

 PEACE MAIL

July 26-August 1, 2016

**President Santos Names ELN Peace Process Representatives**

On July 26, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos attempted to give new life to the stalled peace talks with the ELN by naming Carlos Velandia (alias 'Felipe Torres') y Gerardo Bermúdez (alias 'Francisco Galán') as representatives for the peace talks. The two men were previously members of the guerrilla group. Talks with the guerrillas have stalled since the March 30 announcement that the ELN would begin a peace process with the GOC. The GOC claims that this is due to the unmet requirement that the group stop its attacks and kidnapping practices; the ELN accuses the GOC of intentionally freezing the talks. President Santos issued a special resolution to remove outstanding warrants against Velandia and Bermúdez so that they might participate in future dialogues. They will still be required to attend their own judicial proceedings, however, which include charges of kidnapping, homicide, robbery, and participation in the ELN.<sup>1</sup> Both men ostensibly resigned from the guerrilla group years ago, and past clashes between Bermúdez and the ELN's Central Command have resulted in some spokespersons from the ELN rejecting his presence on the negotiating team.<sup>2</sup> Nonetheless, the guerrilla group still maintains that it is open to dialogues with the GOC.

**Members of the United Nations Monitoring and Verifying Team Arrive in Colombia**

A 23-member team of United Nations observers arrived this past week to complement the original team of 20 civilian staff in Colombia. The observers from Argentina, Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, and Uruguay will be responsible for monitoring and verifying the implementation of the bilateral ceasefire and final peace agreement.<sup>1</sup> Eventually, 500 observers will participate in the mission, and will mostly comprise individuals from the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).<sup>2</sup> On June 30, three FARC leaders who have had active roles in the peace negotiations in Havana – Pablo Catatumbo, Marco León Calarcá y Carlos Antonio Lozada – were appointed to lead the process of temporarily relocating the guerrillas to the areas where they will eventually lay down their arms.<sup>3</sup>