

United Nations Peacebuilding Commission

Ambassadorial-Level Meeting on Peacebuilding in Colombia with the participation of H.E. Ms. Laura Sarabia, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia

23 April 2025 10.00 a.m. (EST) / Conference Room 2

Concept Note

Background

Over the past several years, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) has consistently provided Colombia with a dedicated platform to discuss progress and challenges in its peacebuilding efforts, particularly in the context of implementing the 2016 Final Peace Agreement between the Government and the former Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP) guerilla. On 11 July 2024, H.E. President Gustavo Petro addressed the Commission, outlining his administration's commitment to forging durable peace in Colombia. He underscored the importance of promoting social cohesion and comprehensively addressing the root causes and drivers of conflict, including governance deficits, territorial divisions, social and ethnic inequalities, deforestation and illicit activities.

The PBC has strongly acknowledged and supported Colombia's efforts in the implementation of key components of the Peace Agreement, notably through comprehensive rural reform, reintegration of former combatants, transitional justice and reconciliation, providing reparation for victims. The Commission has also underscored the importance of adopting a whole of society approach, actively involving Indigenous Peoples, Afro-Colombian communities, and marginalized communities, ensuring the full, equal and meaningful participation of women, and promoting socio-economic transformation as essential conditions for peacebuilding and sustainable peace. As Colombia begins the second half of the 15-year timetable for implementation of the 2016 Agreement, which has been prioritized by the Government of H.E. President Gustavo Petro through a policy framework of "Total Peace", tangible achievements in inclusive peacebuilding and sustaining peace have been observed. These achievements result from the coordinated efforts of State institutions, civil society, local communities, and the international community, accompanied by the PBC.

The Secretary-General, in his last report on Colombia (S/2025/188), called for redoubled efforts to consolidating peace in Colombia. He noted that the violence that erupted in January 2025 in Catatumbo illustrates the remaining challenges plaguing conflict-affected areas, such as the consolidation of State presence throughout the territory, the closing of development gaps between urban and rural areas and populations, and illicit economies, which the Final Peace Agreement is meant to address.

The Security Council remains deeply engaged in Colombia's peacebuilding process through the presence of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, whose efforts are complemented by the United Nations Country Team. The Peacebuilding Commission has directly engaged

through visits to Colombia, advice to the Security Council, and participation in the Security Council's deliberations focused on Colombia. Most recently in October 2024, PBC advice to the Security Council emphasized that further progress in achieving lasting peace in Colombia requires accelerated implementation of comprehensive rural reform, deeper integration of marginalized communities, and strengthened transitional justice mechanisms. While welcoming the Government's commitment to strengthening the reintegration process, the Commission expressed concerns about the threats against former combatants, exacerbated by the ongoing presence and activities of armed groups, and stressed the need to implement the comprehensive protection measures for former combatants.

During several multilateral engagements in 2023 and 2024, including on transitional justice and on Indigenous issues, the Peacebuilding Commission reaffirmed the UN's ongoing support in Colombia's conflict prevention, peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts including through expediting the implementation of the 2016 Peace Agreement and placing strong emphasis on the resolution of the root causes of the conflict and the needs of the affected communities. Additionally, the Commission called for a long-term commitment from Colombia to work on transitional justice, promoting national ownership, inclusive participation, and gender- and youth-responsive approaches.

Peacebuilding Financing and Partnerships

Since 2014, the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) has played a key role in supporting Colombia's peacebuilding efforts, investing over US\$ 60 million, most of which has focused on supporting the implementation of the 2016 Final Peace Agreement. PBF-supported projects have addressed core elements of the peace process, including the reintegration of former combatants, territorial peace initiatives in prioritized regions, transitional justice and innovative finance for peace initiatives. Recent initiatives have included support to addressing gender-based and sexual violence in the context of the armed conflict and strengthening victims' access to justice, namely the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, through partnerships with civil society organizations.

The PBF has also contributed to institutional strengthening and to enhancing the effective political representation for conflict-affected populations. In 2024, the PBF approved a project to, among other priorities, support Colombia's South-South Cooperation Strategy, facilitating the exchange of the peacebuilding experience with other countries, such as Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria and the Philippines around issues such as institutional architecture for peace and transitional justice; territorial development and institutional articulation for peace; reincorporation processes; and reparation to victims.

Objectives of the meeting

The meeting will provide the opportunity for the Foreign Minister, H.E. Ms. Laura Sarabia, to update on the Government's peacebuilding priorities in the context the implementation of the Peace Agreement, and offer insights into the current landscape of dialogue under the "Total Peace" policy. To facilitate the aforementioned, the meeting will also be briefed by Mr. Diego Tovar, a representative of the former FARC-EP guerilla and delegate to the Commission for the Follow-Up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement (CSIVI), on the

experiences and lessons learnt in the reintegration and transformation processes in the areas afflicted by conflict and violence. The PBC will also advocate for continued international support for the Peace Agreement and Colombia's national peacebuilding priorities. The Foreign Minister will also brief the Security Council during its quarterly meeting on Colombia on 22 April.

Agenda

- Opening remarks by H.E. Ms. Antje Leendertse, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission
- Statement by H.E. Ms. Laura Sarabia, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia
- Briefing by Mr. Diego Tovar, a representative of the High Contracting Party of the Agreement, on behalf of the former FARC-EP guerilla and delegate to the Commission for the Follow-Up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement (CSIVI)
- Briefing by Mr. Rodrigo Uprimny, founder and researcher at Dejusticia and former deputy justice of the Constitutional Court; Member of the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 2015-2022
- Interventions from the floor
- Remarks by Ms. Elizabeth Spehar, ASG for Peacebuilding Support
- Closing remarks by the PBC Chair