts of the former combatants in contributing to the peace process. Initiatives that enhance their skills and create opportunities for the broader communities in which they live are positive strides towards reintegrating into Colombian society and contributing to the economy. However, there are many challenges to be addressed moving forward.

South Africa fully supports the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, which was signed between the Government of Colombia and the FARC-EP in 2016. We commend the progress made in its implementation, including on the demobilization and reintegration processes of former members of the FARC-EP. We wish to call for the full implementation of the peace agreement and of the

statutory law of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, in accordance with the provisions of the agreement.

We agree with the Secretary-General that Colombia's peace process is at a critical juncture, and the implementation of the agreement remains at the heart of the situation in Colombia. We note President Duque's decision to undertake a process of review of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, which he has indicated could be an opportunity to create a national consensus regarding transitional justice in Colombia. It is trusted that this process will not result in heightened tensions in the country. It is important to deepen efforts to de-escalate tensions, address the reintegration processes and allay the concerns of the former combatants, particularly with regard to legal and security guarantees. The Special Jurisdiction for Peace is a vital component of the agreement and any further delay in its implementation could undermine the political, socioeconomic and security prospects of Colombia.

South Africa's process of reconciliation and reconstruction was underpinned by the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which presented an opportunity to facilitate reconciliation between the perpetrators and the survivors of such human rights violations. In the words of our Constitution, the Commission process allows for the cultivation of

“a need for understanding but not for vengeance, a need for reparation but not for retaliation, a need for ubuntu but not for victimisation”.

That process was essential to the long-term consolidation of hard-won freedom in South Africa. In that context, we support the statement that was issued on 11 March by the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, in which it highlighted the importance of preserving the gains made in the peace process by guaranteeing the rights of victims. We should be firm in creating conditions conducive to the full and free functioning of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace as part of the peace agreement. South Africa therefore calls on all parties to respect the constitutionally mandated mechanisms and frameworks established to assist the political and judicial transition.

In its own struggle to overcome decades of division and mistrust and in seeking a better future for all, South Africa was significantly supported by the international community. In that regard, the support

for the work of the United Nations through its Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, as well as the relevant United Nations agencies, civil society and international partners, has been invaluable. We urge Members and the international partners to support and encourage the people of Colombia to preserve and fully implement the peace agreement in addressing the concerns and rights of victims, access to justice, reparation, guarantees of non-repetition, inclusive dialogue and peaceful negotiations to resolve all outstanding issues in Colombia.

Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): We welcome the presence of His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia at this meeting.

We are here today almost three years after the signing of the Colombian Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, which ended a bloody conflict of more than 50-year that resulted in many dead, injured and missing persons. Since its conclusion and to this very day, the Government has achieved many successes and national gains that will undoubtedly have a positive effect on the overall situation in Colombia. The peace agreement, however, continues to face many challenges that require the concerted efforts of the parties to maintain and build upon those achievements, leading to its full implementation. I will be brief in focusing on three major issues.

First, concerning the economic and social reintegration process, we appreciate the efforts of the Colombian Government to guarantee the social and economic reintegration of former members of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP) through collective and individual plans, initiatives and projects, adopted by the National Council on Economic and Social Policy. We look forward to seeing the implementation of the objectives related to the reintegration process within the established deadlines and to the acceleration of the reintegration process through the provision of legal and security guarantees to former members of the FARC-EP, while remaining fully aware of the many challenges facing the implementation of the peace agreement.

Secondly, with regard to the security situation, we are concerned about the ongoing killings and acts of violence and intimidation directed against social leaders, human rights activists and indigenous

leaders. That requires the National Government and regional, local and civil society organizations to take further action. We commend the pact for life, signed between the Colombian Government and civil society organizations, which will provide security guarantees to local communities, human rights defenders and social leaders. We look forward to the adoption as soon as possible of the statutory law of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, in accordance with the constitutional framework. It is key to building trust and creating the necessary political and security conditions to complete the implementation of the peace agreement in all its dimensions in order to strengthen the principles of justice and no impunity.

Thirdly, concerning we commend the ongoing efforts of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of Mission to strengthen the peace process by cooperating with national, local and territorial authorities, as well as civil and international organizations, in addition to the private sector. We also commend the Mission's role in engaging young people and youth organizations in integrating a youth perspective into its activities. We have seen many initiatives and dialogues launched by the United Nations Mission within the reintegration process. We also reaffirm the role of women in implementing the peace process and the national development plan for building peace and achieving reconciliation in Colombia.

In conclusion, we commend the initiatives taken by the Government of President Duque to pursue the implementation of the peace agreement. In the presence of His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, we renew our full support for the peace process, which has become a resounding success story thanks to his efforts and the will and determination of the friendly Colombian people.

Mr. Singer Weisinger (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour to have Minister Trujillo García among us once again in the Council. We also thank Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu and Ms. Rosa Emilia Salamanca for their briefings.

Allow me to begin by reiterating the interest and support of the Dominican Republic for the peace process in Colombia and to commend the resolve and sacrifice of the Colombian people in that process. Since the signing of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, Colombia

has been an example for peace. Two years after the signing of that historic agreement, Colombians have put behind them more than half a century of violence, held peaceful and inclusive elections, and established transitional justice institutions.

We commend the efforts of the Colombian Government to advance the process of reintegrating former combatants who have laid down their weapons. We want to acknowledge the progress and challenges in the period covered, especially with regard to the reactivation of institutional mechanisms that seek to guarantee security across the Colombian territory. However, we understand that there is a need for the speedier implementation of some provisions governing the reintegration of ex-combatants. As things stand now, their implementation is at less than 20 per cent.

In that connection, the implementation of gender-related provisions with regard to reintegration and the guarantee of security for women, as established in the peace agreement, is critical. To that end, there is a need for the financial and technical resources required in the national development plan and the prompt implementation of gender-related actions in the national reintegration policy, including those aimed at the economic reintegration of women ex-combatants. By the same token, it is crucial that protection be provided for women leaders and defenders of human rights who face attacks and threats. In that regard, we call on the Government of Colombia to accelerate the implementation of the comprehensive programme for the security of women leaders and human rights defenders.

We invite the authorities to consider that the immediate economic sacrifice necessary for reintegration, while not insignificant, will, in the medium and long terms, have repercussions on the economic prosperity and social cohesion of Colombian society. We therefore encourage the consideration of proposals and alternative solutions that will be put forward in consultations with the ex-combatants living within the 24 territorial areas for training and reintegration. Those areas and the monthly food and health allowances for ex-combatants are expected to remain in place until summer. We trust that the decisions taken on those measures for the period after August will be based on the positive effects that they have had and the challenges ahead. It is essential that projects for the reintegration of ex-combatants proposed in the framework of the peace agreement be assessed so that we can determine the extent and scale of progress.

It is also important that any process of inclusion take into account the access of ex-combatants to land and alternative income sources.

We understand that the political, legal and socioeconomic integration of former members of the Fuerza Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP) is necessary. We trust that issues related to land ownership will be dealt with appropriately, since that is at the heart of effective reintegration. During the reporting period, 12 former FARC-EP members were assassinated, which brings the total number of assassinations of that group to 99 since the signing of the final peace agreement. It is the State's responsibility to identify those responsible and bring them to justice.

The same applies to the threats against and killings of social leaders and human rights defenders. That situation bears noting and demands close attention. We encourage the State to address the issue through its presence in the most affected area and to maintain ongoing dialogue with civil society through the National Commission on Security Guarantees. Work on that issue is also key to ensuring that peaceful and free elections at the local level are held in October and that they are free of any violence.

It is extremely important to bear in mind the gender provisions contained in the peace agreement, in particular the issue of women's reintegration and security guarantees. We share the concerns expressed by the international verification component concerning the gender focus established in the peace agreement, and we welcome the commitment of the Vice-President of Colombia to looking into that report.

We also commend the adoption by the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia of a strategy to implement resolutions 2250 (2015) and 2419 (2018), with a focus on the role of young people in reintegration and ensuring security. It is a formal recognition of the preponderant role that young people play in promoting peace. That strategy should serve as an inspiration to other missions in their efforts to put an end to conflict and build peace.

We encourage all parties to support the important work of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace to promote access to justice and national reconciliation in Colombia, which is also an expression of the legal guarantees granted to those who have laid down their arms. We also emphasize the need to preserve the independence

and autonomy of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace and other transitional justice mechanisms, as well as to maintain the legal security of those involved and avoid the retroactive application of certain provisions to the detriment of those who legitimately trusted in the State.

Finally, we call on Colombian society to avoid polarization in public discussion of the implementation of the peace agreements, to refrain from bombastic and aggressive rhetoric, to reject the expressions of hatred and divisiveness of a few and to embrace forgiveness, reconciliation and the rule of law. We commend the people and Government of Colombia for the example they have set in the process that we are happy to support today.

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

Speaking last in a discussion is an advantage because one can listen to everyone who has spoken. My impression is that, with regard to Colombia, there is unity in the Council. There is not only unity with regard to the full support to the peace implementation process, but there is also unanimity with regard to the concerns that we have.

I would like to start with a quote from Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ruiz Massieu, who said at some point that Colombia remains a “source of inspiration” for all those working on the settlement of other conflicts. That remains true, and we would like to commend the Government of Colombia for what it has been doing under very difficult circumstances, with 1.3 or 1.4 million refugees from Venezuela.

Germany will continue to support Colombia in building an inclusive society. We will do that bilaterally, multilaterally and with the multi-partner trust fund, as well as by providing funds to the Peacebuilding Fund.

I can be brief in my comments because we support the report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and his recommendations relating to the consolidation of the peace process, concerning which we add our voice to those around the table. Just before I took the floor, the representative of the Dominican Republic said how important it was that the Special Jurisdiction for Peace be implemented, that the statutory law be adopted and that there be legal certainty and no retroactivity in applying the laws.

With regard to the security situation, I also join my voice with those who have said how important it

is that State institutions be present throughout the whole country so that there is safety and security for all representatives of civil society, social workers, community leaders, indigenous leaders and human rights defenders. In addition, with regard to the reintegration of the former members of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo, I would like to add my voice to those who have said how important that is.

I would like to make one special point. Following on from what the Indonesian Ambassador and others have said, the peace agreement is exemplary with regard to its gender provisions. I would like to reiterate what Ms. Salamanca said, the effect that investing in women yields peace dividends. I would also like to add to it. Mr. Singer Weisinger just said that investing in young people also means investing in peace.

With regard to the gender provisions, there are still a number of challenges, such as the integration of former female combatants, barriers to the participation of women in the political process and security risks for women human rights advocates. Women social leaders also face many security challenges. Another very important point, which Ms. Salamanca addressed is that of sexual violence in conflict and accountability. Reparations are therefore very important.

As I said, we have made a great deal of progress. I have one question for Ms. Salamanca. I wonder if she would have concrete measures — perhaps, low-hanging fruit — that the Government could do to help women.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia.

Mr. Trujillo García (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening today’s briefing. I also thank Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Colombia, for his briefing. I warmly welcome Rosa Emilia Salamanca and thank her for the remarks she shared with us today.

Similarly, I would like to thank the members of the Security Council for their ongoing readiness to attend informal meetings and hear thoughts regarding the situation in my country, which are useful because they help foster a greater understanding of the challenges facing Colombia and the measures being taken. I thank

them for giving of their time to hear me explain the overarching challenges we face, which of course must be considered holistically when analysing the commitment of President Duque to the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace.

We appreciate the fact that members heard that, for example, with respect to illicit crops, the Government faces the following challenge. In 2012, the area under illicit crop cultivation stood at 102,000 hectares. In 2010, it was 61,000 hectares. The following year, when the Administration of the former President began, the number stood at 63,000. In 2017, the year immediately prior to the start of President Duque's Administration, the area under illicit crops had reached 171,000 hectares. In the months after President Duque assumed power, the number of hectares of illicit crops had reached the highest ever recorded in Colombia's history at 200,000, which, obviously, required major efforts on the part of Colombia.

I thank members for listening to the details of a major challenge for my country — the unprecedented regional migration crisis, which also has global implications. Today, we are addressing it with solidarity and human sentiment. We are deeply grateful to host 1.3 million Venezuelan brothers and sisters.

I would like to reiterate the commitment of President Iván Duque to implementing the agreement signed by the previous Government and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP). Achieving the objectives of the pact for Colombia — a pact for equity and a road map proposed by President Duque for his Government — is closely linked to the stabilization of the territories and the consolidation of peaceful coexistence. The implementation of the agreement signed in 2016 with the FARC-EP guerrillas is part of the agenda that the national Government has established to move in that direction. The "Peace with legality" plan, which the Secretary-General mentions positively in his report (S/2019/265), also points to that.

The implementation of the agreement is a commitment that the Government of President Iván Duque has assumed with unquestionable resolve. To honour that commitment, various measures have been adopted and concrete actions are being taken, many of which are acknowledged in the report before us today. However, the Secretary-General also states that the

peace process in Colombia is at a critical juncture. We nevertheless consider this juncture to be an opportunity and view it with optimism, although we are aware that some of the most difficult tasks in consolidating peace still lie ahead. Our optimism arises from the firmness of our commitment, our permanent willingness to engage in dialogue with all actors involved, our conviction that consensus can be built amid differences and, in particular, from trust in our institutions.

The Government of Colombia recognizes and values the work carried out by the United Nations Verification Mission, whose mandate includes two crucial aspects of the implementation of the agreement: first, the reintegration of the former members of the FARC-EP into civilian life and, secondly, the provision of security guarantees for those who participate in peacebuilding, including human rights defenders and leaders of social or political movements. In that regard, allow me to make a few observations.

In addition to the progress made in the political reintegration of the FARC-EP, whose political party not only occupies seats in Congress, participates in the process of developing our laws and will also take part in regional and local elections next October, progress has also been made in the area of economic and social reintegration. The Secretary-General expresses valid concerns about the need to move forward more efficiently in various processes, especially in the provision of goods and public services in the various territories. In that regard, a rigorous process of planning and budgeting has been put forward, which has made it possible to align and focus institutional management around a single road map that will undoubtedly have a greater impact in less time. We will increase our efforts to offer demobilized combatants the conditions that will allow them to carry out their plans for the future, contribute to the development of their communities and remain on the right side of the law.

An important milestone in that direction was the completion and signing, during the reporting period, of 14 of the 16 territorial development programmes, thereby completing all programmes included in the provisions of the final agreement. Such programmes will benefit 6.6 million Colombians in the 170 municipalities that were most affected by violence and poverty in the past. Progress has also been made in approving productive projects for the demobilized, to the tune of \$6.2 million; registering 12,743 people in our social security and health system and 9,946 people

to receive pensions and providing 1,053 people with jobs in the public and private sectors and economic support that will benefit 12,750 people, for a total of approximately \$58.5 million. Those are some of the many efforts undertaken.

Today, 3,537 former members of the FARC-EP and 7,074 families are settled in the territorial areas for training and reintegration, which were conceived as focal points to facilitate the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. As envisaged in the regulations issued in 2017, the legal validity of that framework will come to an end in August. However, that should not generate uncertainty. Although those spaces were always intended to be temporary, the commitment of the national Government to offering stable conditions and certainties to the former members of the FARC is not provisional. That has been expressed by President Iván Duque, in direct dialogue with them and their families, in the three visits he has made to the areas of Pandores, San José de Oriente and La Fila, where he learned first-hand the concerns and expectations of the former members of the FARC-EP and reiterated the Government's willingness to work, together and hand in hand with them, to build opportunities for progress in accordance with the law.

The culmination of the legal framework of the territorial areas will be addressed through a strategy that entails, among other provisions, their incorporation into land-use management. Where that is not possible, alternatives for the relocation of demobilized individuals will be identified, and stability, legal and physical security, the provision of goods and services, and conditions for productive initiatives and job creation will continue to be provided.

The Government of Colombia agrees with the Secretary-General regarding the magnitude of the challenges we face in guaranteeing the physical security of individuals involved in the reintegration process, social leaders and communities in certain municipalities of the country. Containing diverse manifestations of violence is one of the main challenges faced by societies going through a process of stabilization and that, in our case, originate in the activity of organized armed groups linked to criminal economies. It is significant that, between 2013 and 2018, the number of cultivated hectares of coca surpassed all historical records, rising from about 60,000 to 200,000, according to the latest estimates. Furthermore, we must not forget that

drug trafficking has fuelled the bloodiest violence in Colombia for more than 40 years.

Over the past eight months, President Duque has adopted new policies on security and the fight against the world drug problem, and has adjusted the existing institutional architecture and protection mechanisms, improving coordination among authorities and the capacity for prevention and appropriate response. In fact, the verified number of homicides of human rights defenders fell from nine in August 2018 to five in January 2019, and to 1 in February, according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Colombia. According to the same source, of the 265 cases reported between January 2016 and March 2019, the Public Prosecutor's Office has identified the authors of 151 homicides, representing 57 per cent of perpetrators. The fight against impunity has been accompanied by the activation of various agencies, including the National Commission on Security Guarantees, under the leadership of President Duque, at the end of January. Our commitment to legality and the defence of life is unwavering. We will therefore continue working tirelessly until we manage to definitively overcome violence and achieve the full realization of the rule of law throughout the territory.

I wish to turn now to two additional issues that are addressed in the Secretary-General's report. As I have noted previously, on 11 March President Duque decided to object to 6 of the 159 articles that make up the draft procedural statutory law of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. He did so in order to provide the Jurisdiction with a clearer and more coherent legal framework that will allow it to respond to the aspiration of all Colombians to living in peace with legality and without impunity, and to best serve the rights of the victims and honour Colombia's obligations under international law. In accordance with to our institutional arrangement, the objections are being handled in the Congress of the Republic, where last Monday the plenary of the House of Representatives voted against adoption. The decision of the Senate is pending. The Government will respect the decision adopted by the Legislature and proceed in accordance with the national Constitution.

Finally, we have read carefully the observations of the Secretary-General on the gender dimension in the implementation of the final agreement. For the Government of President Duque, women's effective exercise of their rights and their active participation in all areas of national life is a priority issue. Therefore,

the national development plan that has been under discussion since February in the Congress includes a pact for women's equality. The pact imposes mandates to strengthen the institutional framework on gender and to move forward with concrete actions towards the empowerment of women. First and foremost, it establishes measures in favour of rural women and peacebuilding.

Dialogue with women and their organizations has been a continuous practice of the President and his Government in all areas where women are actors, including the implementation of the agreement. That is why I want to welcome the presence of Ms. Rosa Salamanca and, through her, express our gratitude for the fundamental contribution that the women of Colombia make to the building of a better country and a more promising future for all.

The magnitude of the task that lies before us should not make us underestimate the relevance and meaning of our achievements. We do not, however, deem any of those satisfactory or sufficient. We will continue working to build peace with legality for all Colombians. In that regard, the observations of the Verification Mission and the members of the Security Council will always be welcome and constitute an essential guide in the search for coexistence among Colombians.

Accordingly, on behalf of the Government of Colombia, I would like to thank the United Nations for its support, through the Verification Mission headed by Carlos Ruiz Massieu, and to recognize its constructive contributions. I would also like to extend an invitation to the Security Council to visit our country soon so that its members can see the titanic effort we have undertaken.

The President: I thank Mr. Trujillo García for his invitation.

I now give the floor to Mr. Ruiz Massieu to make some additional comments.

Mr. Ruiz Massieu: I have essentially said what I needed to say. There were no questions directed at me. Again, I appreciate the opportunity to address the Council, and I thank Council members for the comments directed at the Mission's work. We are at the

disposal of the Council for any further clarification in the future.

The President: I now give the floor to Ms. Salamanca to make additional comments.

Ms. Salamanca (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Council for the questions. I should also like to thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia for his statement.

I take this opportunity to express gratitude for the interest shown in the issue of gender and to kindly call on the Government to make progress in the specific matters related to this topic. As set out in the development plan, there is a pact for gender equity. We kindly ask Member States to ensure that the plan be given sufficient resources and institutional capacity with robust institutions that will enable such a programme to truly have an impact. We believe that the resources are still lacking and that they therefore need to be allocated in order to achieve a cross-cutting impact.

I also believe it is important to say that within the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, we are convinced that the international benchmarks for sexual violence should be respected. Finally, we would like to emphasize that there should be a recommendation to implement such a programme of guarantees for women leaders in peacebuilding.

I agree that the agreement is not an easy path. It is complex and challenging but it also enables the promotion and strengthening of the political social, cultural changes required for the future of the country. This is a path towards coexistence and future reconciliation. In leveraging it we will strengthen democracy, promote well-being and prevent violence and suffering. In such a task we as women will remain committed to ethical standards so as to achieve a peaceful country.

The President: I thank Ms. Salamanca for the clarifications she has provided.

I now invite members to consultations to continue our discussions on the subject.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.