



This callout box includes a weekly update on news and work specifically related to implementing the Peace Accord between the Government of Colombia (GOC) and the FARC.

Confirmation that the **letter sent by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) to the United States Department of Justice requesting evidence in the Jesús Santrich case never arrived** was received this week, leading the JEP to offer the United States a further 20 days to deliver their evidence, and prompting an investigation into the Ministry of Justice and 4-72 national courier service.<sup>1</sup> The episode has again called the JEP's legitimacy into question, adding fuel to criticisms on both sides of the divide with regards whether Santrich should be covered by the non-extradition guarantee offered by the Peace Accord.<sup>2</sup>

The **GOC is planning to extend the Victim's Law** (Law 1448 of 2011), which expires in July 2021, and has expressed their commitment to attending to victims without generating false expectations. To date, the government has compensated 962,000 victims, but requires additional resources to continue support; the United Nations' Multi-Partner Trust Fund is one source of possible funding.<sup>3</sup>

**"Rodrigo Cadete," leader of the dissident FARC group operating in the South and West of the country, was killed** during a military operation in Caquetá on 2 February, along with nine other combatants.<sup>4</sup> Cadete, who was responsible for articulating dissident actions in the region, represents a significant loss for the movement. "Gentil Duarte" is now the dissidents' most visible target, being the only figure with the political profile to hold the movement together, followed by "John 40," who wields financial power and has extended control into Guainía near the Venezuelan border, and "Cabuyo," responsible for the death of three geologists in Antioquia in September. Despite military successes, dissident structures now number over 1,000 combatants and represent a significant threat to security, which the GOC has struggled to control.<sup>5</sup> Uncertainty surrounding the implementation of the Peace Accord (including the assassination of 84 former combatants since December 2016, and the funding of only 36 of the 292 collective projects developed by former combatants) may cause dissident ranks to swell.<sup>6</sup>

The **United Nations issued an alert in response to displacements in Cauca and Norte de Santander** on 1 February. More than 300 people have left their homes following confrontations between Public Forces and armed groups including the ELN, EPL, and FARC dissidents. The UN has identified protection, education and housing, and mental and physical health as areas of concern. Human rights defenders also denounced the effects of continuing confrontations on Indigenous communities,<sup>7</sup> as well as outbreaks of violence in Antioquia since the withdrawal of the FARC and the expansion of the ELN and *Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia* (AGC, or *Clan del Golfo*), which seek control of drug trafficking routes and processes.<sup>8</sup>

On 3 February, the ELN freed the three helicopter crew members kidnapped in Norte de Santander on 11 January,<sup>9</sup> but the **GOC continues to call for the release all hostages and refuses to follow the protocols signed by the Santos administration to guarantee the safe return of ELN negotiators** in the event of peace talks falling through.<sup>10</sup> The international community has largely called on President Duque to fulfil the agreement and pursue a negotiated end to the conflict,<sup>11</sup> while Duque confirmed the capture of nine ELN members and a new arrest plan following the security council meeting held in Quibdó, Nariño, on 31 January. The campaign, which is part of the "Who Does It, Pays" policy, will offer rewards worth up to US\$1.2 million to encourage citizens' collaboration in identifying those involved in organized crime, and particularly in the assassinations of social leaders.<sup>12</sup> The GOC's Timely Action Plan for the Prevention and Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Social Leaders, and Journalists (PAO) has been criticized for its overly militarized approach, particularly with the continued involvement of General Barrero, who is implicated in the "false positives" scandal and the stigmatization of social leaders. The Colombia-Europe-United States Coordination delegate, member of the National Security Guarantees Commission, also called for a more integrated approach to the problem.<sup>13</sup>