



23 March 2016  
Index: AMR 23/3703/2016

**UN Human Rights Council  
Thirty-First session  
29 February – 24 March 2016**

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 Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia are close to signing a peace agreement that we hope will bring an end to a very long conflict between the two parties marked by human rights abuses and violations and by endemic impunity.

For peace to be effective, victims' right to truth, justice and reparation must be respected, but doubts remain about whether the Agreement on Victims of the Conflict will guarantee such rights.

The authorities must adopt comprehensive measures to end ongoing human rights violations and abuses and effectively protect those communities and groups most at risk of violations and abuses.

Indigenous, Afro-descendant and peasant farmer communities continue to be attacked, often to undermine their campaigns against the economic exploitation of their lands. The recent spate of killings of human rights defenders is of particular concern.

The international community must play a greater role in demanding more action by the Colombian authorities to guarantee the safety of these communities and groups and to ensure the right of victims to truth, justice and reparation.

The UN Security Council's establishment of a political mission to monitor and verify compliance with an eventual cease-fire and cessation of hostilities is an important development, but for it to be effective it must include a human rights component and work hand-in-hand with a strengthened and adequately funded Office in Colombia of the UNHCHR.

Thank you Mr. President.