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Serious human rights violations continue in the context of the implementing the Peace Agreement in Colombia

Human Rights Council adopts Universal Periodic Review outcome on Colombia

Amnesty International welcomes Colombia's acceptance of recommendations to adopt measures to protect human rights defenders and to continue to implement the Peace Agreement, focusing on transitional justice, truth and reconciliation, the rights of victims and Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities, and the reintegration of former combatants.¹

The organization is concerned, however, at serious human rights violations in the context of implementing the Peace Agreement. There has been an increase in threats against and killings of human rights activists, including people in social leadership positions.

The limited measures taken by Colombia have so far failed to mitigate the risks facing those who defend the rights of victims of the internal armed conflict, as well as land rights and collective rights, and there is a higher risk of sexual and gender-based violence.

This is largely the result of the power vacuum following the demobilization of the FARC guerrilla and the failure by the state to increase its presence in territories which have been weakened by the armed conflict. State protection mechanisms have either not been implemented or have proven to be ineffective.

Amnesty International urges Colombia to implement effective measures to protect human rights defenders and to employ approaches that are sensitive to ethnicity and territorial concerns.

The armed conflict has intensified in some areas of Colombia following armed confrontations between National Liberation Army (ELN) guerrillas, paramilitary groups and state forces.

Since January 2017, Amnesty International has documented targeted killings of members of Afro-descendant communities and Indigenous Peoples, collective forced displacement, forced confinement of communities within their territories, limiting their freedom of movement and access to essential services and food, forced recruitment of child combatants, sexual violence, and the use of anti-personnel mines.

Although official figures indicate a reduction in deaths from armed combat, armed confrontations continue in some parts of the country between ELN guerrillas, paramilitary groups and state forces, and even some FARC dissident groups.

Amnesty International continues to be deeply concerned by the expansion of paramilitary groups in the country. Despite the government's claims that all paramilitary groups were

¹ Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Colombia, A/HRC/39/6, 9 July 2018, Recommendations 120.1 (Azerbaijan), 120.2 (Australia), 120.12 (Austria), 120.13/14 (Canada), 120.31 (Croatia).

demobilized in 2005, territories formerly dominated by FARC are now controlled by paramilitaries with no measures by the state in place to protect the communities against human rights violations. There continues to be reports of the collusion by sectors of the security forces with such groups.

Colombia must commit to dismantle any remaining paramilitary structures and to recommit to investigate any alleged complicity of state agencies with such structures.

Background

The UN Human Rights Council adopted the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Colombia on 20 September 2018 during its 39th session. On that occasion Amnesty International delivered this oral statement.

Amnesty International also contributed to the information basis of the review through its submission on country: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/amr23/7357/2017/en/>

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