

PEACE MAIL

November 21-27

WEEKLY UPDATE: Implementing the Peace Accords

This callout box includes a weekly update on releases and work specifically related implementing the Final Peace Accord between the Government and the FARC in Colombia.

On Monday, November 27th, with a vote of 84 votes in favor and 0 against, the plenary session of **the House of Representatives approved the statutory law for the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP)**, resolving a deep source of uncertainty for the implementation of the peace accords moving forward. As originally proposed, sentences for offenders found guilty by the transitional justice mechanism will be influenced by the degree to which they are determined to have contributed to the historical truth of the armed conflict throughout their interaction with the JEP. Guiding principles for the Jurisdiction remain peace building and reconciliation. Dissents and those who demobilize after December 1, 2016, will be tried by the ordinary justice system.¹

On Monday, November 27th, with a vote of 88 in favor and 7 against, **the norm for former FARC guerrilla participation in Colombian politics was approved in the plenary session of the House of Representatives**. Convictions will be suspended for former guerrillas so that they may participate in the upcoming 2018 election cycle. However, in order to assume their role as a Congressperson, the individual will be required to submit himself or herself to the JEP once it is completely functioning, should they be named in a case under consideration by the transitional justice mechanism. Should the individual be sentenced to any deprivation of liberty after having been named to Congress, they will be required to step down in order to fulfill their sentence.²

Given the November 30th scheduled end date for the Special Legislative Act for Peace – the “fast track” mechanism designed to pass peace accord related measures through Congress more rapidly than traditional means – **the Santos Government urged finalization of related projects currently under consideration in Congress**. Currently, eight bills and one constitutional reform remain under review. Among the greatest challenges is a high level of absenteeism of many members of Congress, which has impeded voting and progress in general.³