



Colombia: Statement at the 22nd session of the UN Human Rights Council (25 February – 22 March 2013)

AI Index: AMR 23/014/2013
20 March 2013

Item 2: Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General

General Debate

Mr. President,

The peace talks in Colombia have raised expectations that the conflict with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) could finally come to an end, but a stable peace will remain elusive unless the two sides put an end to human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law.¹ Those responsible for such crimes must be brought to justice.

Guerrilla groups and the security forces, acting alone or with paramilitaries, continue to commit abuses and violations. Members of Indigenous, Afro-descendent and peasant farmer communities, human rights defenders, including women activists, and trade unionists are most at risk.

The Victims and Land Restitution Law could benefit many victims. However, some of the law's provisions and threats against and killings of those campaigning for land restitution could undermine efforts to return land to many forcibly displaced persons.

Efforts to combat impunity have been dealt a serious blow by several legislative measures, including reform of the military justice system, which will give the military greater control over criminal investigations when members of the security forces are implicated in human rights violations.

The parties to the conflict continue to subject women and girls to sexual violence. A bill currently in Congress to combat impunity in such cases could help to address some of the obstacles to justice faced by survivors of such crimes.

Amnesty International asks this Council to call on the parties to the conflict in Colombia to fully implement all UN human rights recommendations. Correspondingly, this Council should:

- urge the government and the FARC to make a verifiable commitment to end all human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law;

¹ See: "The human rights situation in Colombia: Amnesty International's concerns and recommendations" A/HRC/22/NGO/174, 27 February 2013.

- call for effective protection for persons at risk of human rights violations and abuses, including land and women activists;
- call for the repeal of legislation that threatens to exacerbate impunity;
- insist that those responsible for human rights violations and abuses and violations of international humanitarian law are brought to justice; and
- support legislation to combat impunity in cases of conflict-related sexual violence.

Thank you Mr. President.