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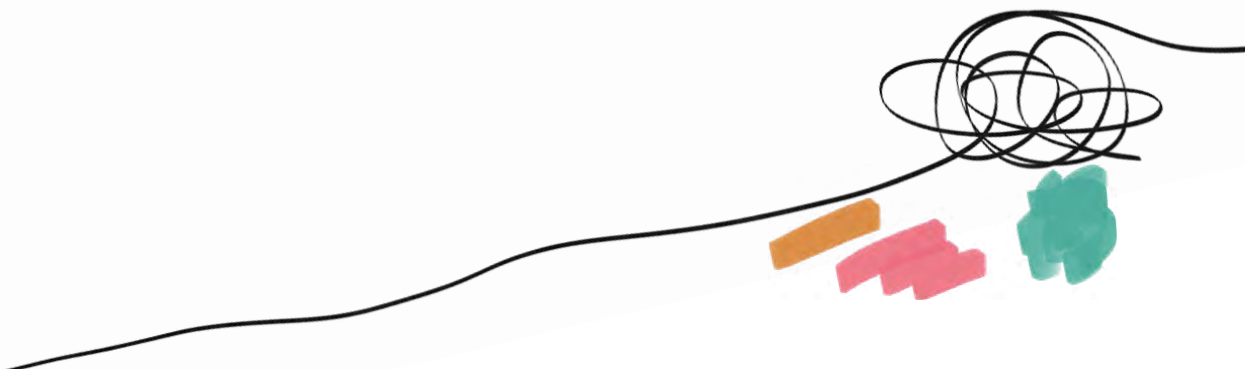
The ntanglements of peace

Reflections on the long road of
transformation in Colombia



The Entanglements of Peace

Reflections on the long road of transforming the
armed conflict in Colombia



Editors

Kristina Birke Daniels and
Sabine Kurtenbach



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Reflections on the long road of transformation in Colombia

ENGLISH EDITION
Bogotá, Colombia, August 2021
ISBN 978-958-8677-48-4

Authorised translation from the spanish edition “Los enredos de la paz. Reflexiones alrededor del largo camino de la transformación del conflicto armado en Colombia” edited by Kristina Birke Daniels & Sabine Kurtenbach, Bogotá, 2021, published by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

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This publication is supported by the Program «Consolidation of Peace in Colombia» ProPaz II, which is being implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and its Colombian counterparts, on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). As a federally owned enterprise, GIZ supports the German Government in achieving its objectives in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development. The ideas expressed in image and text are the sole responsibility of the authors. For any questions or clarifications related to the content, please contact the authors directly.

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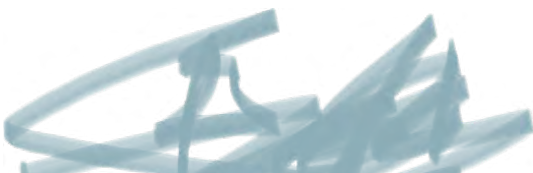
Endorsements

“The Entanglements of Peace presents the diverse perceptions of what it would be like to live in peace in Colombia, and the measures necessary for the country to move towards social justice with guarantees for human rights, social inclusion, and sustainability. An excellent diagnosis with relevant proposals.”

—Mariano Aguirre, Associate Fellow at Chatham House (London),
and member of the Latin American Network for Inclusive and
Sustainable Security of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

“The Entanglements of Peace, edited by Kristina Birke and Sabine Kurtenbach, presents an accurate picture of the complex Colombian situation four years after the signing of the Peace Agreement. There, the voices of citizens appear, who, through a survey and focus groups, describe very similar visions of peace as a peaceful life in dignity. However, this consensus takes place in a situation full of challenges and possibilities well described in the different chapters, which mention the experiments of rural reincorporation of former FARC combatants, the armed conflicts over legal and illegal wealth in the border areas and the Pacific, the social mobilizations and the national and international actors that have support peace, and the still uncertain outcome. The research has the virtue of leaving the capital cities and moving to those places where territorial peace must be built, identifying the centrality of the leadership of women, youth, and ethnic peoples in peacebuilding. It is a must read at this time of uncertainty, when only certain and verifiable information can support the decisions that the country must make to avoid a new cycle of insecurity and violence.”

—Julieta Lemaitre Ripoll, judge of the Chamber for the
Acknowledgement of Truth, Responsibility, and Determination of
Facts and Conduct (JEP) and adjunct professor at the Universidad de
los Andes.



“Perhaps the most important sentence in this admirable book is its invitation to ‘conceive peace not as a state, but as a process.’ It is not only a realistic warning against unreasonable expectations, but above all a call to responsibility. Like a garden, peace must be watered every day to bear fruit. And for that, it must be first understood that it is a space in time to address all types of conflicts - social, territorial, local vendettas, and illegal economies, as explained in detail in these pages - that were uncovered with the end of the war and that the final agreement intends to address, to a large extent, in order to nip the sources of violence in the bud.

So this space has been reduced? Right. And much more could have been done? Yes. But as long as the daily work of men and women committed to the process at all levels continues, peace will move forward.”

—Sergio Jaramillo, Senior Advisor to the European Institute of Peace (EIP). He served as High Commissioner for Peace (2012-2016) and National Security Advisor (2010-2012) during the administration of President Juan Manuel Santos.





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Preface

Adam Isacson

WOLA Director for Defense Oversight

James P. McGovern

Congressman

We've been privileged to visit several of the regions of Colombia where this excellent volume's authors carried out their research. We too have heard from communities and local leaders about their aspirations, their exhaustion with armed conflict and other forms of violence, and their strong desire to be governed by a state that enforces rules fairly, defends their rights, and listens to them. While Sabine Kurtenbach's "glocal concept of peace" is new to us, we recognize it in the hopes and claims of social movements, ex-combatants, victims, experts and explainers, and those government officials who act out of goodwill.

We also recognize these traits in our country, the United States, a nation nominally "at peace." This volume encourages us to reflect on whether that word fits what our country is experiencing in the early 2020s. The United States is in a moment of growing political polarization. Mass shootings, episodes of racist police violence, and expressions of hate are all too frequent. Economic inequality is worsening, and confidence in our institutions is plummeting. The January 6, 2021 riot at the U.S. Capitol crystallized an ominous sense that, while we're not at war (not within our borders, at least), it's inaccurate to call this "peacetime."

"The crux of the matter," Kurtenbach reminds us, "is to conceive peace not as an end-state but as a process." It is a messy journey, with many setbacks, and with frequent arguments over which direction to proceed.

And the nature of human beings in society makes it impossible actually to “arrive”—only to get as far away as possible from peace’s opposite: war, violence, injustice, and preventable suffering.

Even when we’re not at war—like in the United States—we’re on a difficult journey to peace that requires constant effort to avoid moving backward. And that effort involves far more than getting negotiators to sit at a table somewhere and sign a piece of paper. This volume explains vividly what is needed. It reminds us that peace rests on three overlapping pillars: protecting people’s physical integrity, protecting their individual and collective human rights, and building up the institutions necessary to transform conflicts.

It has been both inspiring and frustrating to watch Colombia, in the years since its 2016 peace accord, seek to fortify these pillars. Inspiring because 13,000 people gave up arms and agreed to be held accountable, and because a government made firm promises to uphold victims and to serve long-neglected territories. Frustrating because overlapping elites and criminals have worked to undermine reform and accountability, and because the government’s response has often appeared rudderless and divorced from those impacted communities most severely affected by the conflict.

As of early 2021, about 700 independent social leaders’ voices have been silenced and 260 demobilized guerrillas have been murdered since the signing of the peace accord. The government has barely reached the “road map” stage for its flagship program (PDETs) for establishing a functioning presence in 3 out of 16 post-conflict territories. For the past four years, the U.S. government often hectored Colombia about eradicating coca, but said little about peace and human rights. (Thankfully, the U.S. Congress resisted the Trump administration’s attempts to cut economic aid to support the accord’s implementation.)

Stumbles are to be expected on the journey to peace. What is essential is that the country, the society, gets up and keeps walking. This volume provides knowledge, inspiration, and recommendations for doing that.

Getting to peace requires physical safety for ex-combatants, community organizers, campesino leaders, environmental defenders, women’s

groups, LGBTI activists, Afro-descendant communities, indigenous leaders, labor unions, youth leaders, human rights defenders, drug policy reformers, and journalists. It means a high probability of accountability and punishment for those who impede their work through violence and fear.

Getting to peace requires protection and basic services for people trying to survive—in the shadow of armed groups and criminals—in neglected, ungoverned territories, including sensitive border zones. It means justice for people facing extractive projects in their communities. It means protection for people facing illegal economies, or people seeking to denounce the official corruption that facilitates those economies. It means the justice system systematically punishing illegal violation of human rights, even when the perpetrators are powerful, wealthy, and well-connected.

Getting to peace means institutions that reflect people's deepest aspirations for the elements that, in their view, define the word "peace." The authors of this volume went to eight regions of the country and talked to people about their aspirations, about what peace means to them, and got some answers that support this "glocal" conception: Respect, Justice, Tranquility, Rights, Well-being. Basic conditions needed to live a fulfilling life, to serve others, and to overcome common challenges. Importantly, they found that these aspirations are significantly shared among Colombians across sectors and regions.

These aspirations must guide the institutions necessary to transform the conflict transformation. These institutions must, in turn, include the historically excluded Colombians who are the focus of important chapters in this book: youth, women, indigenous and Afro-descendant communities, and LGBTI people. They must honor their commitments, breaking with long traditions of broken promises. These responsive, inclusive, reliable institutions must include external actors with interests in Colombia—prominent among them the United States.

"Social changes and the evolution of society transform social structures and alter the distribution of power between different parties," the Peace and Reconciliation Foundation observes in this book, emphasizing how organized civil society holds up the "three pillars" of peace. In

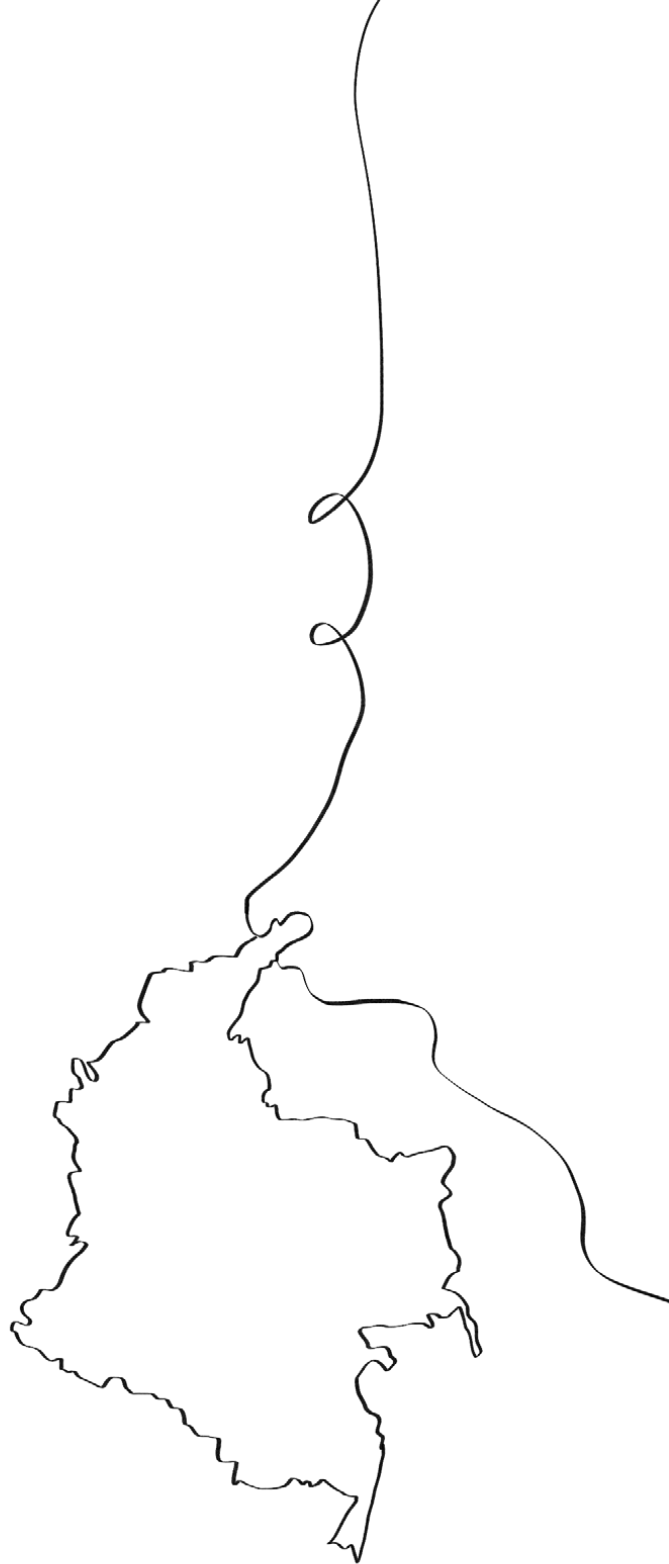
Colombia, though, as Catalina Niño points out, that role is blocked by elites' distrust of civil society, which then spirals into a "vicious circle of mutual distrust." Through economic assistance, diplomacy, messaging, and careful choices of whom to uphold and whom to keep distant, international actors like the United States can help break that cycle of distrust and clear Colombia's path toward peace.

This won't be easy. A "glocal" perspective on peace will often look messy and frustrating. As statistics illustrate, Colombia is a more violent place than the United States. But there is nothing exotic to a U.S. reader about Colombians' responses, as noted in this volume, when asked what "peace" means to them. They probably wouldn't diverge much from Americans' answers. As our country wrestles with its own divisions, we can learn much from the Colombian people who—unevenly, despite setbacks—are moving toward that never-quite-attained destination of "peace." We congratulate Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Colombia (FESCOL) for presenting their perspectives in this timely volume.

That Colombians are moving in the right direction, generally, is an important conclusion one draws from this book, even as it stares unflinchingly at the many challenges that stand in the way. If the country, led by its civil society at all levels and sectors, can sustain this movement over time, it will have no real precedent in Colombia's history.

The Entanglements of Peace





Introduction: The ups and downs of peacebuilding in Colombia

Kristina Birke Daniels y Sabine Kurtenbach



The challenge of peacebuilding in Colombia

After 52 years of war, at the end of 2016, the then-government of Colombia, headed by President Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018), and the FARC-EP (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army) guerrilla signed a comprehensive Peace Agreement: Final Agreement for the Termination of the Conflict and the Construction of a Stable and Lasting Peace. This was yet another effort in a long series of partial successes and failed attempts to leave the war behind through a peace process (Helfrich and Kurtenbach, 2006; Bouvier, 2009; Kurtenbach, 2013; 2017). The best-known efforts were the peace process with M-19 and other guerrilla organizations at the end of the 1980s and the Caguán dialogues at the beginning of the new millennium. While the former is considered successful, the latter brought to light the consequences of a failed process: an increase in many forms of violence and the delegitimization of dialogue as a method of conflict resolution. A decade passed before then-President Santos started a new process in 2012. The negotiations in Havana were complex and it was not assumed that the process would culminate in one of the most comprehensive peace agreements.

The levels of armed confrontations and physical violence decreased during the dialogues and negotiations. As 2017 was the year with the lowest homicide rate since the late 1970s, the Colombian experience raised high expectations that dialogue could solve protracted and structurally complex armed conflicts. Although led by the Colombian

parties, the process benefitted from political and academic inputs from other parts of the world. Such is most obviously the case of the guarantor countries (Cuba and Norway) during negotiations and the United Nations in the verification of the implementation of the Agreement. Although less visible, experts and non-state organizations were also important, facilitating the conciliation of divergent positions between the parties and a rapprochement with Colombian civil society. Research and testimonies about these negotiations and the ebbs and flows of the implementation process already fill libraries. The political and academic debates reveal a gap between the peace conceptions, expectations, and experiences of various actors in different contexts and settings.

In international politics, peace is primarily conceived as the end of a war or an armed conflict, that is, of collective violence for a political purpose. With this perspective, at the meeting of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (Celac) in early 2014, governments declared Latin America and the Caribbean as a “Zone of Peace” (Celac, 2014). In 2017, before the United Nations Security Council, Uruguayan Ambassador Elbio Rosselli celebrated the Peace Agreement in Colombia as a historical event that would end active armed conflicts in the Americas. This minimalist conception of peace as the absence of war collides with an extremely violent reality in many parts of the region. Since the regional average exceeds ten homicides per 100,000 inhabitants, the World Health Organization (WHO) describes interpersonal violence in the Americas as a pandemic. Can this situation be characterized as peace?

On the opposite end of the minimalist conception, much broader notions add a series of attributes to peace. Peace can be democratic and liberal –a very fashionable concept after the fall of the Berlin Wall–. It can be the peace of winners, which refers to wars that end in military victory. It can be exclusive, if only the leaders of the armed actors participate, or inclusive if the most relevant groups in society are involved. Goal 16 of the United Nations 2030 Agenda formulates the challenge of building “Peace, justice, and strong institutions” (United Nations, 2015). The list of traits of peace could even be more extensive.

It is important to stress that this debate is not just academic or theoretical but has considerable political consequences as well. The under-

lying conceptions of peace have different policy and peacebuilding implications. The minimalist notion of peace requires a ceasefire, the demobilization of armed actors, and, possibly, their reintegration into civilian life. This was the model of the governments of Virgilio Barco (1986-1990) and César Gaviria (1990-1994).¹ The conception that predominated in the international arena, the renowned liberal peace, which favors liberal political systems and a market economy, is more ambitious and goes further. It promotes the end of the war or armed conflict and a series of institutional reforms to transform underlying conflicts and prevent a relapse into violence. It thus includes substantial changes in affected societies.

In the Colombian case, peacebuilding experiences are as varied as the experiences of war and armed conflict. War and violence have seldom been a national experience and have mainly taken place in peripheral and border regions (UNDP, 2003; González González, 2014). Therefore, different notions of peace prevail in Bogotá, Cauca, or Catatumbo. Its meaning varies between marginalized sectors and wealthy neighborhoods. But there is no linear or direct causality between one and the other. The concept of “territorial peace” of the Santos government tried to incorporate these significant differences (Jaramillo, 2014).

These diverse notions of peace exist even though Article 22 of the Colombian Constitution stipulates that “Peace is a duty of mandatory compliance.” There is no shared vision of what peace is or should be, much less how to achieve it. The 2016 Peace Agreement, linked to the Constitution for three legislative periods, can be interpreted as an attempt to generate a shared conception of peace “as a process of deepening democracy which allows the emergency and representation of new actors in the Colombian political system and society” (Valenzuela, 2019: 302). At the same time, with the goal of non-repetition in mind, the Agreement emphasized the need to transform structural and historically unresolved conflicts, such as the land problem, and to recognize full citizenship to historically marginalized sectors such as women, Indigenous peoples, Afro-Colombians, and the LGTBI community.

¹ Although one of the most important institutional reforms in the recent history of the country –the 1991 Constitution– was issued in this context, it was not a direct product of the negotiations.

The plebiscite, an effort of the Santos government to provide the Peace Agreement with a democratic foundation, demonstrated the complexity of perceptions and hopes around the peace process (González, 2017; Vanegas and Vergara, 2016). While the worst affected regions and large cities were overwhelmingly in favor, intermediate cities and regions, like the Eje Cafetero, voted against it. The plebiscite on the Agreement and the debates to date highlight the absence of a shared concept of peace. However, the representative survey conducted within the framework of this project shows that the majority of those surveyed share a vision of peace with three fundamental elements: respect, justice, and tranquility. A recent study conducted by the United Nations Development Program (PNUD) and the Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO) on the perception of the population in the territories of Development Programs with a Territorial Approach (PDET) also highlights a broad consensus (UNDP and PRIO, 2020). Despite much criticism about the slow pace and lack of implementation, the majority of those surveyed agree with 11 of 12 central components of the Peace Agreement. The disagreement centers on the FARC's political participation. Both studies show that Colombians are not as polarized as the political discourses seem to indicate and that if there is political will, a substantial consensus is possible.

The challenge in this publication is to analyze the variety of conflicts and notions of peace in Colombia, transcending the focus on the peace agreement with the FARC, in order to include peacebuilding in a broader sense. We base our work on an innovative concept of peace, emphasizing the need to analyze persistent conflicts and those that emerged after the end of the war with the FARC. To research this reality and the different notions of peace, we examine three central pillars of integral peace: physical integrity, the guarantee and implementation of individual and collective human rights, and the capacity of formal and informal institutions for the constructive transformation of conflicts. Teams of Colombian and German researchers collected quantitative data and conducted qualitative and participatory explorations in eight communities in different contexts in the country. This variety of historic and conflictive realities enabled us to identify common and singular experiences.

In general terms, three patterns of conflict stand out:

Conflicts for territorial control persist between different non-state armed groups. After the signing of the Agreement, areas abandoned by the FARC have been the most affected. Almost invariably, these are territories with illicit economies (cultivation of coca or marijuana and production of cocaine and illegal mining, among others) or are border areas.

Conflicts emerge and increase in the context of extractive projects and the globalized economy. With the Peace Agreement, these conflicts have reached previously inaccessible regions and have met with high levels of mobilization and resistance from the local population, especially from Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities.

The end of the war brings to light conflicts related to social and political change concerning the recognition of full citizenship to hitherto marginalized groups, such as peasants, women, Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities, the LGBTI population, and FARC-EP ex-combatants. These groups struggle for recognition, representation, the prospect of a dignified life and against violence and structural discrimination.

These conflicts are interrelated, as evidenced by the high levels of threats and murder of human rights defenders and social leaders, on the rise since the signing of the Peace Agreement (Indepaz, 2020b, and see Chapter 6). This multitude of conflicts generates a variety of experiences and notions of peace in Colombia.

The diversity of peace experiences is also related to the reality of the three pillars of peace. Although violence in the country decreased during the last decade, there is significant variation between regions (see Chapter 4). In the most violent areas, conflict factors multiply, while in others, existing conflicts can be managed and resolved. Nevertheless, participants in the focus groups mentioned an increase in domestic and gender violence.

Concerning human rights, Colombian governments proudly proclaim that the country is one of the oldest democracies in Latin America. Colombia has signed and ratified most international human rights trea-

ties, including the Rome Statute that created the International Criminal Court. However, there are significant gaps in the guarantee of human rights between urban and rural areas and social classes. In the context of elections, for example, political and civil rights are restricted. Problems arise mainly in the most remote rural areas, where candidates (especially if their agendas are change-oriented) are threatened or even killed. This jeopardizes free and fair elections and reveals the existence of clientelistic networks and corruption.

The situation is much more complicated in terms of collective rights. Colombia is one of the most dangerous countries for trade unionists, social leaders, and human rights defenders. Those devoted to the defense of the rights of Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities are targeted the most. Threats and killings increased amid pandemic conditions. Recently, violent practices of war, such as massacres and youth recruitment, have returned (Indepaz, 2020a).

Formal and informal institutions for conflict resolution exist in Colombia. The Colombian state has a limited institutional presence in the territory or is part of contentious relations at the local level. There is significant variation in terms of the presence or absence of national institutions for conflict resolution such as houses of justice [casas de justicia], the Attorney General's Office, or community centers. There are also non-state institutions, for example, in Indigenous communities (resguardos). This lack or limited presence of institutions has a double impact on violence and human rights: violence goes unpunished, impunity is extreme, in rural areas more than in urban centers (Valencia et al., 2019), and human rights defenders are left unprotected. This destroys the little confidence of citizens in the state and creates opportunities for armed actors to replace the formal institutions in peripheral regions under their control. The focus groups provided interesting information in this regard.

In the face of this variety of conflicts and pillars of peace, we expected notions of peace to reflect the same variation. Interestingly, the results of our representative national survey and focal group discussions evidence that despite high levels of polarization within Colombian society, there appears to be a consensus on the main elements of peace. Most of the people surveyed associated peace with respect, tranquility, and jus-

tice. Although these are also complex concepts, at least at first glance, there is no evidence of a correlation between perceptions of peace and the underlying conflicts. Theoretically, we expected that the conception of peace of poor and marginalized people (strata 1 and 2) would prioritize justice, well-being, inclusion, and change. Although a detailed analysis of the survey is still pending, we see little correlation in a cross tabulation (see Chapter 3).

We selected local contexts based on variations in levels of violence, conflicts, and institutions for their constructive transformation. As in the national representative survey, the notions of peace in the communities studied are closely related to expectations and hopes of change associated with the Peace Agreement. Most participants in the focus groups want to live a tranquil life, that is, free of threats to their physical integrity and undue interference in daily life. They also want to live a dignified life and to be able to exercise their fundamental political and economic human rights both individually and collectively. The latter is emphasized especially in conversations with marginalized groups such as women, youth, Indigenous communities, and Afro-Colombians. Access to equal opportunities plays a fundamental role in this regard. Finally, and just as important, the participants acknowledge that some institutions for the constructive transformation of conflicts (state, municipal, formal or informal) fulfill their functions, although they also observe the interference of vested interests in the status quo. Despite signs of hopelessness, most interviewees seem to be aware that peace is a process, that the signing of an agreement is necessary but not sufficient, and that everyone must take part in its construction. For this to occur, it is essential to guarantee all citizens a fundamental level of physical security and to generate opportunities for people and communities to conduct their activities and live a dignified life.

More than four years after the signing of the Agreement with the FARC-EP, an analysis of peace in Colombia yields mixed results. On the positive side, a large part of this guerrilla demobilized, and (so far) there has not been a relapse into war, despite dissent and numerous implementation problems. In this perspective, the 2016 Peace Agreement is in line with the partial successes in demobilization processes since 1990. In a broader perspective of peace and peacebuilding, current

events reflect the persistence and reproduction of structural problems and historic blockades for transformation. We will return to this topic in the conclusion.



The purpose of this research is twofold. First, we want to analyze and understand the variety of notions of peace at the national, regional, and local levels in Colombia. To this end, we use a mixed methodology. We analyze documents, reports, and academic essays on experiences in the post-agreement phase at different administrative levels. We also designed and commissioned a representative peace survey. As a third key element, we visited several communities, conducted interviews, and organized focus groups to include the voice of local actors. The aim was not to analyze the implementation of the Peace Agreement, as a large number of reports, institutions, and organizations are already documenting this process. Our challenge goes further: analyze the entanglements of peace from the perspective of different conceptions of peace. How are the conceptions contained in the Agreement related to the territorial conception of the government of Juan Manuel Santos, FARC's conception, and the conception of peace with legality of the government of Iván Duque (2018-)? How do Colombians understand the concept of peace and what do they relate it to? Are there differences or is there consensus about the conceptions and central elements of peace? This perspective stems from the belief that different understandings of peace condition the evaluation and expectations of events in a specific context. Second, based on this analysis, we aim to identify the entanglements and interactions between various levels, cross-cutting themes, and possibilities to build bridges between different conceptions. Politically speaking, peacebuilding depends on building interpersonal trust between people and between them and the formal and informal institutions responsible for the constructive and non-violent transformation of conflicts. Beyond the absence of war, peace cannot be achieved overnight; it is a long and non-linear process with progress and setbacks. What is essential is to evoke common sense and not lose the north. Consequently, peacebuilding needs to include the management of expectations.



The book is organized as follows. In the first section, Sabine Kurtenbach introduces her concept of peace, which allows the analysis of peace as a process based on three pillars: physical security, individual and collective human rights, and formal and informal institutions for conflict transformation (Chapter 2). Chapter three analyzes these elements and –based on a national representative survey– the notions of peace of the Colombian population. Chapter four presents the variety of local conceptions and experiences. We then identify a series of cross-cutting issues, such as the challenging conditions of former combatants in the Territorial Training and Reincorporation Spaces (ETCR), social mobilizations and threats against social leaders, the situation on the borders, the extractive economic model, and the illegal economy. All these issues are closely related to the possibilities and limits of peacebuilding. In following section, we shift the perspective of the analysis to important national and local actors. What is the role of Congress, civil society, women, youth, Indigenous communities, and the LGBTI population? How do they perceive peacebuilding, and what can they do to contribute? The last chapter is devoted to the possibilities and limits of the contribution of external actors. What is their perspective of peace, and how does it translate into support for the peace process?

This publication is the result of a collective effort of many people and organizations: the German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA), the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) (especially its office in Colombia: Fescol), the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH (ProPaz project), who have been working for decades in Colombia and the world in academic and political analysis and peacebuilding.

During 2019, field research was conducted with participatory methodologies and objectives in the territories and workshops in Fescol, in Bogotá. The following researchers, most of them Fescol counterparts, collaborated in the project: Theresa Bachmann, Solange Bonilla Valencia (Pares), Alfredo Andrés Bula Beleño (Caribe Afirmativo), Vivian Fernanda Cuello Santana (Caribe Afirmativo), Dennis Arley Huffington Arroyo (Pares), Catalina Niño Guarnizo (Fescol), Diana Rico, Andrés Rodas Vélez, Mauricio Romero, Juan Manuel Torres Erazo (Pares), Luis Trejos, and Inge Helena Valencia.

We thank each and every participant for their support, especially the following GIGA research assistants and the coordinators of the Fescol team: Daniela María Bohórquez Ramírez (Fescol), María Fernanda Ramírez Medina and Daniel Rodríguez Aldana (GIGA), Saruy Camilo Tolosa Bello, Pedro Valenzuela, and Alejandra María Trujillo Uribe (Fescol). Kristina Birke Daniels would like to especially thank her family, who, amid the pandemic, always supported her work on this book.

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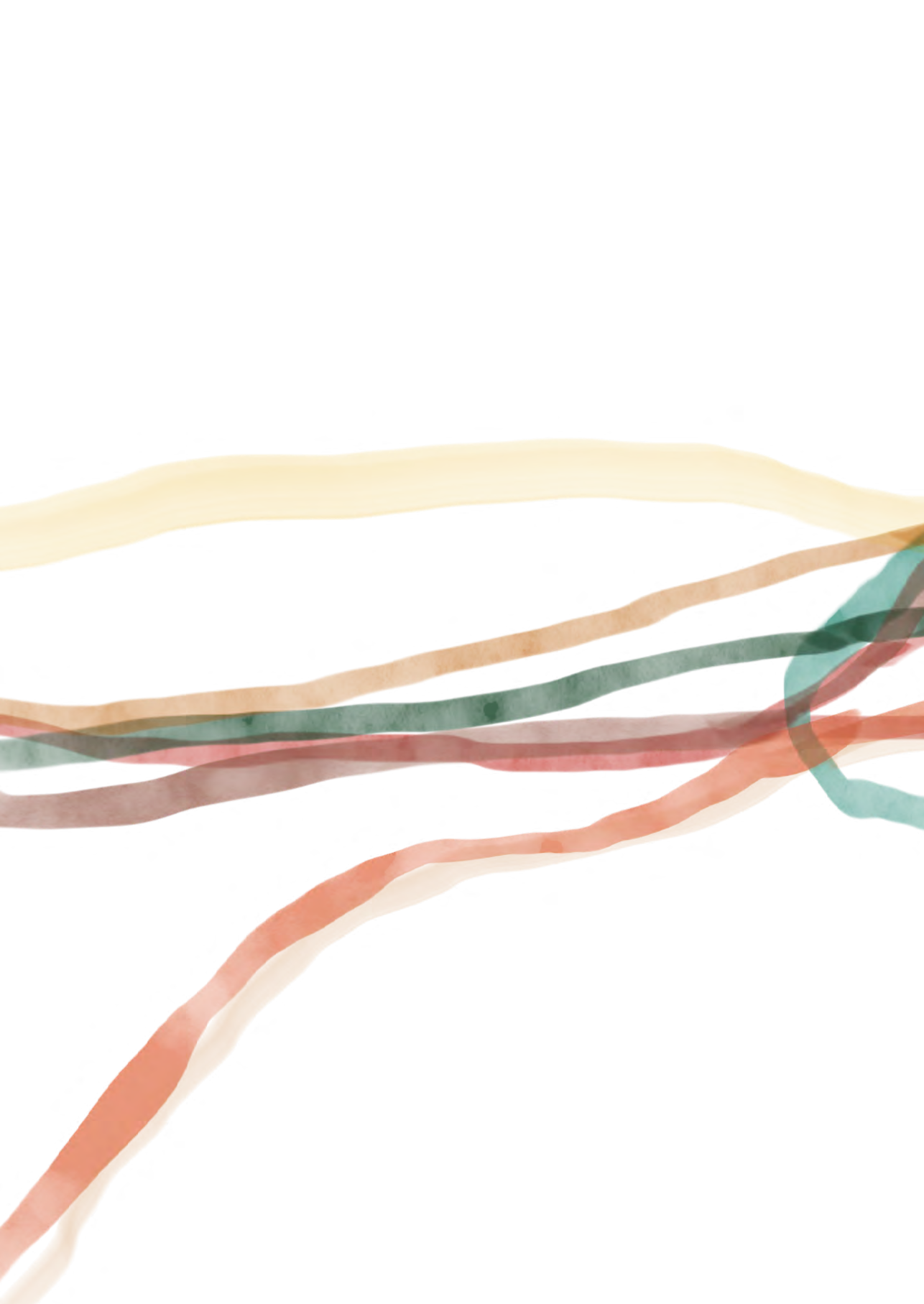
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PART I

Glocal Peace



A glocal concept of peace

Sabine Kurtenbach



During the Cold War, German Chancellor Willy Brandt uttered one of his most famous phrases: “Peace is not everything, but without peace, everything becomes nothing.” Countless national and international political debates and documents have proclaimed “peace” as a goal. This is not a novel phenomenon, as it has recurrently appeared everywhere throughout human history. What can be differentiated in debates about peace are the proposed definitions and concepts of peace and the answers to the question: how can peace be achieved and sustained?

1. What is peace?

The first step in the analysis of peace and the evaluation of peacebuilding processes must be to identify the notions and definitions on which the concept is based. As with other complex concepts, such as trust or legitimacy, it is important to understand the meaning attributed to the term itself. The prevailing lowest common denominator in all definitions and dominant in international politics is the minimalist conception, which reduces peace to the absence of war. However, different social groups and local communities often understand the concept in more concrete ways. For the elites in power, peace can materialize simply through the disarmament of the adversary. In contrast, for civil society groups, it is essential to tackle the causes and the dynamics of conflicts (for example, respect and recognition of cultural, economic, and social rights, equality, etc.). Specific elements may vary within and between societies.

The second step entails defining the main elements encompassed in each conception of peace. These can vary greatly according to historical and cultural contexts. A few decades ago, Norwegian researcher Johan Galtung (1981) called attention to the relevance of cultural and historical differences for understanding and building peace. For example, while the Western conception of *pax*, derived from the Roman tradition, focuses mainly on formal agreements and laws, in other contexts, harmony and well-being are equally important. American researcher Elise Boulding (2000) points out that differences in contexts and cultures also imply different approaches. Both authors, however, emphasize that peace is not an end-state, but an ongoing task, a process.¹

Irrespective of specific definitions or conceptions, peace is closely linked to various manifestations of conflict and violence. However, in themselves, conflicts are not usually the critical problem, as they are an intrinsic part of coexistence between people (Coser 1957; Dahrendorf 1958). Social changes and the development of societies transform social structures and alter the distribution of power between different actors. Arguably, conflicts generally arise when two or more divergent interests collide or when individuals or social groups oppose each other. Conflicts can be repressed, managed constructively and peacefully, or lead to different forms of violence. The outcome is contingent on a series of factors related to the context in which the conflict takes place, mobilization strategies, and access to resources. However, it is not usually a case of symmetric causality whereby the presence or absence of these factors determine directly whether peace prevails or a violent conflict breaks out. It is rather quite the contrary: various combinations of factors can have dissimilar effects in different contexts.

If the starting assumption is that peace is something more than the absence of war, which components, dimensions, or qualities should it display? Although in numerous debates and discourses it is asserted that peace must transcend the absence of war, the path to achieving peace remains a contested issue.

¹ For more information on this diversity, see “Palgrave Handbook of Global Approaches to Peace” (Kulnazarova and Popovski, 2019).

The crux of the matter is to conceive peace not as an end-state but as a process. Johan Galtung (1969) defined “peace as the absence of violence” and differentiated between “negative” and “positive” peace. Peace, therefore, implies ending or reducing violence in all possible forms, that is to say, direct physical violence as well as structural or cultural violence. However, simply ending violence and overcoming the factors that caused it will not suffice to produce peaceful societies in the structural domain or the social order. Some theorists devoted to studying the complexity of certain situations (Vallacher et al., 2010: 120) argue that peace can only be achieved with a “tandem” strategy that, besides reducing or eliminating negative factors, fosters and stimulates positive relationships. Ending –or achieving the absence of– war will be, at best, the first step towards peace. Concurrently, other forms of direct physical violence should be reduced and positive relations between people should be promoted. This means that peacebuilding is a complex and non-linear process.

Below we present a concept that allows us to understand and analyze different objectives of peacebuilding and their connection with various historical and cultural contexts. We identify three fundamental elements that are deemed a priority: physical integrity, fundamental individual and collective rights, and constructive transformation of conflicts. On one hand, all of them are general enough to be meaningful in different contexts and, on the other hand, they can be adapted to be functional in specific contexts to investigate empirically and analytically the type and quality of peace at a given time and place.

2. A glocal concept of peace

The struggle to restrain direct physical violence must be a fundamental objective of any society. Irrespective of controversies surrounding the appropriate methods to curb it, controlling violence is an indisputable imperative. Debates on the legitimacy of different forms of violence or their causes –for example, in the case of revolutions or uprisings– vali-

date this finding (Von Holdt, 2012). If peace is conceived as the antonym of violence (Arendt, 1969; Pearce, 2016), the starting point of any strategy aimed at a peace process must be the reduction of direct physical violence. This concept of peace does not focus solely on the phenomenon of war, a very specific form of collective and organized violence, but allows us to include other forms of direct physical violence. Recent publications on the issue of “new wars” (Kaldor, 2001; 2013) as well as those devoted to criminal or social violence (Barnes, 2017; Andreas and Greenhill, 2010) or the logic of violence in civil wars (Kalyvas, 2006) show the blurring of boundaries between different forms of violence. In this conception of peace, the absence of war is still a relevant criterion, although it includes other forms of direct physical violence insofar as they are of minimal social importance. The high homicide rates in certain Latin American countries are an example. 25 years after the end of the war in El Salvador, the country could hardly be described as a peaceful society. In a similar vein, it would be highly inappropriate to speak of peace in situations of unilateral use of violence by state forces—as in the case of ethnic cleansing in Myanmar—.

Bearing in mind the relevance of underlying conflicts and a wide spectrum of conceptions of violence, the great challenge on the road to peace is to transform these conflicts to ensure that they do not evolve into violence. For this purpose, formal and informal institutions play an important role, as they “embed” conflicts, that is, they establish norms and procedures to manage them peacefully (Koehler and Zürcher, 2003: 25; North, 1990). Although much has been said in recent years about the role of institutions in peacebuilding and the multiple challenges they entail (Ansorg, Haass, and Strasheim, 2013; Ansorg and Kurtenbach, 2017; Kurtenbach and Mehler, 2013), we still lack a universally valid answer to the question of which institutions can contribute to the peaceful resolution of conflicts and how and under what conditions they can fulfill this role.

When the magnitude of violence in the social domain becomes significant, existing institutions are verifiably unable or unwilling to resolve underlying conflicts. From the perspective of conflict transformation and its main representative, John Paul Lederach (2003: 14), institutions must “create or support constructive processes of change aimed at reducing violence [and] promoting justice”. Theoretically, institutions that

aim to transform conflicts can be specifically dedicated to the resolution or management of conflicts or they may be international organizations or formal or informal justice systems (for example, the courts or some traditional authorities). Nevertheless, their functioning and logic can be very diverse. In theory, for instance, formal democratic institutions should serve the common good and ensure citizen cooperation and respect for people's rights. On a different level, however, it is possible to find traditional institutions or authoritarian regimes whose main objective often is to achieve control over society or repress conflicts (Millar, 2017; Lewis, Heathershaw and Megoran, 2018).

Finally, the third element of our concept of peace is respect and promotion of individual and collective fundamental rights. While there are reasons to be critical of "liberal" peace and the debate on the universality of human rights is relevant, a comprehensive concept of peace requires normative benchmarks. Fundamental rights –both individual and, naturally, economic, social, and cultural– are a relevant frame of reference because, on one hand, everyone has the right to claim them and, on the other hand, the vast majority of governments have signed and ratified declarations on this subject (Sen, 2002). One of the main challenges of building peace is that these rights have only been partially implemented. Likewise, a Western bias in favor of individual rights indeed plays a considerable part in many violent situations. Nevertheless, despite reproaches from many quarters that human rights presuppose a normative framework consistent with the Western vision of the world, nothing is farther from reality: rather than being a Western project, many involved parties from the Global South contributed significantly to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Kathryn Sikkink (2014), for example, illustrated this in the case of Latin America.

Conceiving peace on the basis of these three elements has several advantages:

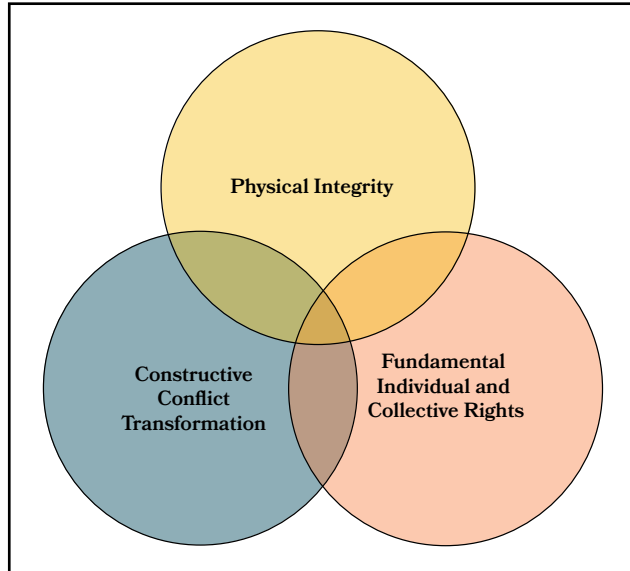
1. The concept recognizes peacebuilding as a non-linear and troublesome process, for which no sequence of predetermined steps can be established. It also takes into account the great diversity of ways to achieve peace in society, understood, as noted earlier, not as a condition but as a continuous process.

2. Unlike cases where the aim is to establish liberal peace, in this instance, respect and promotion of fundamental rights are not delegated to a specific political system (such as, for example, liberal democracy).
3. This conception is not centered around a specific social cleavage. Rather, it includes all types of possible disparities: gender, ethnic, religious minorities, among others. Because of this comprehensive approach, it can be adapted to a variety of contexts.
4. This approach is broader than the frequently elitist concepts of power-sharing or inclusion of civil society (Paffenholz, 2010; 2015). Also, it can contribute to discussions taking place at the UN (United Nations) on the participation of women (UNSCR 1325) or youth (UNSCR 2250).

The concept of peace offered here can be illustrated graphically by three overlapping circles (Figure 1). Peace should be stronger and more enduring in contexts where the three circles overlap. The three fundamental pillars can interact in positive and negative ways. Consequently, based on experiences in different contexts, it can be argued that if physical integrity is not respected (that is, if different forms of direct physical violence, whether explicit, political or “criminal” exist), the capacity for action of human rights defenders and respect for fundamental individual and collective rights are limited. Numerous cases in Latin America are sad examples of processes of conflict transformation that have led to violence.



Figure 1. Three Pillars of Peace



Source: Author's compilation.

Demanding and guaranteeing respect for human rights is an unsettling process because it challenges existing power relations and hierarchies. It is often presented as a zero-sum game, as when, for example, more rights are granted to women, youth, or minorities, and men, the elderly, or so-called majorities lose their supremacy or their privileges. This is precisely why it is necessary to transform conflicts constructively, making sure that changes are beneficial for the entire society. Thus, the constructive transformation of conflicts is arguably a measure to prevent violence and simultaneously a prerequisite for the respect of human rights.

3. Methodology and indicators

A study like this, which focuses on experiences at different levels and a variety of communities, requires a methodology and indicators to analyze and “measure” peace in specific contexts. The analysis will be carried out in three steps:

1. Analyze the main conflicts.
2. Study the conception or the predominant representations of peace; and
3. Examine the situation and the evolution of the three pillars of peace.

The conflict analysis identifies the most important collective conflicts, their main causes, and the changes they have undergone, whether in a process of social change, due to an armed conflict, the end of the armed conflict, or other forms of violence. Forms of social cohesion and pre-existing identities in a specific context usually influence the management of these conflicts. Ultimately, it is necessary to analyze the relevant actors, the power relations, and the interests at stake.

Once it is clear what the conflict is about, the conceptions of “peace” of local, national, and international actors must be identified.

Pamina Firchow and Roger Mac Ginty’s Everyday Peace Indicators project has succeeded in creating locally an interesting participatory methodology based on a study of 12 cases in sub-Saharan Africa. The authors asked community members to reflect on the conditions they deemed necessary for peace and the indicators that could describe the changes. In the 12 pilot communities, peace was mainly related to individual security and social cohesion or membership in a group (Firchow and Mac Ginty, 2017; Mac Ginty and Firchow, 2016; Mac Ginty, 2013).² In the local interviews in Colombia, we asked participants in the focus groups about their understanding of the concept of peace, the institutions and actors working for it, and the institutions they turn to in a conflict situation.

At the national level, documents or discourses can be analyzed. These may include government declarations, development plans, electoral programs, the position of the business sector, unions, civil society, the Church, or traditional authorities, to mention a few examples. For this

² For more information on the coding of the different categories, see <https://everydaypeaceindicators.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Codebook-%E2%80%93EPI-Categories-copy.pdf>.

study, we compared the discourse of the governments of Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018) and Iván Duque (2018-) as well as of FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) to identify commonalities and differences in their conceptions of peace.

At the international level, programs and projects that explicitly or implicitly address the issue of peace are analyzed. In the Colombian case, the reports of the Verification Mission provide interesting criteria in this regard.³

Subsequently, a first assessment allows systematizing and documenting similarities and differences between the various conceptions and levels. The differences identified can point out latent or manifest conflicts or problems in a peace process.

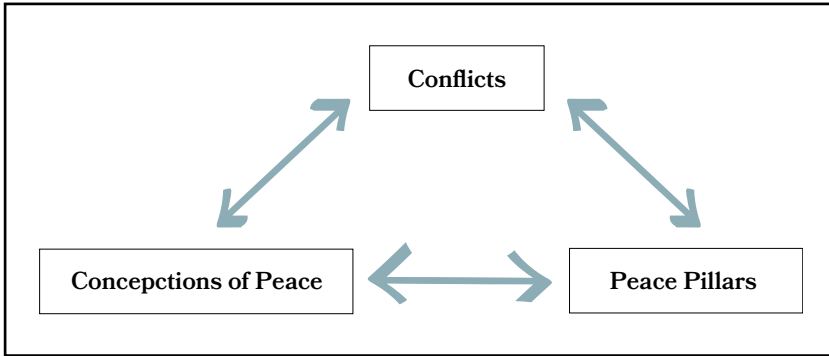
In the third step of the analysis, it is possible to obtain qualitative and quantitative indicators of the three pillars of the concept of peace. Once the “status” of each pillar has been established, a baseline will be available to present the challenges and possibilities of a peace process. Likewise, it will be possible to draw parallels within and between different contexts.

The analysis of specific contexts, therefore, is a three-part process: conflict analysis, conceptions of peace, and pillars of peace (Figure 2). The three components must interact to create appropriate peacebuilding strategies.

³ The United Nations Verification Mission verifies the political, economic, and social reintegration of FARC-EP members and the security guarantees for ex-combatants, their families, and the communities. The Mission is in charge of verifying two points of the Peace Agreement: 1) FARC-EP's reincorporation into civilian life --economically, socially, and politically, and 2) Security guarantees and the fight against criminal organizations and activities.



Figure 2. Elements of peacebuilding



Source: Author's compilation.

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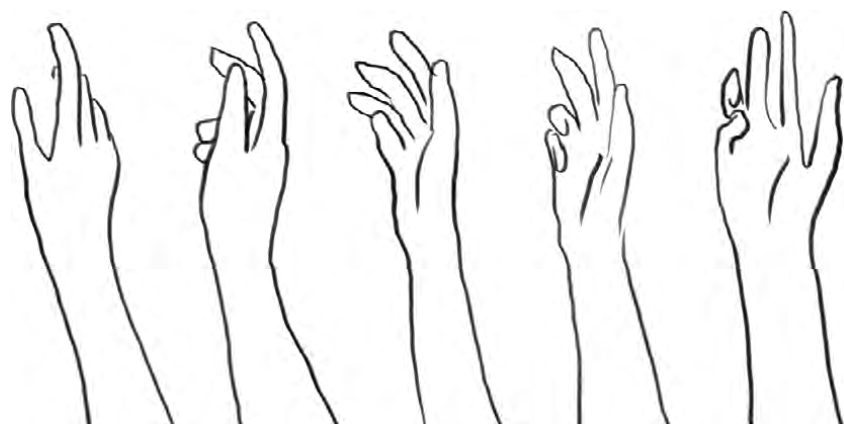
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National Peace

Sabine Kurtenbach Y Pau Palop-García



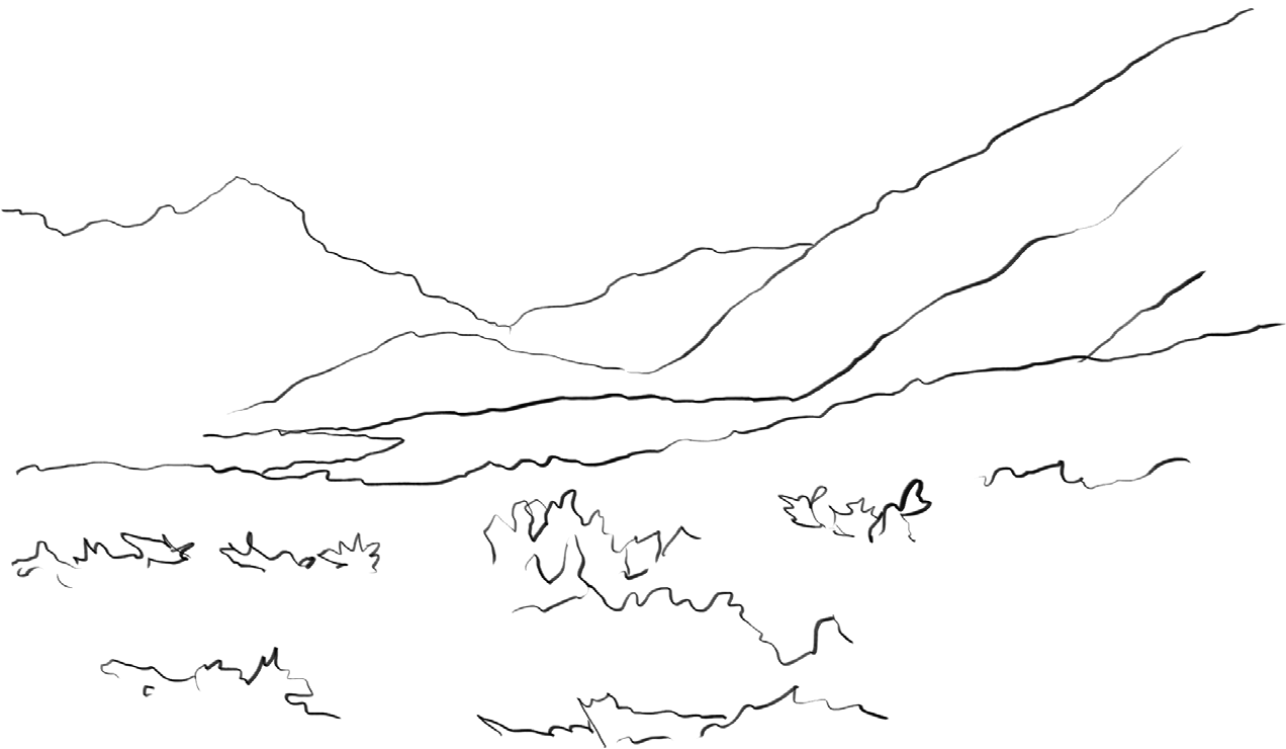
In this chapter, we will identify the central features of the concept of glocal peace (see Chapter 2) at the national level. For this purpose, we will identify the most important conflicts and the three pillars of peace (physical integrity, human rights, institutions for constructive conflict transformation) and will present the results of a representative survey on conceptions of peace conducted within this project. This will allow us to analyze in the following chapters experiences in different territories of the country and a variety of relevant actors.

1. Conflicts in Colombia

Like other societies, Colombia is not free of political, social, and economic conflicts. Several historic conflicts, such as the inclusion of the Afro-descendant population and the rights of Indigenous communities, are still unresolved. Colombia is a rich country, with a traditionally inequitable distribution of abundant natural resources and raw materials. Despite high levels of urbanization, the country's main inequalities are between urban and rural areas and between the rich upper class and particularly marginalized ethnic minorities. Inequitable access to and possession of land, as well as a lack of prospects for a dignified life in rural areas, are the main structural causes of inequality (LeGrand, 1992; González González, 2014). In this context, the FARC-EP (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army), the still-active guerrilla organization ELN (National Liberation Army), and the so-called criminal gangs (Bacrim) have operated and continue to operate mainly in rural areas. Two of the Peace Agreement's thematic chapters address these historic conflicts: the agrarian conflict and, closely related, the

conflict around illicit crops. The other historic element –the possibilities for political participation– was significantly transformed as a result of political decentralization in the mid-1980s and the 1991 Political Constitution.

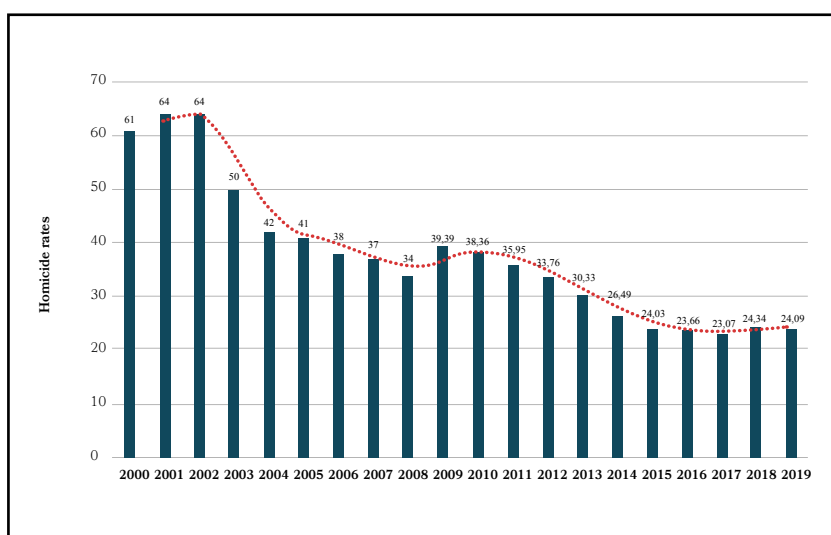
The Peace Agreement and its implementation have partially generated profound processes of transformation, giving rise to new conflicts and exacerbating existing ones. The promotion of small-scale agriculture and FARC's political participation are examples of changes that have polarized the country. Opponents of the process and these changes mobilized successfully in the 2016 plebiscite and the 2018 presidential elections. On the other hand, a counterpoint has been the success of reform-oriented coalitions in the regional and local elections of October 2019.



2. The three pillars of peace

Irrespective of the data source (figure 3), the scale of physical violence undoubtedly fell during the last decade. At the same time, violence has not been uniformly reduced in the national territory, as levels vary between departments and regions.

Figure 3. Colombia: National homicide rate per 100.000 inhabitants, 2000-2019



Source: Instituto Nacional de Medicina Legal y Ciencias Forenses (2008: 2, 6; 2018: 75, 2019: 2)

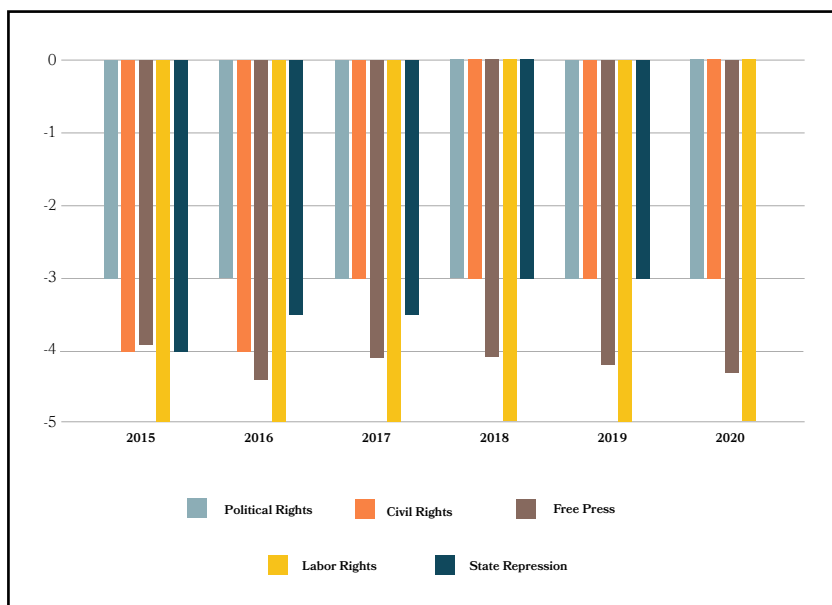
While homicide rates (violent deaths per 100,000 inhabitants) in Boyacá are well below the national average (6.42 in 2019), departments like Cauca and Valle del Cauca continue to have much higher rates: 43.02 and 47.37 in 2019, respectively. A similar situation exists in departments where some municipalities have little homicidal violence while others exhibit high homicide rates.

The most alarming physical violence is the murder of social leaders and human rights defenders. This type of political violence did not come to a halt with the end of the war and appears to have increased in some parts of the country. Once again, the department of Cauca has the highest level of violence. According to Indepaz (2020), in the first six months of 2020 (January 1 to July 5), 159 leaders, six of their relatives, and 25 signatories of the Peace Agreement were killed. Consequently, physical integrity remains a critical issue, despite the drop in armed confrontations and homicides.

Colombia has signed most international human rights conventions, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) and the Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (1980). The 1991 Constitution not only confirms that “The right to life is inviolable” (article 11), but also states in article 22 that “Peace is a right and a duty of mandatory compliance.” At the same time, several articles concern individual (11 to 41), social, economic, cultural (42 to 77), and collective and environmental (78 to 82) human rights. Despite the existence of this legal framework, the high level of victimization of human rights defenders reveals a large gap between theory and practice. Serious problems exist concerning the guarantee and realization of these rights. Based on global indexes,¹ Figure 4 shows where the biggest problems lie. While a value of 1 means that a right is fully guaranteed, a value of 5 means that it is not. The figure shows that Colombia occupies an intermediate place concerning political and civil rights. Workers’ rights are still an unresolved challenge. Annual reports of the International Confederation of Unions place Colombia on the list of the five to 10 countries with the worst conditions for workers. The changes since the signing of the Peace Agreement mainly concern civil rights and the reduction of state repression.

¹ Civil and political rights: Freedom House, www.freedomhouse.org; Freedom of the Press: World Press Freedom www.rsf.org; labor rights: International Confederation of Unions, <https://www.ituc-csi.org>; state repression: Political Terror Scale, www.politicalterror scale.org.

Figure 4. Human rights realization deficit, 2015-2019



Sources: Civil and Political Rights: Freedom House: www.freedomhouse.org; Freedom of the press: Reporters Without Borders: www.rsf.org; Labor rights: International Trade Union Confederation: <https://www.ituc-csi.org>; State repression: Political Terror Scale: www.politicalterrorsscale.org

The functioning of the rule of law and national institutions like the judicial system is pivotal in the guarantee and fulfillment of human rights. As indicated by Latinobarómetro surveys (2019), Colombians generally distrust institutions like the government or the Judiciary (only between 20% and 25% claim to have high or moderate levels of trust). At the same time, the Colombian state's institutional presence in parts of the territory is flimsy at best. However, other institutions, such as Jun-



tas de Acción Comunal (Community Action Boards) or Indigenous or Afro-descendant organizations, play an important role in the non-violent transformation of conflicts.²

3. Notions of peace – A national survey

3.1 Description of the Study

This section purports to analyze Colombians' understanding of peace. To this aim, Cifras y Conceptos conducted a nationally representative survey specifically designed to study their conceptions of peace. The survey was applied to men and women over 18 years of age, of all socioeconomic levels, residing in urban and rural municipalities throughout the Colombian territory. The fieldwork was carried out between October 21 and November 11, 2019, through a probabilistic, multiethnic, stratified sampling process of conglomerates of areas with a random selection of the observation unit. The surveys were conducted in person in the homes of the respondents. The final sample size consisted of 1,733 surveys, of which 1,378 were applied in urban municipalities and 355 in rural municipalities. The sample was designed based on the 2005 National Population and Housing Census, including population projections for 2019. The estimated margin of error is 2.6% with a reliability of 95%, for observed frequencies of at least 50%. The survey questionnaire contains 48 questions and was designed specifically to study the respondents' conceptualization of peace. The main block in-

² A Community Action Board (JAC) is a non-profit, solidarity-based, civic, social, and community organization of social management, with legal status and its own patrimony, voluntarily integrated by the residents of a place who combine efforts and resources to seek comprehensive, viable, and sustainable development based on the exercise of participatory democracy. The JACs play an important role in the political-social sphere of communities, serving as forums for participation and the articulation of the problems that affect them (Translator's note).

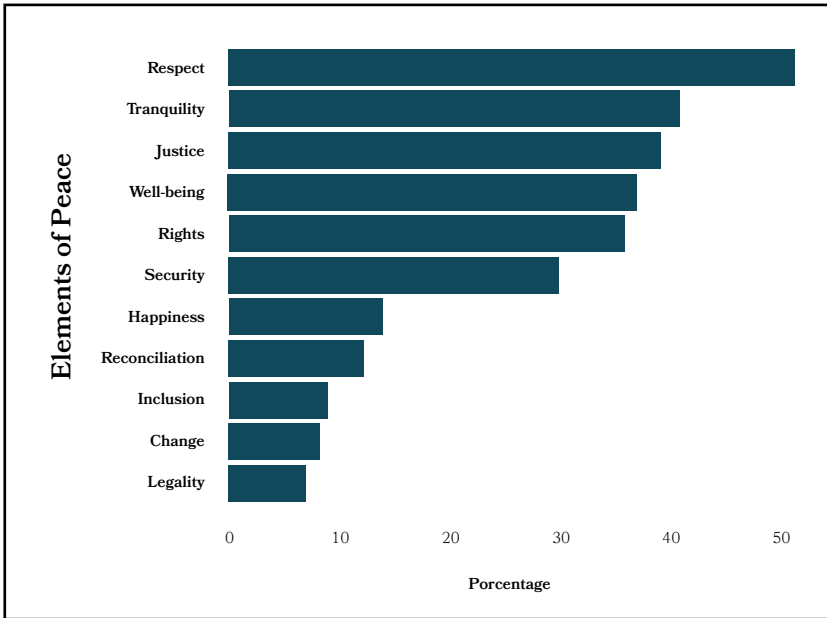
cludes open and closed questions that seek to capture the respondents' understanding of peace. Additionally, the study includes questions about knowledge and assessment of different institutions, as well as the framework of the Peace Agreement. Lastly, the survey includes socio-demographic questions, questions on political ideology, and questions that indicate whether the respondent has been a direct victim of armed conflict or violence.

3.2. The three most important elements of peace

Figure 5 shows the most important elements of peace according to the respondents. The bars represent the percentage of respondents who identified each attribute as one of the three most important elements of peace. To answer this question, respondents were provided with a card listing possible attributes and then asked to choose the three they deemed to be most important.

As shown in Figure 5, there is a broad consensus among those surveyed: 51.1% chose respect as one of the key elements of peace. Other attributes, such as tranquility (chosen by 41% of respondents), justice (identified by 39.3%), well-being (indicated by 37.2%), rights (mentioned by 36.2%), or personal safety (highlighted by 30.1%) were identified as important for peace. In contrast, the elements least often identified with peace were happiness (only indicated by 14% of respondents), reconciliation (identified by 12.4%), inclusion (9%), change (8.2%), and legality (7%).



Figure 5. The most important elements of peace

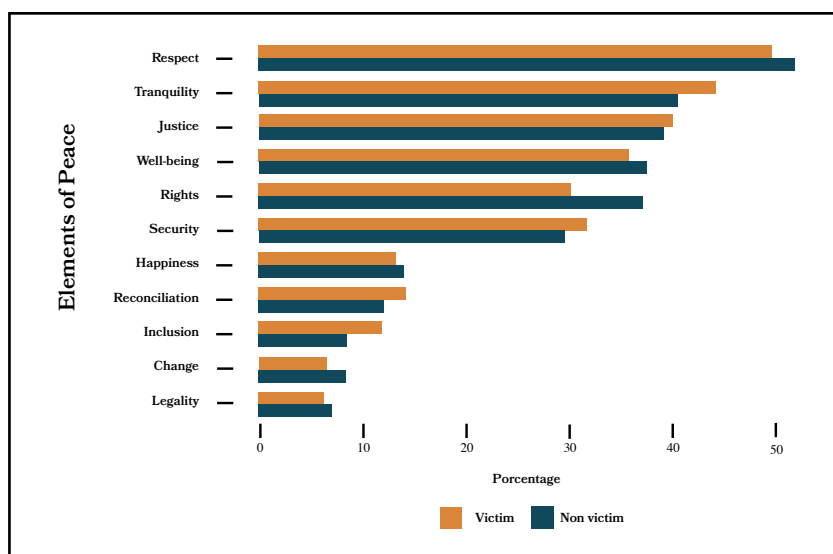
Source: Encuesta de Percepción de Paz en Colombia (Survey of perception of peace in Colombia). Based on the question: “In your opinion, what are the three MOST important elements of peace?” Options: Personal security, tranquility, respect, participation, justice, well-being, rights, inclusion, happiness, legality, reconciliation, change, education, and health. For the analysis in this chapter, options well-being, education, and health were included in well-being; and options rights and participation were included in rights. Data weighted to the socio-demographic structure of the municipality. Number of valid observations: 1,733.

Figure 6 shows the differences in the conception of peace between people who are part of the Single Registry of Victims (Registro Único de Víctimas, RUV) and those who are not.³ As seen in the figure, there are no great differences between victims and non-victims. For example,

³ The Single Registry of Victims was created by Law 1448, commonly known as the Victims Law, and is conceived as the administrative tool for the registration of victims of the armed conflict, based on the definition of victim included in article 3 of said law. According to official data provided by the Victims Unit, approximately 9.000.000 people recognized as victims are currently in the Registry.

both groups identified respect as the most important element: 51.8% of non-victims, and 49.7% of victims. The only differences concern the importance attributed to tranquility and rights: 44.3% of the victims indicated tranquility as a key element of peace compared to 40.5% of non-victims; and 30.2% of victims identified rights as an important element of peace, compared to 37.1% of non-victims.

Figure 6. The most important elements of peace. Difference between victims and nonvictims of the armed conflict



Source: Encuesta de Percepción de Paz en Colombia (Survey of perception of peace in Colombia). Based on the question: “In your opinion, what are the three MOST important components of peace?” Options: personal security, tranquility, respect, participation, justice, well-being, rights, inclusion, happiness, legality, reconciliation, change, education, and health. For the analysis presented in this chapter, options well-being, education, and health were included in well-being; and options rights and participation were included in rights. Question for categorizing as victims and non-victims: “Are you part of the national registry of victims of the armed conflict?” Options: yes, no, don’t know, don’t answer. Data weighted to the socio-demographic structure of the municipality. Number of valid observations: 1,733.

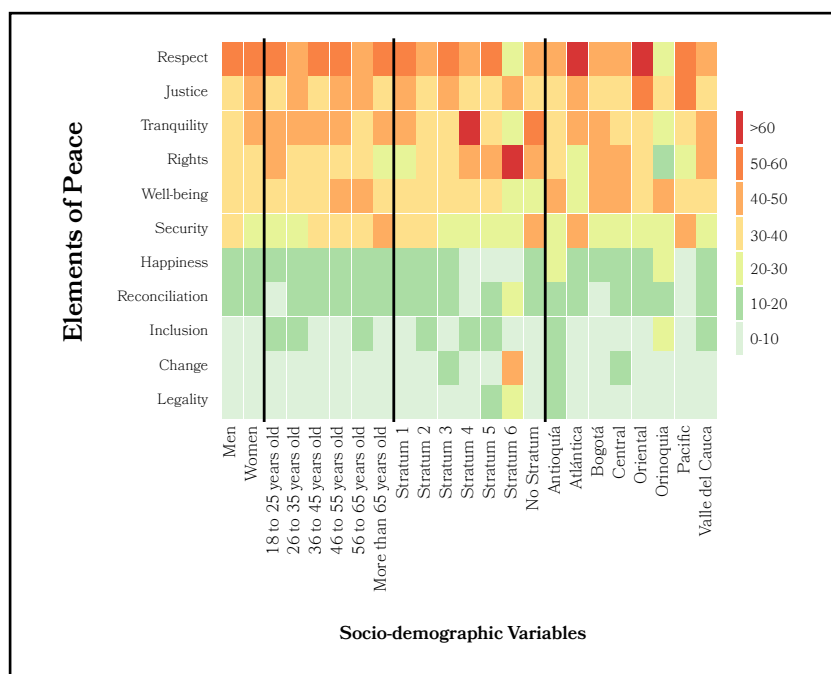
Figure 7 shows the differences between socio-demographic groups (gender, age, social stratum, and region) in terms of the attributes identified as the most important for the concept of peace. The elements of peace are located on the ordinate axis and the colors represent the percentage of respondents in each group who indicated each attribute as an essential element of peace. The lowest percentages (from 0% to 30%) are represented by grey tones and the highest (from 30% to more than 60%) by orange and red tones. The figure does not show significant discrepancies regarding differences by sex. Men and women identified respect as the main attribute of peace. However, women tend to point more often to justice and tranquility as elements of peace and less frequently to personal security.

Interesting differences can be identified between age groups. For example, people under 25 years of age most frequently pointed to rights as a key element of peace. Respect is most relevant for people in the age range between 18 and 25 and between 36 and 55 years. Personal safety, along with respect, is the most important attribute for people over 65 years of age.

The differences are wider between social strata. For example, people in stratum 1 tend to prioritize respect, justice, tranquility, well-being, and security over rights. People belonging to stratum 4 prioritized tranquility, respect, and rights over justice, well-being, or security. The most deviant results from the sample mean are found in stratum 5, whose respondents prioritize rights and justice over respect, tranquility, well-being, or security.

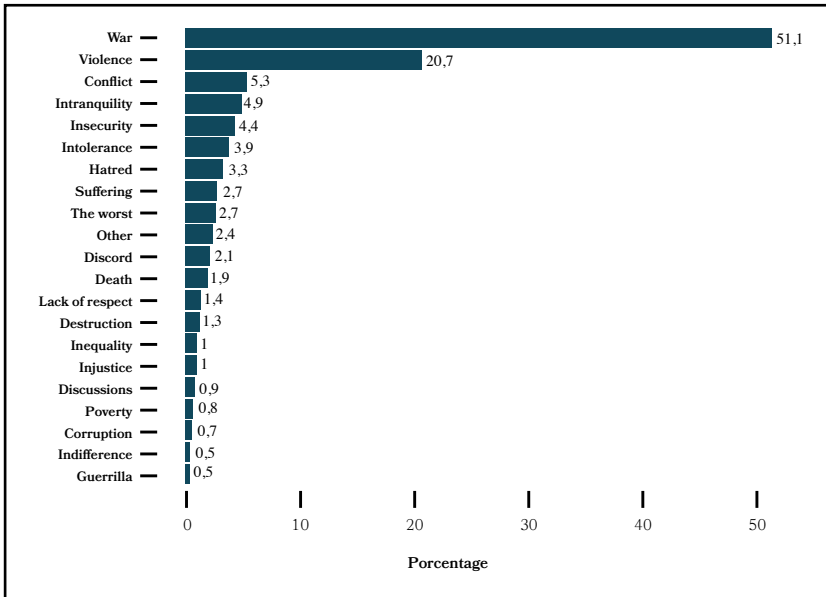
Finally, regions also exhibit interesting differences. Residents in the department of Antioquia prioritized respect and well-being over justice, tranquility, and personal safety; the inhabitants of the Atlantic region prioritized respect, justice, and tranquility over rights and well-being; residents in Bogotá and the Central region give similar weight to respect, tranquility, rights, and well-being; respondents from the Pacific region identified respect and justice as the two most important elements, and residents of the Orinoquia gave priority to well-being over all other attributes.

Figure 7. The most important elements of peace (socio-demographic differences)



Source: Encuesta de percepción de paz en Colombia (Survey of perception of peace in Colombia). Based on the question: “In your opinion, what are the three MOST important components of peace?” Options: personal security, tranquility, respect, participation, justice, well-being, rights, inclusion, happiness, legality, reconciliation, change, education, and health. For the analysis presented in this chapter, options well-being, education, and health were included in well-being; and options rights and participation were included in rights. Data weighted to the socio-demographic structure of the municipality. Number of valid observations: 1,733.

Figure 8 shows the Colombians’ definition of the opposite of peace. To answer this question, respondents had to state the first thing that came to mind when thinking about the opposite of peace. The data in the figure are based on a posteriori coding of the answers provided to the open question. The attributes most frequently mentioned by respondents were war (by 51.1% of the sample) and violence (by 20.7%). Other attributes, such as conflict, turmoil, insecurity, and intolerance were mentioned by less than 10% of the sample.

Figure 8. Definition of “the opposite of peace”

Source: Encuesta de percepción de paz en Colombia (Survey of perception of peace in Colombia). Based on the question: “Complete the following sentence with the first thing that comes to mind: The opposite of peace is ...”. Open question; the answers were coded a posteriori and arranged into the following categories: war, violence, conflict, turmoil, insecurity, intolerance, hatred, suffering, the worst, other, discord, death, lack of respect, destruction, inequality, injustice, discussions, poverty, corruption, indifference, and guerrilla. Each answer can be arranged into up to three categories. Data weighted to the socio-demographic structure of the municipality. Number of valid observations: 1,486.

Table 1 shows the relation between attributes frequently mentioned as essential for the concept of peace (respect, tranquility, justice, well-being, rights, and personal security) and the two attributes most mentioned by respondents as the opposite of peace: war and violence. The table confirms the trend evidenced by Figure 8: irrespective of the conception of peace, respondents tend to identify war more often than violence as the opposite of peace. For example, 26.1% of those surveyed who identified peace with respect identified war as the opposite of peace, while only 12.2% of this group identified violence as its opposite. The same occurs with those surveyed who related peace to justice: 19.3% of those who mentioned this attribute of peace identified war as the opposite of

peace, while only 9.2% identified violence as its opposite.

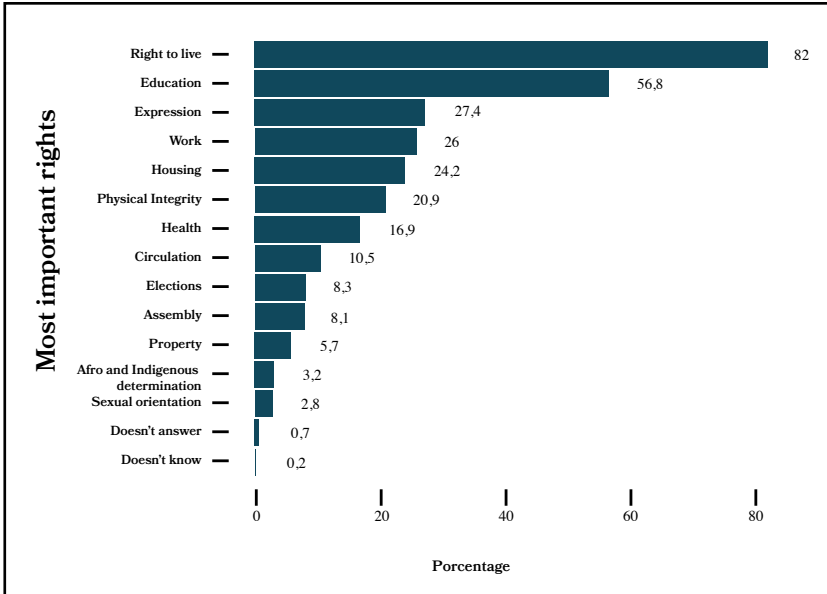
Table 1. The relation between the conception of peace and the opposite of peace

Peace is:	The opposite of peace is...	
	War	Violence
Respect	26,1%	12,2%
Tranquility	21,7%	10,0%
Justice	19,3%	9,2%
Well-being	17,8%	7,4%
Rights	18,1%	7,8%
Security	16,0%	6,3%
N		1.486

Source: Encuesta de percepción de paz en Colombia (Survey of perception of peace in Colombia). Based on the questions: “Complete the following sentence with the first thing that comes to mind: The opposite of peace is ...”, and “in your opinion, what are the three most important elements of peace? Data weighted to the socio-demographic structure of the municipality. Number of valid observations: 1,486.

3.3 The most important rights

Figure 9 shows the respondents’ opinions about the three most important rights. To answer this question, respondents were asked to choose the three most important rights from a previously provided card containing multiple options. As shown in the figure, the three rights considered most important were the right to life (chosen by 82% of those surveyed), the right to education (chosen by 56.8%), and the right to freedom of expression (27.4%). In contrast, the rights least frequently mentioned by those surveyed were the right to sexual orientation (2.8%), the right to self-determination of Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities (3.2%), the right to property (5.7%), the right to free assembly (8.1%), and the right to participate in elections (8.3%).

Figure 9. The three most important rights

Source: Encuesta de percepción de Paz en Colombia (Survey of perception of peace in Colombia). Based on the question: “In this card, you will find a list of rights. Choose the three rights you consider MOST important and arrange them by order of significance”. Options: right to life, right to physical integrity, right to freedom of circulation, right to freedom of expression, right to peaceful assembly, right to participate in elections, right to education, right to health, right to housing, right to property, right to free determination of Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities, right to sexual orientation, don’t know, don’t respond. Data weighted to the socio-demographic structure of the municipality. Number of valid observations: 1,733.

The data show that most Colombians want violence to end and to lead lives free of turmoil. Determining the relation between peace and justice is more complex, as it would require asking the respondents’ conception of justice and whether it is related to the debate on the atrocities of war and transitional justice, a highly polarized issue, or to notions of justice concerning everyday life and the socio-economic and political context. The fact that there is little difference between victims and non-victims concerning the importance of justice could point to the second possibility.

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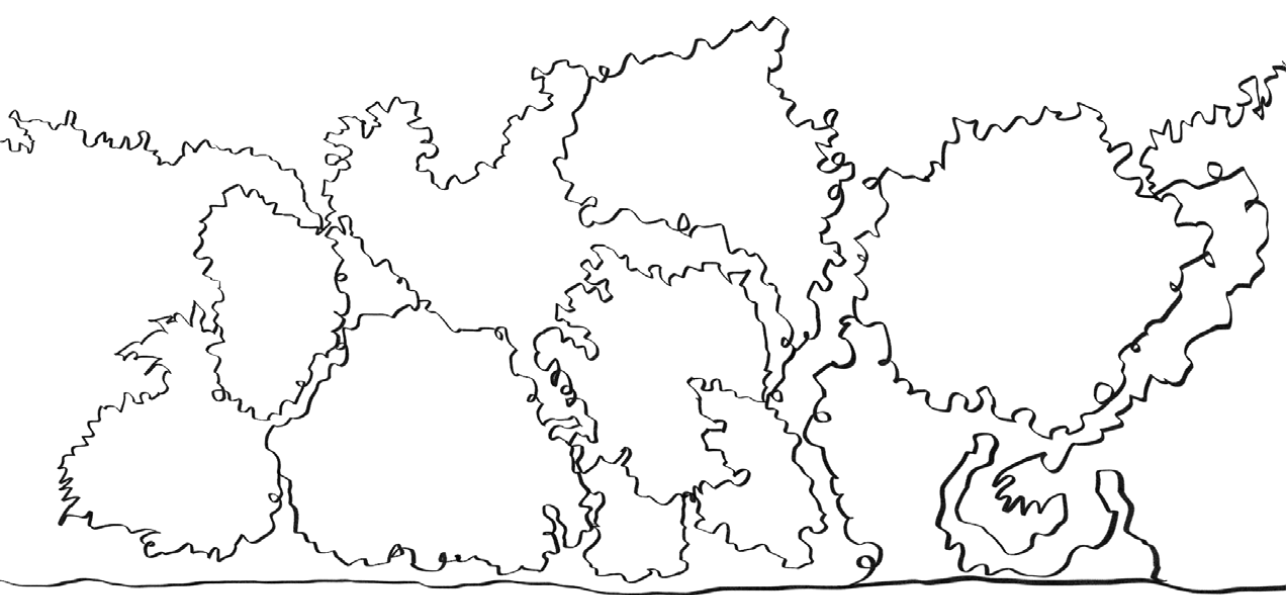
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March against kidnapping and violence, with the slogan "Alive, Free, and In Peace." Medellín, 1999. Photo: Natalia Botero.



Local diversity and case studies

Sabine Kurtenbach y Andrés Rodas Vélez

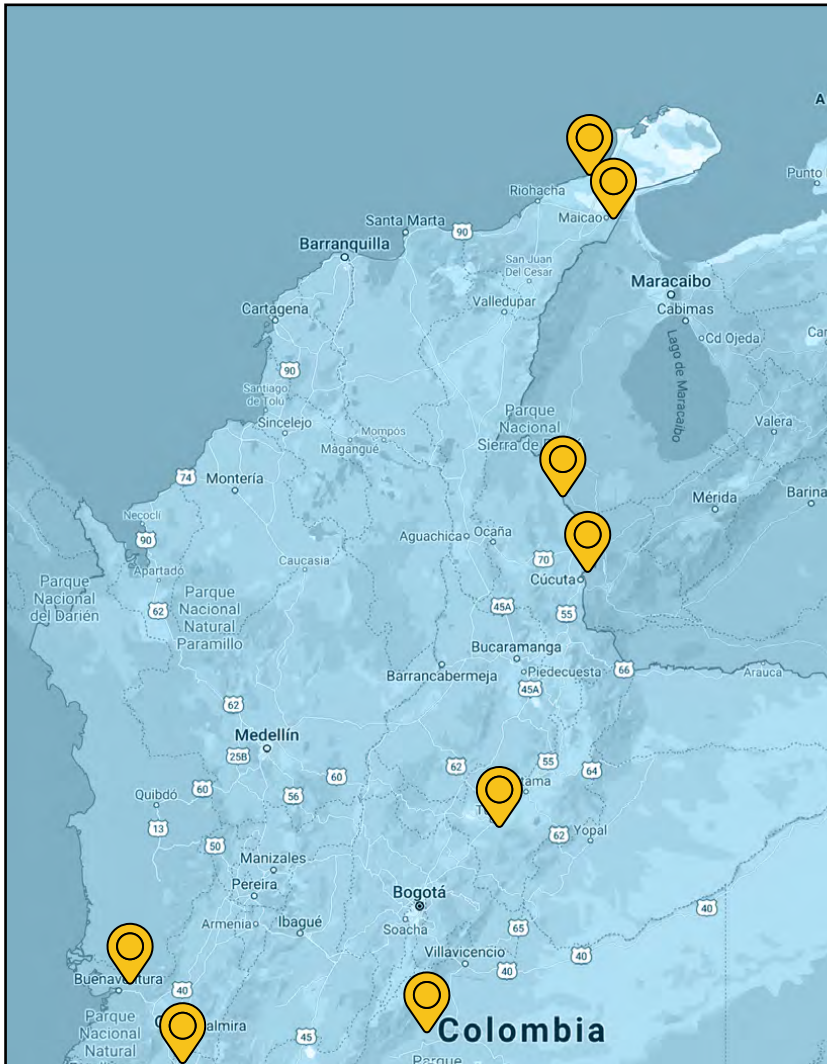


Colombia is a country of regions as well as great variation and local diversity in terms of conflict, levels of violence, human rights guarantees, and presence of formal and informal institutions for the constructive transformation of conflicts. Different dynamics of armed conflict throughout the national territory testify to its complexity. These complexity and variety were the focus for the selection of the case studies. To ensure that such diversity is represented, the following criteria guided the selection of cases for the qualitative analysis of glocal peace (Chapter 2) presented in this book:

1. Level of violence during the war, structure, and presence of armed actors.
2. Causes and dynamics of conflicts: political, social, economic, and ethnic.
3. Local conflict transformation institutions: presence of the central state, presence of peace initiatives.

The selection was based on these criteria and their relevance for a representative analysis. Map 1 offers a territorial image of the local contexts studied: Buenaventura (Valle del Cauca), Cúcuta (Norte de Santander), Maicao and Manaure (La Guajira), Mesetas (Meta), Ramiriquí (Boyacá), Santander de Quilichao (Cauca), and Tibú (Norte de Santander).

Map 1. Case studies for the analysis of the concept of glocal peace in Colombia



Source: Author's compilation

The great variety of historical and conflictive realities in the selected cases enables us to study communities affected in different ways by the armed conflict. In the following section, we synthesize and systematize the diversity found in the eight local studies regarding the conflicts in these areas, the three pillars of peace (Chapter 2), and the notions of peace analyzed during the studies and focus groups from a comparative perspective.

1. Variety of conflicts and violence

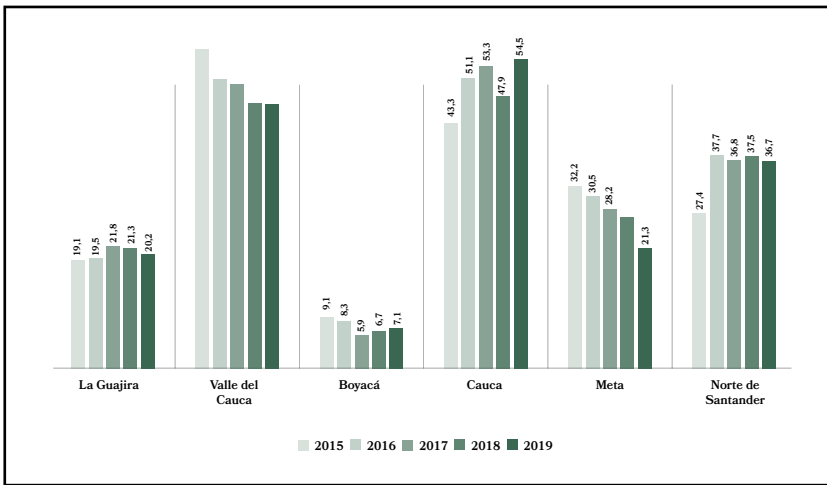
Following the signing of the Peace Agreement, conflict has been mainly related to the process of reconfiguration of political, economic, and social forces and non-demobilized armed actors in different parts of the territory: at the national level, actions by identified armed actors increased 65% during the fourth year since the signing of the Peace Agreement (2020), and the dynamics of the conflict changed from a national war to decentralization of actors and multiple local conflicts (Fundación Ideas para la Paz, FIP, 2020).

In general terms, at least three patterns of conflict can be observed:

- Conflicts for territorial control between non-state armed groups in areas from which the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (Farc-EP) withdrew. In almost every case, these are territories with the presence of illicit or border economies.
- Conflicts around extractive projects or the globalized economy faced with mobilization and resistance by the local population, especially Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities.
- Conflicts related to social and political change regarding the recognition of full citizenship of hitherto marginalized groups, such as the LGBTI population, women, Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities, and FARC-EP ex-combatants. These groups are fighting for recognition and representation and the prospect of a dignified life.

Most of these local contexts exhibit different features of conflict and diverse levels of violence (Figure 10). There are also variations in the presence or absence of national institutions for conflict transformation such as Justice Houses [Casas de Justicia], the Attorney General's Office, or Civic Coexistence Centers.

Figure 10. Homicide rates in analyzed departments, 2015-2019



Source: Based on reports from the National Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences, 2008-2019; National Police; Homicide Monitor.

Two observations stand out from these data: First, violence in Boyacá is much lower than in other departments, although the trend between 2015 and 2017 is reversing and levels of violence have increased. Second, violence in Cauca increased significantly. Except for Boyacá, during the first four months of 2020, in the context of early implementation of restrictive measures to confront the Covid-19 pandemic, fighting between armed groups and violence increased significantly in every department of the pilot study (Llorente, 2020: 6).

In most cases, the levels of general violence visualized in Table 1 do not show significant progress in a positive direction. Explanations for these

differences can be drawn from the interviews and focus groups carried out in the framework of our study.

2. Local experiences: conflicts and peace

In Ramiriquí (Boyacá, Map 2), a low-income agricultural municipality, the impact of the armed conflict was limited (in 2001 and 2002) and, compared to other regions, claimed a lower number of victims. Individual rights are guaranteed, but access to collective rights is challenging, especially regarding gender violence and stigmatization of the LGBTI community. Violence in recent years has taken place mainly in the family setting, against women and children. Current conflicts are primarily environment-related, due to gas and oil pipelines in the area, which, according to several interviewees, create water supply problems and fear among the inhabitants in the vicinity because of the risk of explosion.

The central State only arrived in Ramiriquí in 2005. However, regarding conflict resolution, people seem to trust institutions like the Police, the Family Commisariat, the Mayor's Office, and the Ombudsman's Office. Nevertheless, this trust is limited and relative, given that women, youth, and the LGBTI community do not feel that their problems are acknowledged. In this context the concept of peace is very individual:

(...) The fundamental elements for peace in this municipality refer to individual and family values for the peaceful resolution of conflicts rather than to structural transformations or regional and national initiatives. For them, peace is a permanent process that must be consolidated in everyday actions, relationships with neighbors, family, and friends (Ramiriquí Case Study Report for this project, p. 10-11).

Unlike Ramiriquí, Mesetas (department of Meta, Map 3) has experienced many cycles of violence and can be considered a microcosm of the war between the State and the FARC-EP. Coca cultivation has played an important economic role. Meta is part of FARC-EP's historic zone,

and Liberal guerrillas were present in the 1950s. During the peace process with the government of Belisario Betancur (1982-1986), murders of members of the Patriotic Union (UP), a party founded by demobilized FARC-EP ex-combatants, were committed in its territory. During these years, paramilitary groups also arrived in the area, although not directly to Mesetas, and violence increased significantly. The Mapiripán massacre (1997), in which close to 30 civilians died, is an example. Between 1998 and 2001 it was part of the so-called demilitarized zone. Until then, there was no presence of the central government and FARC-EP took its place and assumed control. With the government of Álvaro Uribe (2002-2010) the State arrived with the armed forces.

Since the signing of the Peace Agreement, the conflict has mutated. Most people (especially those who lived through the phase of generalized violence) perceive a change of context. The Community Action Boards play an important role in connecting the rural and urban areas, a task they have performed well but that now needs a generational change and a new thrust to transform conflicts. At the same time, conflicts previously overshadowed by the saliency of the armed conflict in political discourse and the realities of everyday life of communities became more visible. Such was the case of environmental conflicts as well as gender and intra-family violence. Although current violence is mainly related to armed groups and FARC-EP dissidents, it is uncertain whether they are solely responsible. The conception of peace reflects the challenges of this fragile context:

For the most part, it can be said that it is a concept that can be understood and developed at various levels; either from the most personal, almost spiritual level, to that of the highest political decision-making bodies (...).

First of all, one can speak of a personal level of peace. Many actors, including youth, women leaders, public officials, and ex-combatants recognize peace as a state of spiritual-personal tranquility configured by the subject in his individuality to be able to externalize that same peace once it is placed on a social plane (...).

On the other hand, a social and relational level identified in the notions of peace in Mesetas is recognized. This includes all the

interpersonal values that appear to be vital to building collective peace: among them, they mention respect for the other, solidarity, forgiveness, reconciliation, dialogue, understanding, responsibility, and humility (especially in the case of some ex-combatants), among others. These elements confirm a generalized idea that peace is related to the search for healthy coexistence and well-being with others (Mesetas Report).

Let us now look at the conception of peace in other local contexts, starting with Cúcuta and Tibú, both in Norte de Santander, a department with apparently little change in the level of violence in recent years.

Because of its location on the border with Venezuela, conflicts on both sides of the border overlap in Cúcuta (Map 4). As in Mesetas, the armed conflict and the illicit economy have been and continue to be present; however, being an urban center, the illegal economy includes smuggling networks, speculation with money laundering, high levels of corruption of public officials, and the presence of mafia networks, among others. At the same time, the relationship between Cúcuta and the Catatumbo region urbanized violence (armed conflict, paramilitaries, and neo-paramilitaries). The lack of legal life opportunities, especially for youth, facilitates recruitment by illegal armed actors. In sum, the result is a high level of conflict for territorial control between different armed actors. Since at least 2015, the Venezuelan crisis worsened the situation in Cúcuta.

The case of Cúcuta shows a wide range of notions of peace:

(...) a continuum of conceptions from the most individual at one end to the most public at the other, which, in the case of Cúcuta, and according to the context of unemployment, informality, and violence, have a strong content of peace as a public good with an important social welfare dimension. Peace is associated with opportunities, education, and employment, both for youth and adults, without ignoring concepts such as tranquility and security, but with a more collective and social dimension. This is clearly located near the end of peace as a public good (Cúcuta Report).

Located north of Cúcuta, Tibú is part of the Catatumbo region (Norte de Santander, Map 5), which, despite the peace agreement with FARC-EP, exhibits high levels of conflict and violence, especially against the Barí people. It is one of the municipalities most affected by 50 years of war and has one of the highest rates of illicit crops (Unodc-Simci, 2020). The area experienced different phases of conflict as a result of territorial disputes between various armed actors. In economic terms, conflicts revolve around oil concessions, the illegal economy (half of the hectares of the department), and, since the worsening of the Venezuelan crisis and the closing of the border, the increase in illegal extraction of crude oil, smuggling, and human trafficking. Politically, the Communist Party and the Patriotic Union played an important role, although many of their representatives were assassinated or kidnapped after the arrival of paramilitary groups. Current violence, with one of the highest homicide rates in the department and the country, is related to fighting between the National Liberation Army (ELN) and the Popular Liberation Army (EPL) and to drug trafficking mafias and other illegal economies. In this context, fundamental rights like free expression or association and collective rights are not guaranteed. Because of the limited presence of the central State, Community Action Boards continue playing an important role as institutions for conflict transformation, especially outside urban centers, although they must consult with armed groups present in the area. In this context, different manifestations of violence intertwine. In Tibú, political violence continues or has returned with the murder of social leaders and the mayoral candidate, Bernardo Betancur, before the municipal elections in September 2019.

Regarding conceptions of peace, Tibú shows:

(....) A great variety of connotations and meanings, and it allows us to argue that the notion of peace is contextual, in other words, it depends on the context in which individual and collective actors interact. In the case of Tibú, two factors affect these conceptions: the continuation of the armed conflict and the mafias that have de-



veloped around it, together with various forms of illegal economies protected by armed actors, and the central government's non-compliance with the implementation of the Agreement for the termination of the conflict. Within the framework of these restrictions, the conceptions of peace found in Tibú have an individual, a social, a market, and a public dimension. A continuum from the most private to the most public, with intermediate dimensions between these two extremes, can be suggested. The more public dimension assumes the existence of rights and a political and institutional order to enforce them (Tibú report).

The Peace Agreement created high expectations of significant change, but the lack of compliance by the governments of Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018) and Iván Duque (2018-) and the rise of violence have generated frustration and hopelessness. However, relevant initiatives like the Bono por la Paz and the Pacelly peace community also emerged, supported, among others, by Social Pastoral.

Let us now look at the cases of the two most violent municipalities: Buenaventura, in the department of Valle del Cauca, and Santander de Quilichao, in Cauca.

The port city of Buenaventura (Map 6) is characterized by high ethnic diversity among Indigenous communities, Afro-Colombian population, and mestizo settlers. Two central aspects characterize the lines of conflict: the first is related to the expansion and strategic importance of the port as a logistics node to the Pacific. The second is the growing mobilization of previously marginalized actors, such as black communities and the civic strike in 2017.

Conflicts over territorial control by a variety of non-state armed actors present in the area –ELN and Clan del Golfo, among others– lead to forced displacement and high rates of homicidal violence against young people and human rights defenders. At the same time, violence and insecurity prevent the guarantee and exercise of individual and collective human rights. Different state and non-state institutions for the constructive transformation of conflicts present in the city, such as the Ombudsman's Office or the Consultancy for Human Rights and Displacement (CODHES), have not been able to put an end to the violent dynamics

of the last years. In this context, the notions of peace expressed in focus groups with youth reflect this complexity.

In a context inhabited by Afro/black and Indigenous ethnic groups, peace is closely linked to their worldviews of life and their territoriality. Therefore, the achievement of peace involves institutions by guaranteeing rights, armed groups through the cessation of armed violence, and citizens who must act in accordance with their own social morality (solidarity and trust between relatives and neighbors). In short, peace is understood from a perspective that transcends the protection of physical integrity to include the achievement of social well-being (Buenaventura Report).

Located in the north of the Cauca department, Santander de Quilichao (Map 7) is part of a strategic corridor to reach Cali and connect the Pacific with the Central mountain range. It also has a high ethnic-cultural diversity, with Indigenous communities and *resguardos* and Afro-Colombian population. The economic base is characterized by sugarcane production in the valley area, forestry production, two free zones, and gold mining. During the armed conflict, it was a rearguard area for the FARC-EP and it has an important historic trajectory of mobilization. Paramilitary groups arrived in the 1990s, and it has been one of the most violent regions. After the signing of the Peace Agreement and the demobilization of the FARC-EP, violence by other armed actors increased in rural and urban areas.

The current conflict revolves around disputes over lands of illegal economies and inter-ethnic disputes between Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities. Community and Indigenous councils, and especially inter-ethnic tables, have tried to manage and transform these conflicts. Initiatives by civil society and local entrepreneurs stand out, providing interesting examples of local peace schemes. The notions of peace expressed in the focus groups and interviews cover a wide spectrum, and reveal:

(...) A clear distinction between the notions of individual peace, negative peace, and positive peace. The first thing that was pointed out was the importance of associating peace with the tranquility and well-being of individuals. The trust that must exist between

different people and groups and even towards institutions when referring to peace. (...) The importance of recognizing the need *to build peace but with social justice* (...) (Santander de Quilichao Report).

The experiences of the communities in La Guajira –Fonseca and Maicao, Map 8 and 9– are also characterized by a high diversity of civilian and armed actors. The proximity of the border with Venezuela and illegal activities that are often part of everyday life are also characteristic of these communities. With the peak of the crisis in Venezuela and the closing of formal transit crossings, human trafficking increased significantly. Moreover, the already precarious economic conditions of a large part of the population and the recent heavy flow of migrant communities from Venezuela have created new conflicts between locals and migrants, especially in the case of Maicao. Economically, the area depends on banana plantations and the cultivation of manioc, avocado, and coffee. During the war, and especially as of the 1980s, the FARC-EP, sometime later the ELN, and since 1998 the self-defense groups were present in the region.

Current conflicts are related to the murder of social leaders, domestic violence, common crime, and discrimination and lack of visibility of the LGBTI community in public spaces (Maicao case). State presence has historically been weak, and trust in state entities runs very low. Although increasing, the presence of the Colombian State continues to be limited. In La Guajira there are two Territorial Training and Reincorporation Spaces (ETCR) with diverse reintegration experiences in terms of relations with the communities. Regarding the notions of peace in Maicao:

The reflections centered around the way in which peace is situated in the territory and the strategies for promoting peace from a gender perspective that recognizes sexual diversity and gender identities.

As for the conceptual elements, a series of metaphors and analogies related to cosmological aspects and traditions linked to the territory, to its environmental configurations and cultural processes were presented; these relational categories not only allow the dimensioning of peace concepts but also reveal the need to build peace with a territorial approach. (Maicao Report).

3. Conclusion

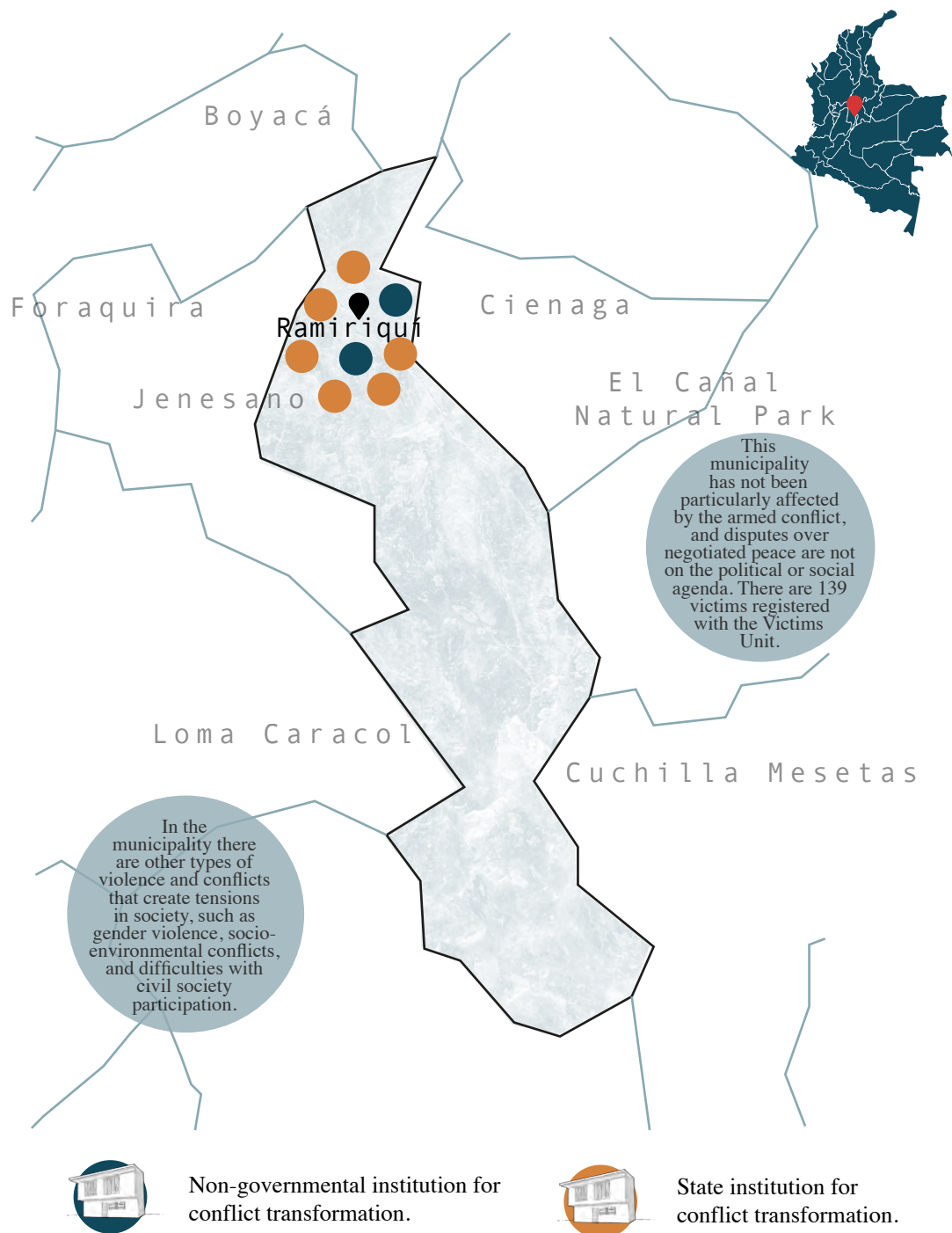
Despite the variety of specific contexts and levels of violence, conflict, and the existence of institutions for the constructive transformation of conflicts, the experiences in the communities analyzed reflect the results of the national representative survey (Chapter 3) in three crucial aspects. Notions of peace are closely related to yearning and hope:

1. To live in tranquility, that is, without threats to physical integrity and undue interference in everyday life.
2. To be able to exercise basic human rights individually and collectively. The latter is particularly emphasized in discussions with hitherto marginalized groups such as women, young people, indigenous communities, and Afro-Colombian groups (see specific chapters in Part III). Access to equal opportunities plays a fundamental role in this regard.
3. Recognition that institutions for the constructive transformation of conflicts (whether state, municipal, formal or informal) are fulfilling their functions.

Although in some contexts there are indicators of hopelessness, most interviewees seem to be very aware that peace is a process, that the signing of an agreement is a necessary but not sufficient condition, and that peace is collectively built. For this, it is not only necessary to ensure a fundamental level of physical security but also to generate adequate spaces of opportunity so that each individual and each community can carry out their activities and live a full and dignified life.



Map 2. Ramiriquí, Department of Boyacá

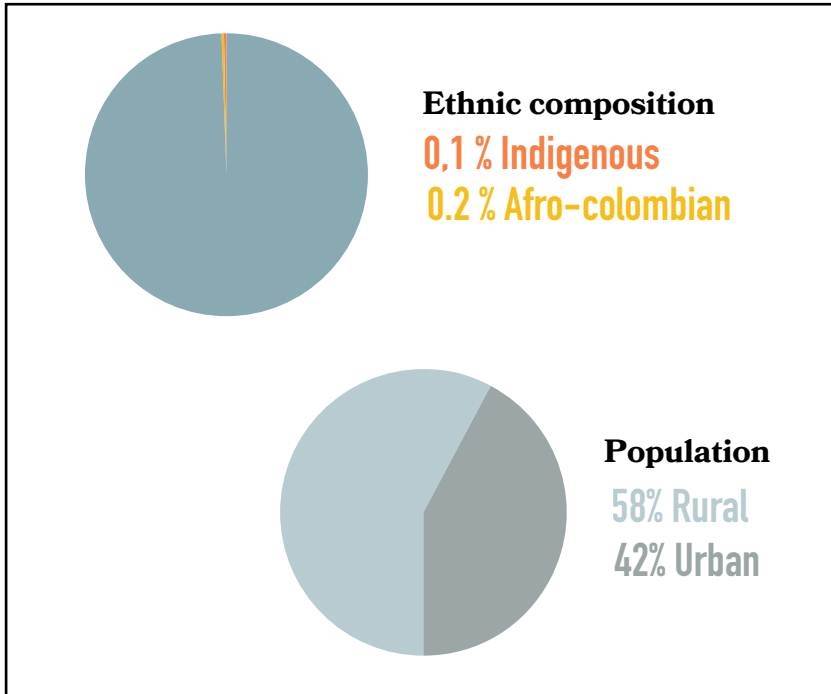


Presence of non-governmental institutions for conflict transformation

- Ramiriquí Victims Coordination
- Women's Network of the Diploma on Political Participation

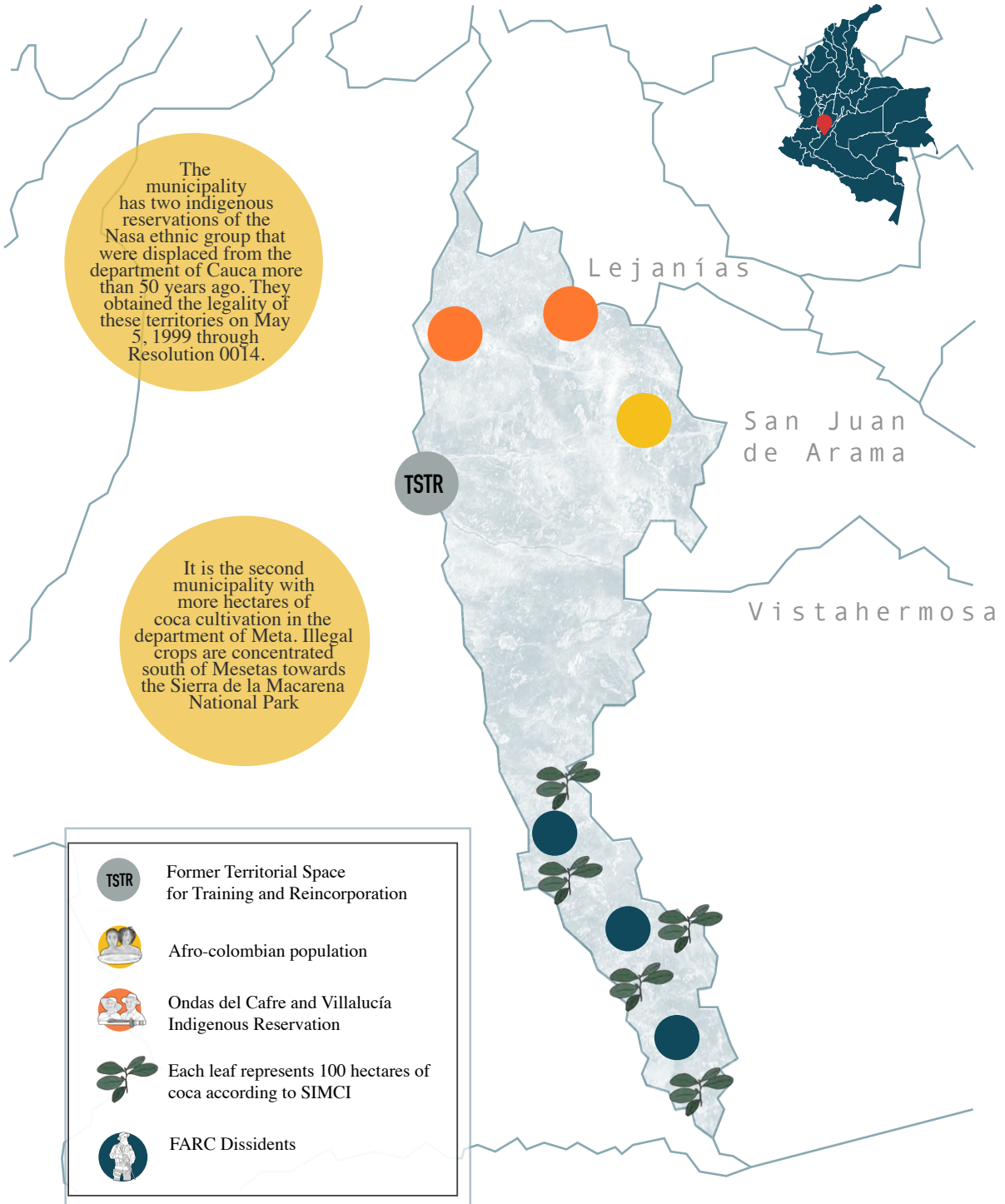
Presence of state institutions for conflict transformation

- The Mayor's Office: among others the Family Commissariat
- Police
- INPEC (penitentiary establishment)
- Ministry of Justice
- Superintendency of Notaries and Registry
- National Land Agency



Source: Case Studies of the Global Peace Project, 20219-2020. Cartography by Santiago Luque, journalist for Rutas del Conflicto

Map 3. Mesetas, Department of Meta



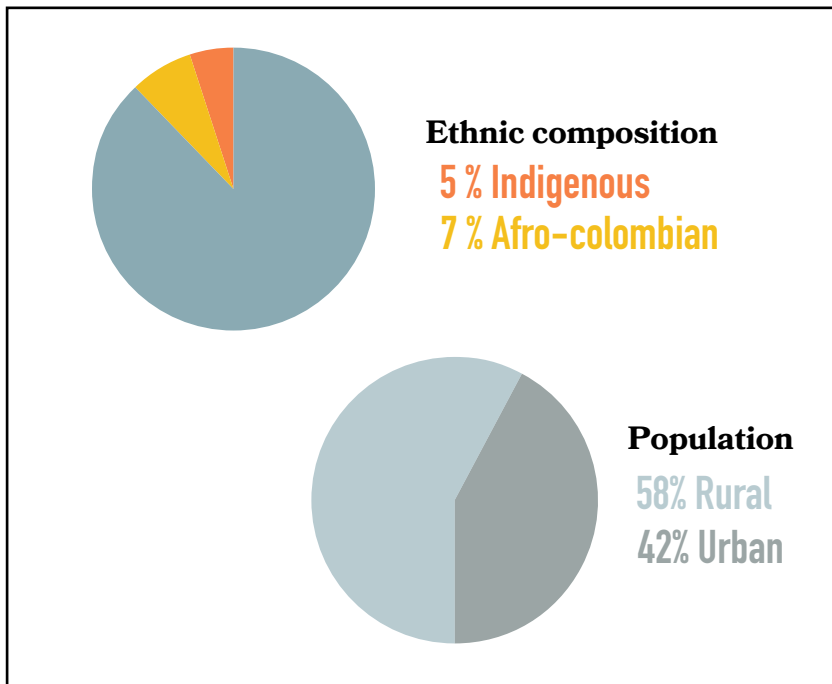
Presence of institutions for conflict transformation

Governmental

- The Mayor's Office
- The Governor's Office
- The Ombudsman's Office
- The Municipal Attorney
- Humanitarian and Victims Table
- Armed Forces
- Police

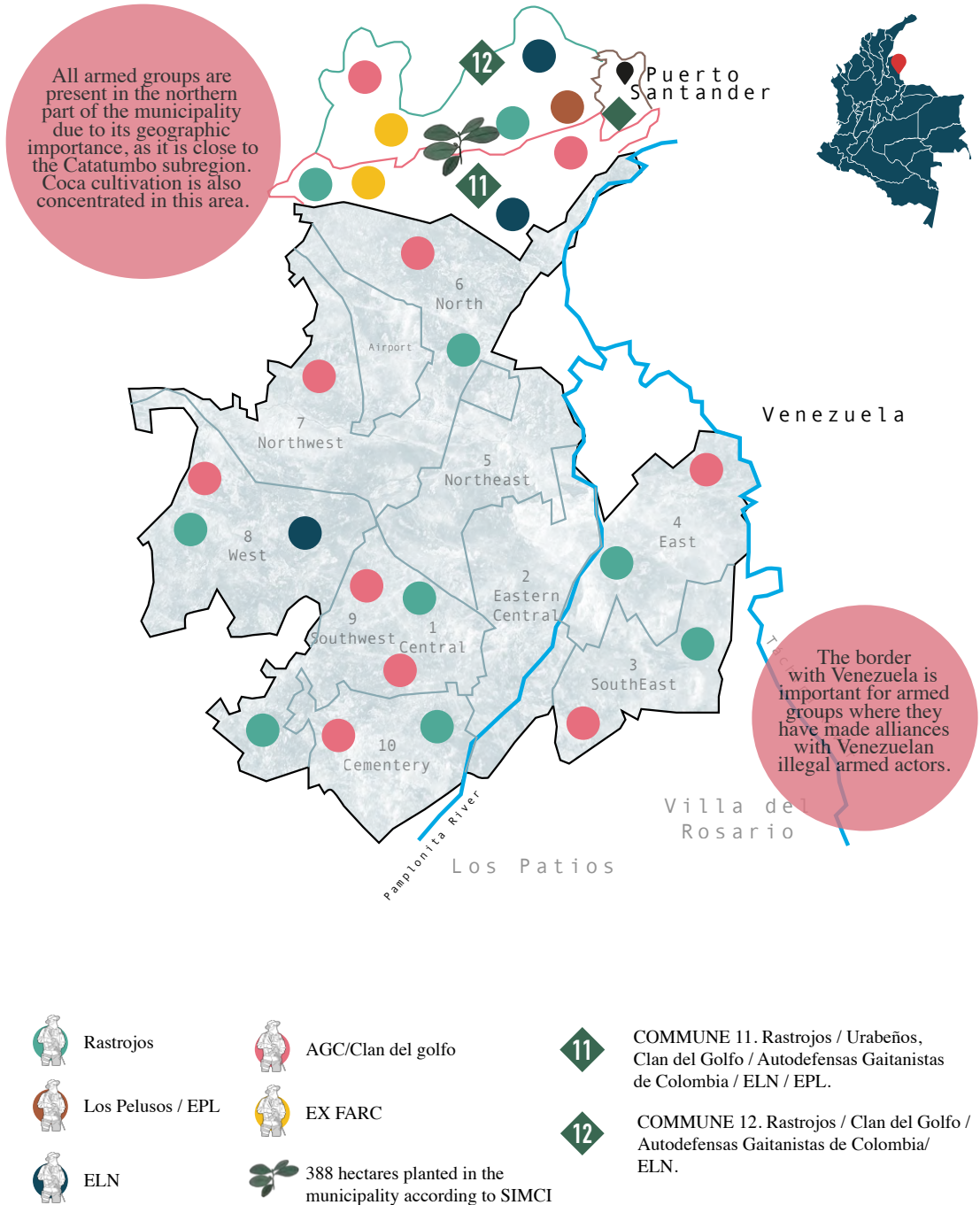
Non-governmental

- Community Action Boards
- ASOJUNTAS
- Churches
- Huellas (Women's Political Movement)
- Yo Puedo (Young Women's Organization)
- WILPF (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom)



Source: Case Studies of the Global Peace Project, 20219-2020. Cartography by Santiago Luque, journalist for Rutas del Conflicto

Map 4. Cúcuta, Department of Norte de Santander



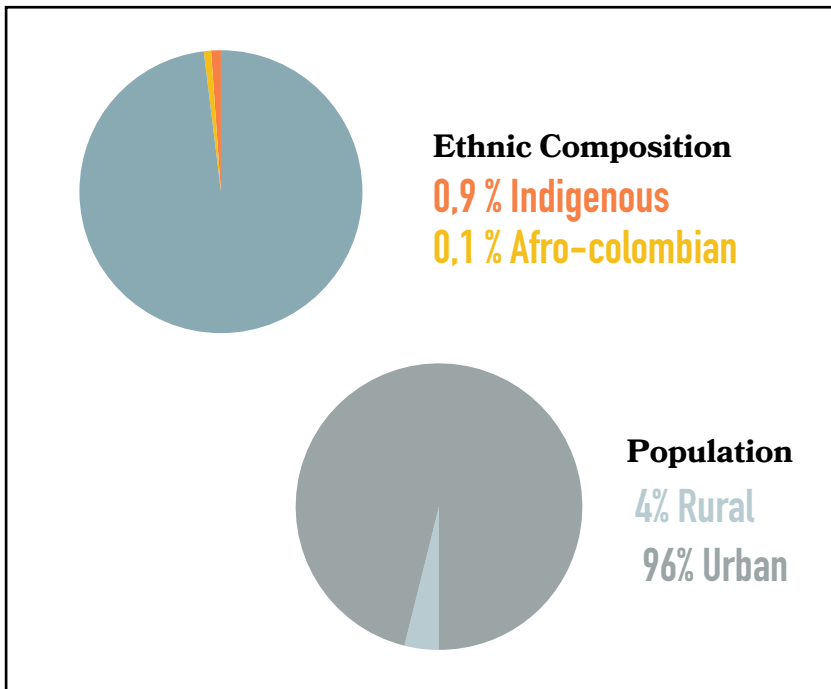
Presence of institutions for conflict transformation

Governmental

- The Mayor's Office
- Victims and Post-Conflict Secretariat
- The Governor's Office

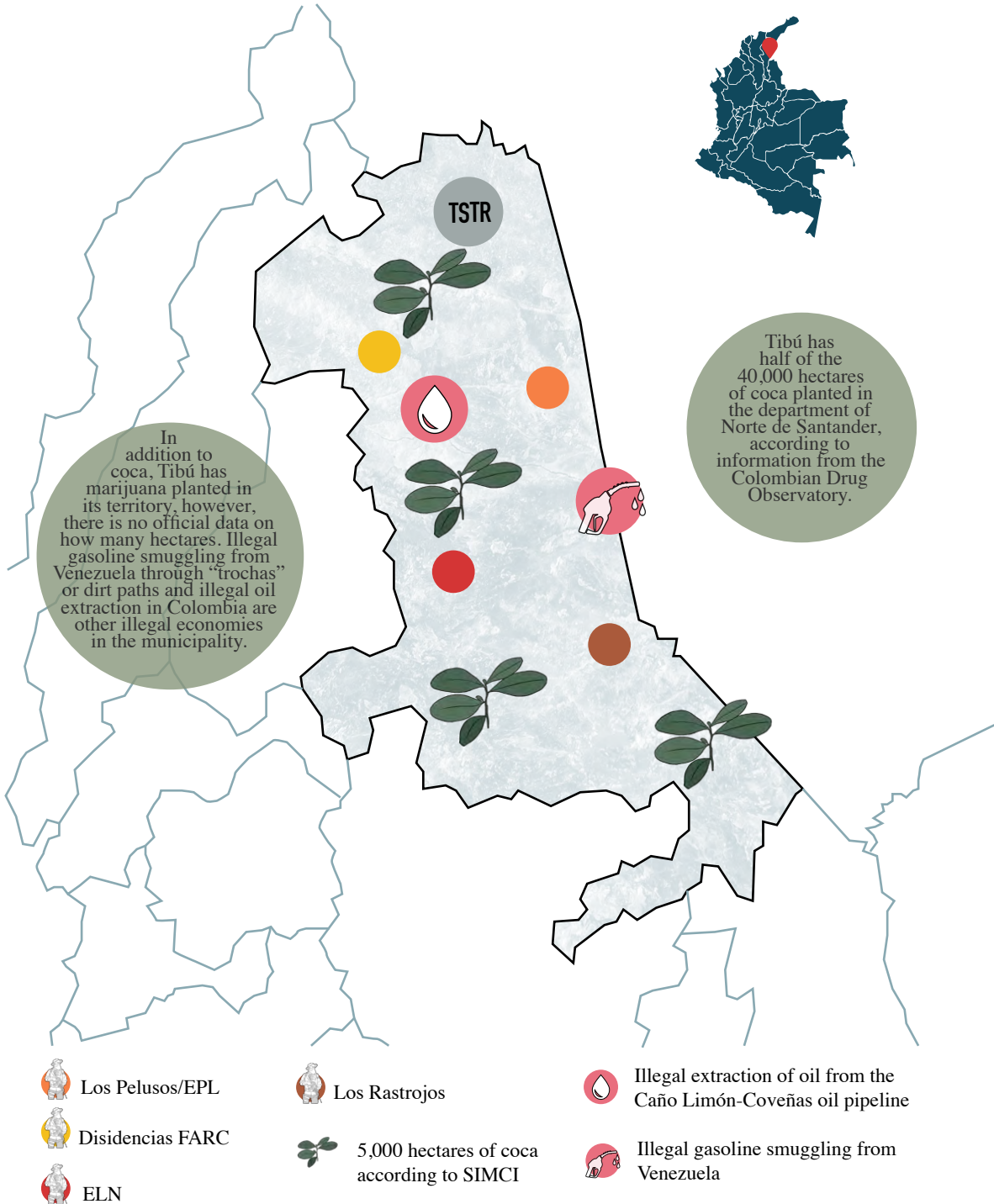
Non-governmental

- Women
- Youth
- La Mesa de la Memoria (The Memory Table)
- Peace Inspiration Center



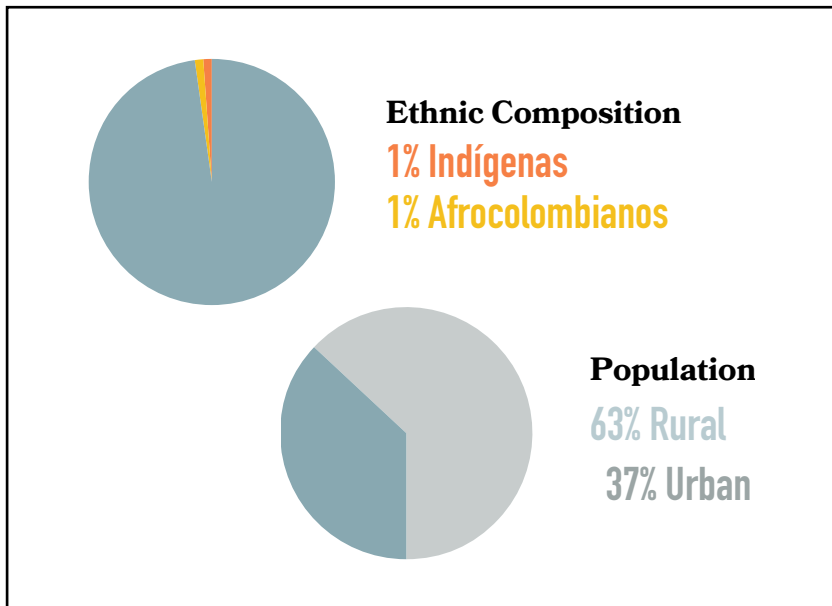
Source: Case Studies of the Global Peace Project, 20219-2020. Cartography by Santiago Luque, journalist for Rutas del Conflicto

Mapa 5. Tibú, Department of Norte de Santander



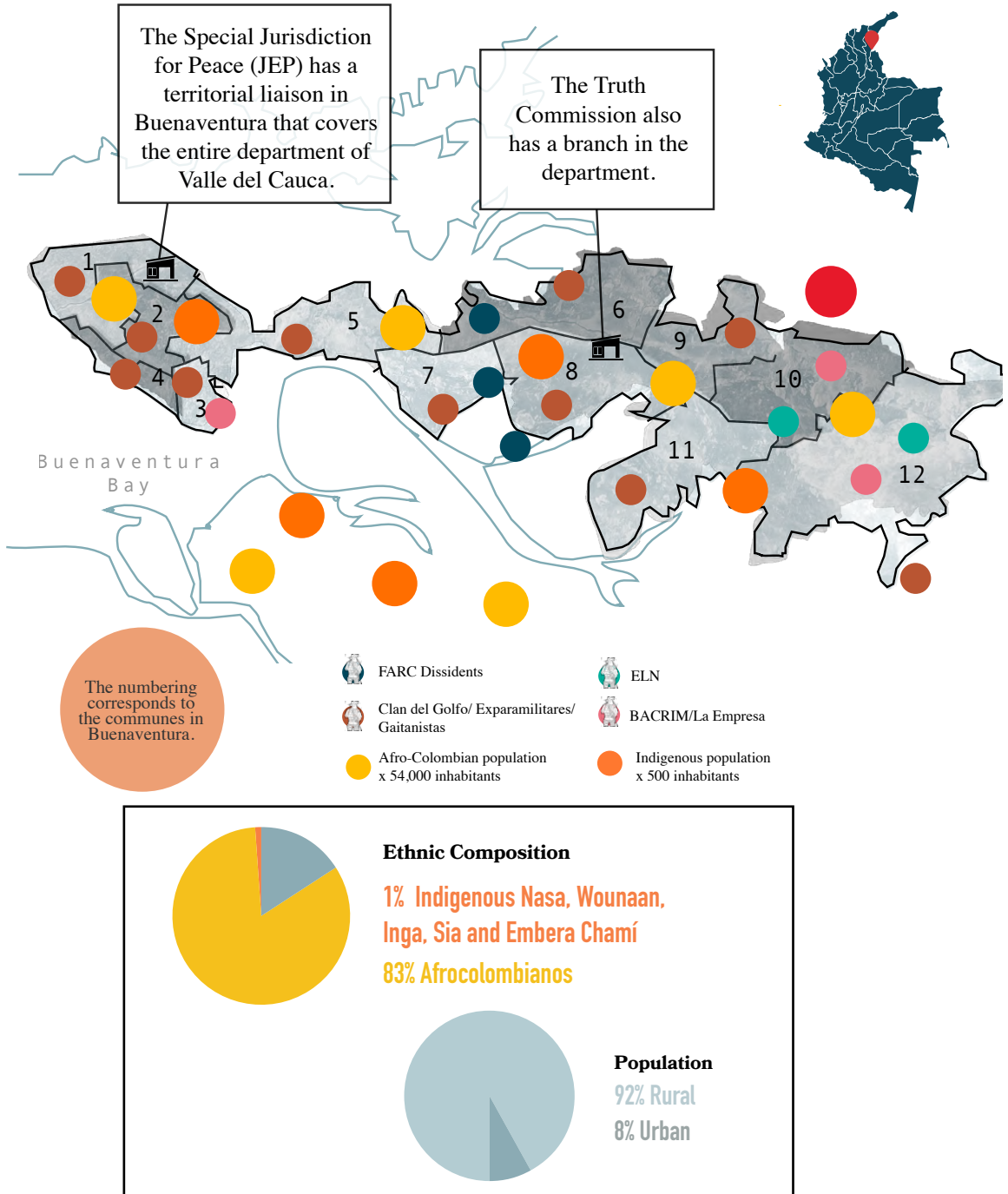
Presence of non-governmental institutions for conflict transformation

- Community Action Boards
- ASOJUNTAS
- Diocese
- Pacelli Peace Community



Source: Case Studies of the Global Peace Project, 20219-2020. Cartography by Santiago Luque, journalist for Rutas del Conflicto

Mapa 6. Buenaventura, departamento de Valle del Cauca



Source: Case Studies of the Global Peace Project, 20219-2020. Cartography by Santiago Luque, journalist for Rutas del Conflicto

Presence of institutions for conflict transformation

Governmental

Official institutions

- Secretariat of Citizen Security, Secretariat of Coexistence for Civil Society,
- Ombudsman's Office, Regional Center for Attention and Reparation and Victims, the District Attorney of Buenaventura.
- Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (National Center of Historical Memory) (CNMH)
- Delegate of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) and the Truth Clarification Commission (CEV)
- SIVJRGN
- The Territorial Renewal Agency (ART),
- Development Plans with a Territorial Focus (PDTs)
- Legal armed actors, such as the police, the armed forces, and the Attorney General's Office

Non-governmental

Community organizations-processes

- Black Communities Process (PCN) - Palenque el Congal and the community councils of black communities involved in PCN's work
- Association of Authorities and Councils of the Regional Indigenous Organization of Valle del Cauca (ORIVAC)
- Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas del -Valle del Cauca Región Pacifico (Association of Indigenous Councils of the Valle del Cauca Pacific Region) (ACIVARP)

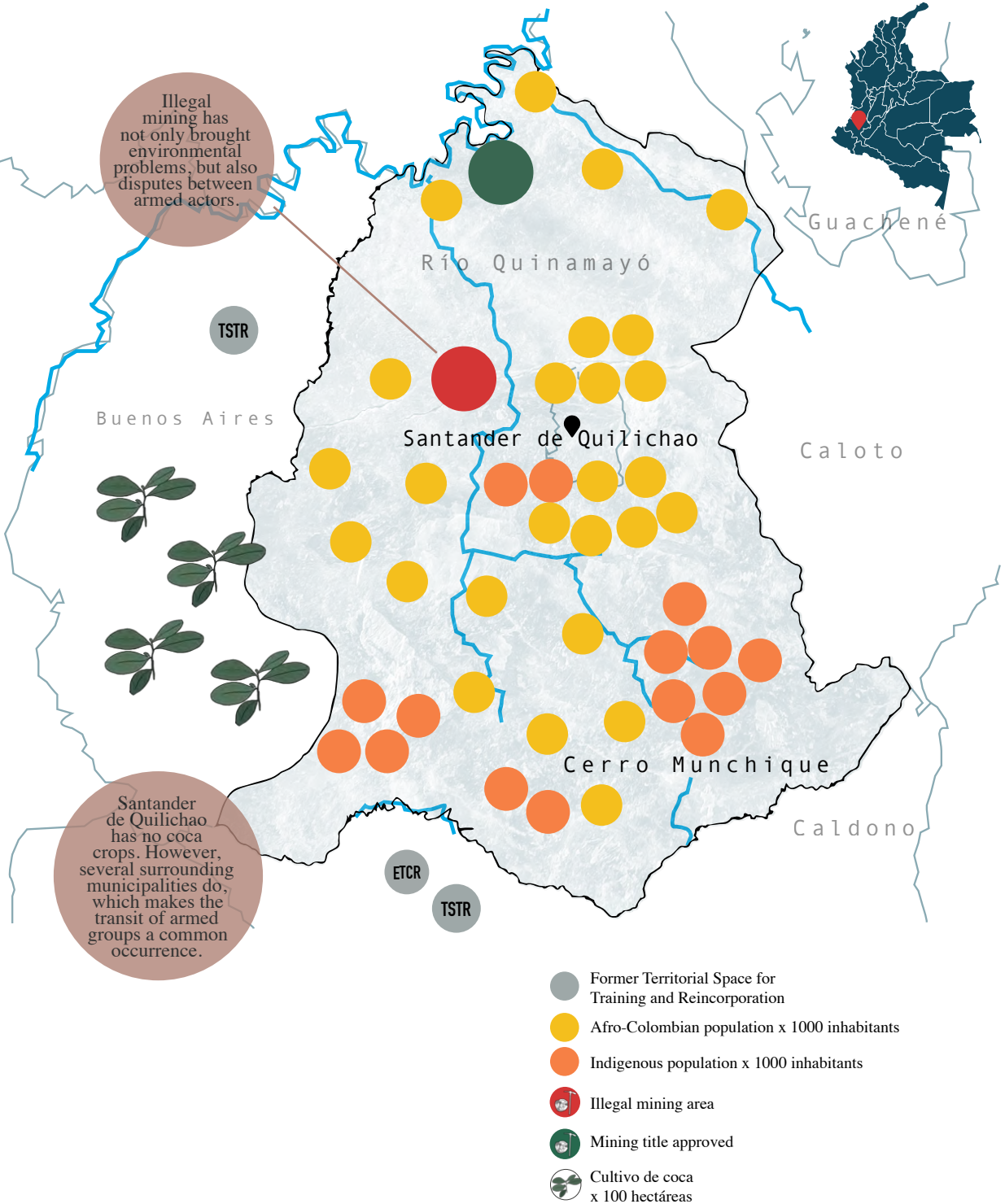
Ethnic organizations

- Community Action Boards
- The Afro-Colombian Pastoral
- Fundación Espacios de Convivencia y Desarrollo Social - FUNDESCODES (Foundation for Coexistence and Social Development)
- The Inter-Organizational Committee for the Defense of the Rights of the Black Communities
- El Comité en Marcha para Vivir con Dignidad (The Committee Marching to Live with Dignity)
- Civic Strike

National and International Cooperation Organizations

- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- UN Human Rights
- UN Verification
- Doctors without Borders (MSF)
- International Solidarity
- Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)
- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- National Red Cross
- Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento (Consultancy for Human Rights and Displacement) (CODHES)
- GIZ German Cooperation

Mapa 7. Santander de Quilichao, departamento del Cauca



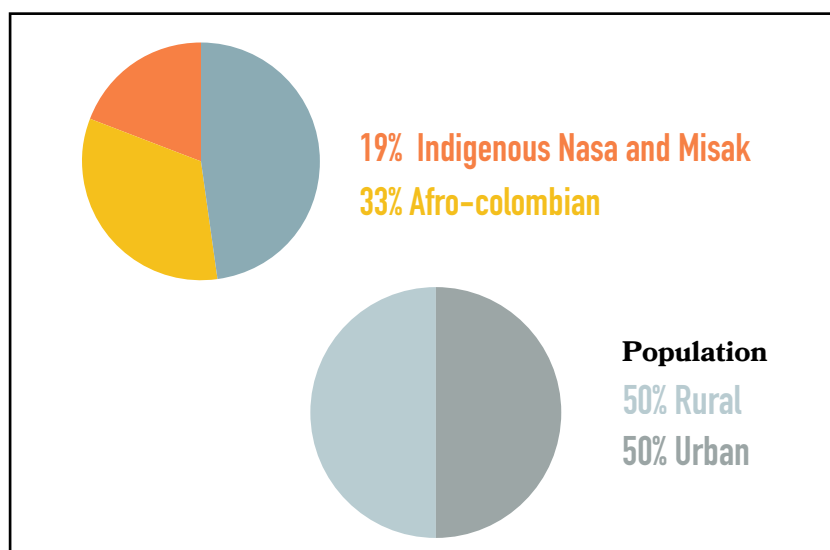
Presence of institutions for conflict transformation

Governmental

- Débil y selectiva presencia estatal.

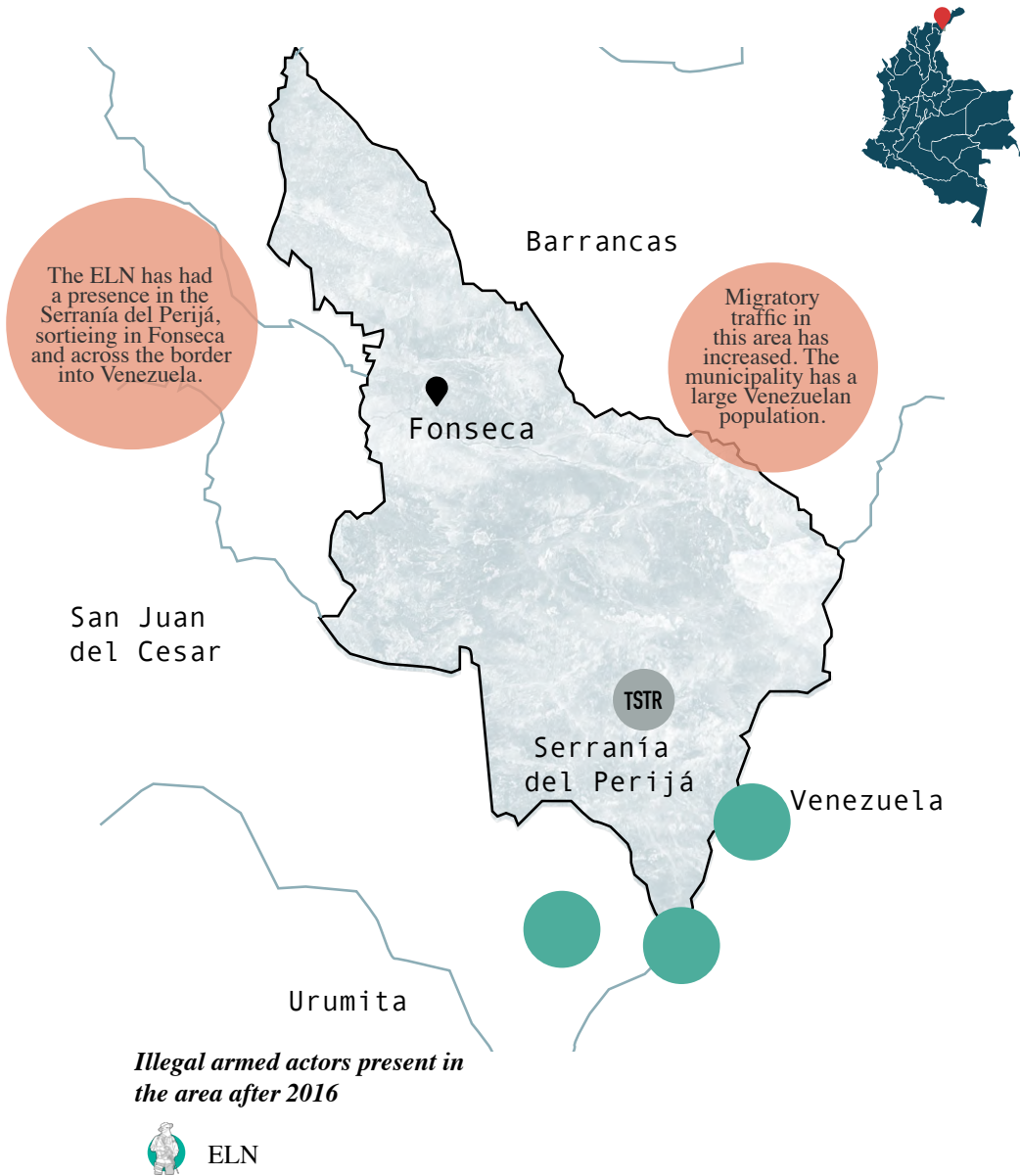
Non-governmental

- Association of Community Councils in Northern Cauca (In: Aires del Garrapatero, Zanjón de Garrapatero, Quarpac, and Cuenca Rio la Quebrada)
- Association of Indigenous Councils in Northern Cauca (Reservations: Las Delicias, Canoas, Guadualito, La Concepción, Tigres and Munchique and Nasa Kiwe Tekh Ksxaw)
- Peasant Organizations Community Action Boards
- Asociación Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos (National Association of Peasant Users) (ANUC)
- Interethnic Roundtables.
- The Vallenpaz Corporation (Vallenpaz supports processes in the following municipalities in the department of Valle: Jamundi, Dagua, Cali, Palmira, Cerrito, Florida,
- Pradera, Buenaventura and in the department of Cauca, processes in Buenos Aires, Santander de Quilichao, Caloto, Padilla, Puerto Tejada, Villa Rica, Miranda, Corinto)



Source: Case Studies of the Global Peace Project, 20219-2020. Cartography by Santiago Luque, journalist for Rutas del Conflicto

Mapa 8. Fonseca, departamento de La Guajira



Source: Case Studies of the Global Peace Project, 20219-2020. Cartography by Santiago Luque, journalist for Rutas del Conflicto

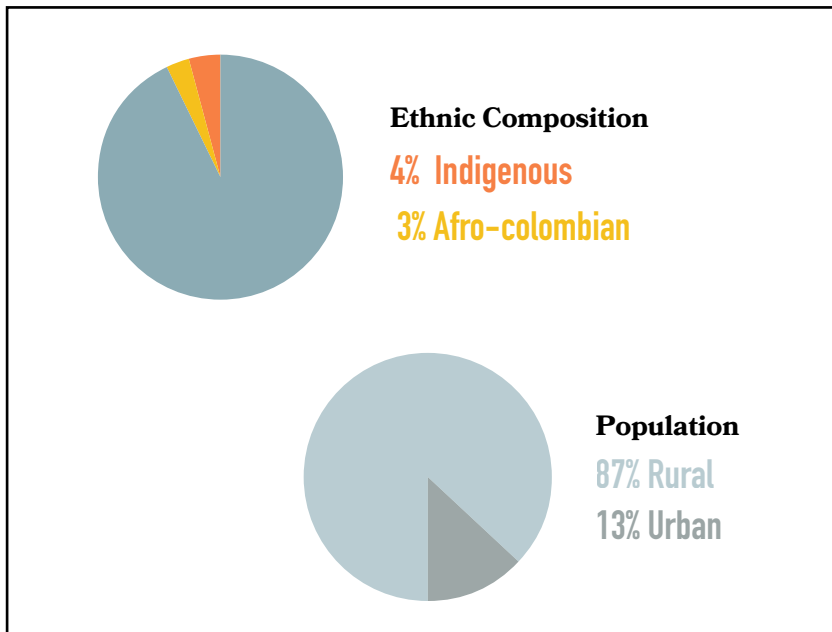
Presencia de instituciones para la transformación de conflictos

Governmental

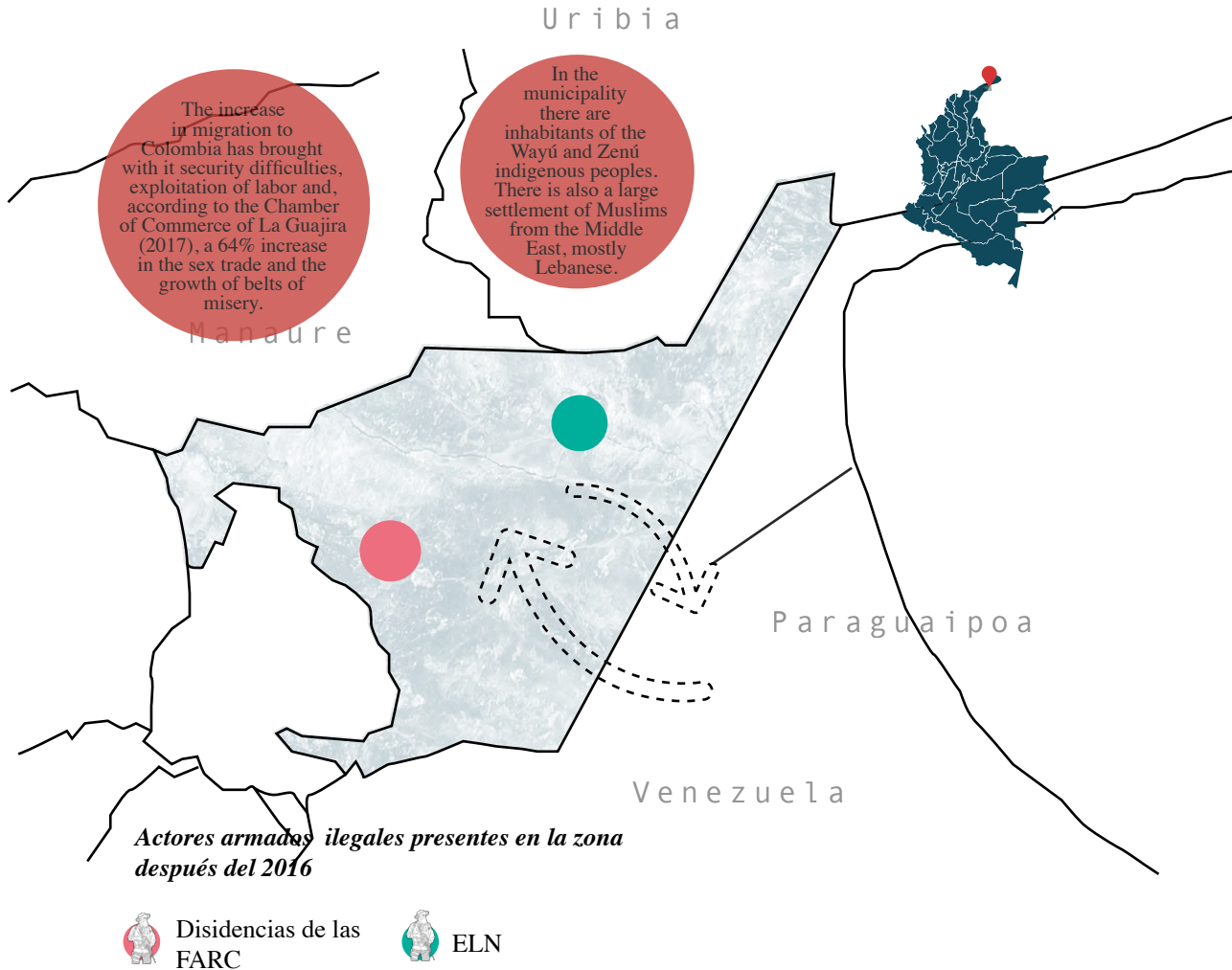
- The central government has had a weak presence in the region. According to a Dejusticia report submitted to the Superior Court of Riohacha (2018), it is concluded that the intervention of the central government in the area has been circumstantial, without proper coordination between the responsible public entities, and without having to apply a differential approach.

Non-governmental

- Community Action Boards



Map 9. Maicao, Department of La Guajira



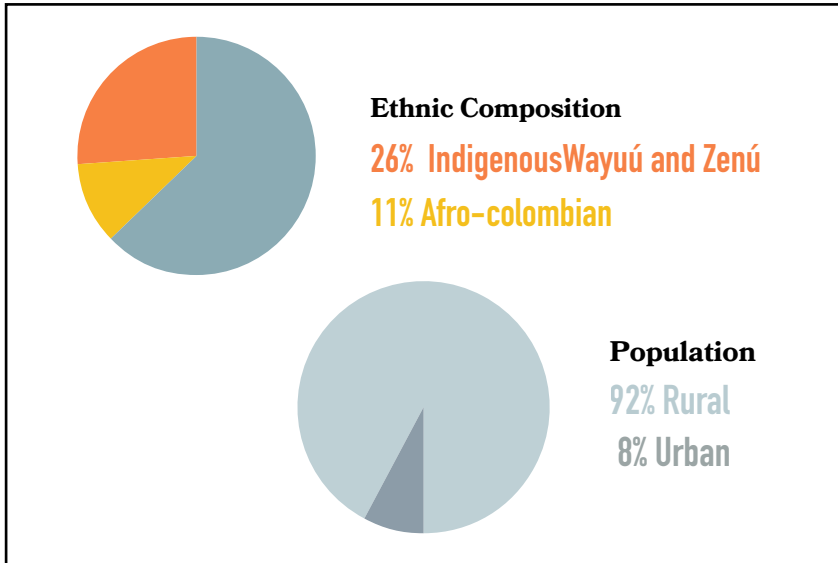
Presence of institutions for conflict transformation

Governmental

Weak state presence

Non-governmental

- Casa de Paz de Caribe Afirmativo (Caribbean Affirmative Peace House)
- Community Action Boards
- LGBTI Platform for Peace



Source: Case Studies of the Global Peace Project, 20219-2020. Cartography by Santiago Luque, journalist for Rutas del Conflicto

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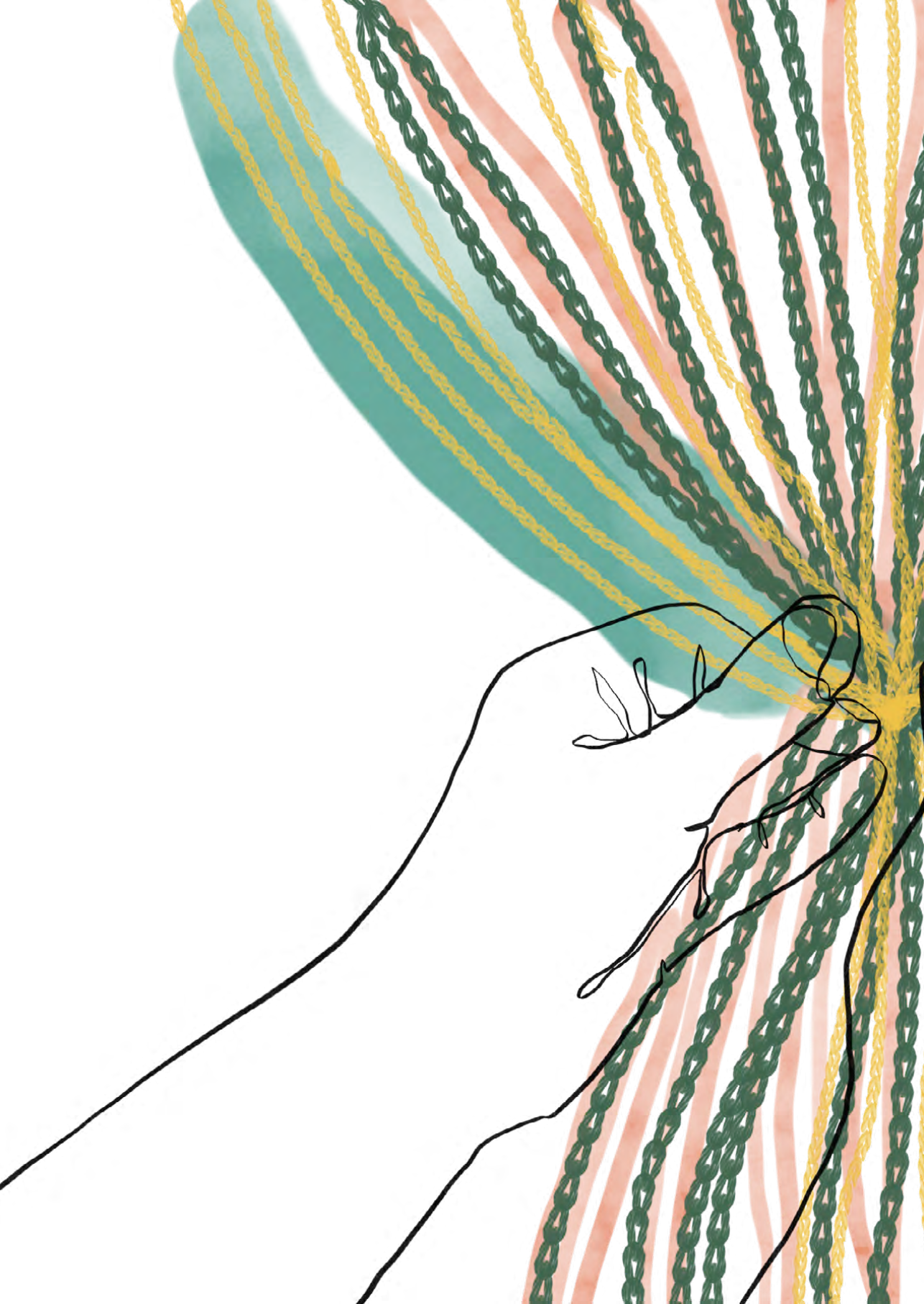


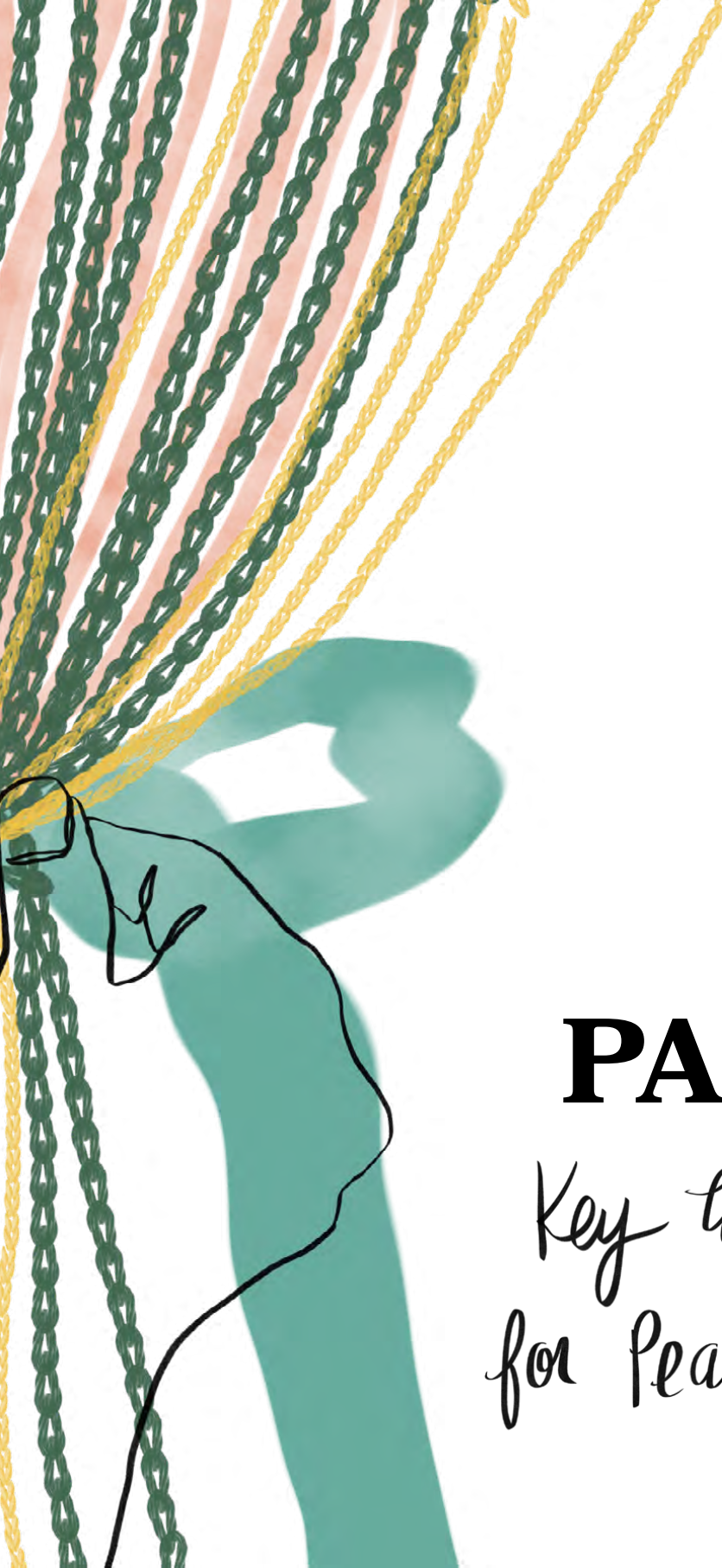
A family of coca growers tries to rescue the leaves of the bushes cut by the Colombian army in an anti-narcotics operation. October 11, 2017. Photo: Federico Ríos.





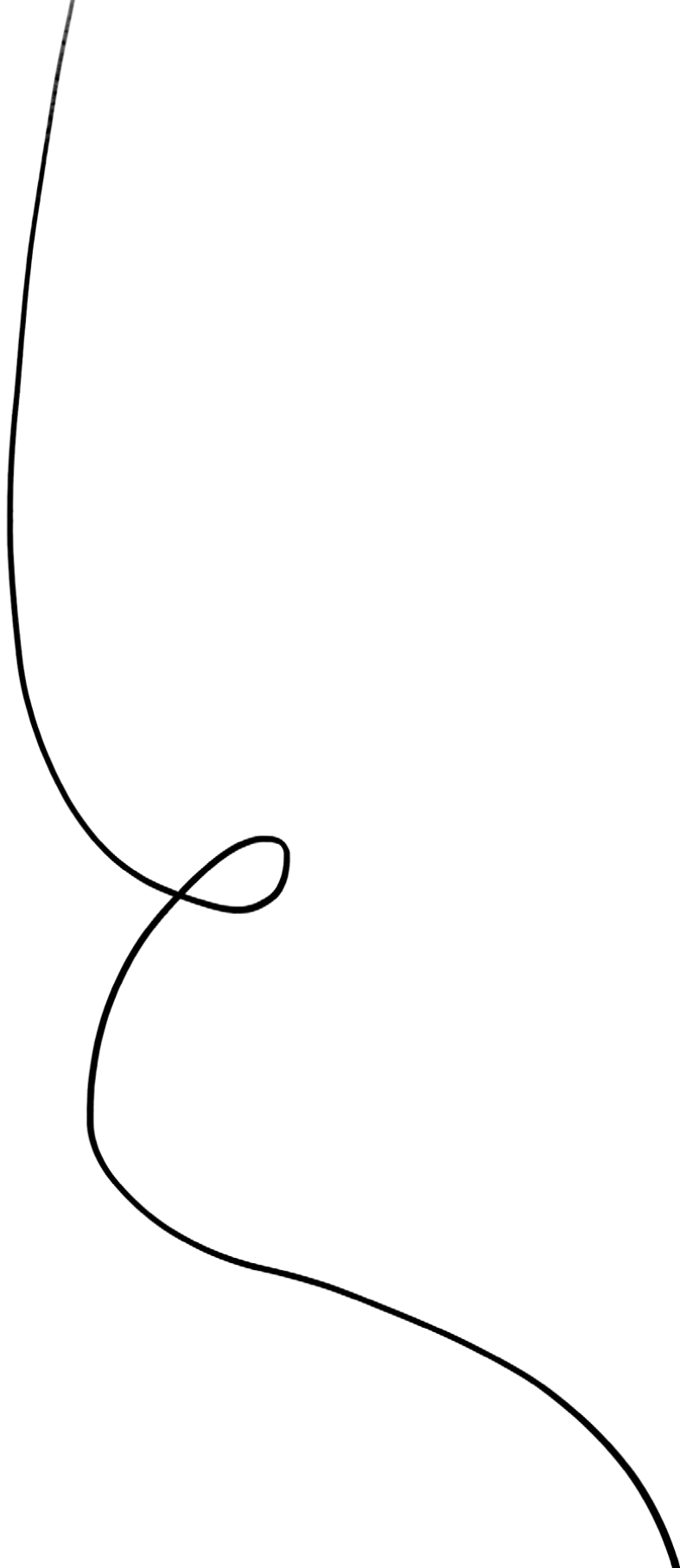
National Army coca eradicators patrol the streets of El Tandil municipality, department of Nariño. October 11, 2017. Photo: Federico Ríos.





PART II

*Key elements
for Peacebuilding*



Reintegration of FARC-EP and territorial spaces: possibilities, obstacles, and frustrations

Mauricio Romero Vidal

Peace negotiations have taken place in Colombia in each of the last four decades. The most recent negotiations culminated in a peace agreement between the government of President Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018) and FARC-EP (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) in 2016. Even so, armed conflict and political violence have persisted to the present, although with variations in intensity and location. In the last 20 years alone, an impressive figure of approximately 75,000 members of illegal armed groups –guerrillas and paramilitaries– have laid down their weapons (Agencia para la Reincorporación y la Normalización, RNA, 2020). However, armed conflict and the murder of former FARC combatants and social leaders continue in territories with illicit crops or good exploitation prospects by mining or agribusiness investors.

What explains the reproduction of armed conflict and violence? There are currently two powerful reasons at the local level: non-compliance with the Peace Agreement by the government of President Iván Duque (2018-) and disillusionment among ex-combatants. In the words of one commander of the former 33rd FARC front in Catatumbo:

We had high expectations, we were willing to abandon the war to find peace, but the agreements have not been fulfilled. We have not even received a piece of land, so the boys are disillusioned and take up arms again (Collective interview with FARC ex-combatants, ETCR Negro Eliécer Gaitán, Caño Indio, Tibú, Norte de Santander, August 7, 2019).

Feelings of unease among the population, especially among youth, run deep in this region. “We are stuck amidst the war, there is no educational outlet for young people. The armed conflict is clearly the most relevant conflict within the territory. It affects everything, it ruins everything, it is cancer in the community” (Collective interview with youth, Tibú, Norte de Santander, August 5, 2019). Undoubtedly, German Chancellor Willy Brandt’s celebrated phrase during the Cold War –“Peace is not everything, but without peace, everything becomes nothing”– makes perfect sense in Catatumbo.

This text analyzes peacebuilding prospects from the perspective of reincorporation of ex-combatants and local communities in three areas of concentration of former guerrillas. The three dimensions of the concept of glocal peace as a process – physical integrity, conflict transformation, and individual and collective rights– guides this reflection. Although the central government conceived the concentration areas as temporary spaces, in practice they have become permanent settlements with close relations with local communities and are seeking recognition within the municipal institutional structure (El Espectador, 2019).

In essence, the tension over the temporal dimension of the spaces –permanent or transitory– reflects different conceptions of reintegration by the negotiators of the Peace Agreement. On the one hand, the government pressed for individual reintegration in urban settings, in the hope of dissipating the organization’s solidarity. On the other hand, FARC negotiators hoped for a process of collective reintegration in semi-urban and rural areas, better suited to the characteristics of an important part of ex-combatants and the “sense of community” of the war years. A stubborn reality prevailed at the end.

The central territorial references of the analysis correspond to three transitional spaces: Antonio Nariño, in Icononzo, department of Tolima, where 320 ex-combatants were concentrated in 2017; Mariana Páez and Simón Trinidad, in Mesetas, Meta department, with 552 and 250 ex-combatants, respectively; and the Negro Eliécer Gaitán, in Tibú, Catatumbo, department of Norte de Santander, where 316 ex-combatants built their camps. The names refer to Antonio Nariño, the hero of the war of independence from Spain in the early 19th century. Mariana

Páez and Negro Eliécer Gaitán were members of the FARC guerrilla killed in the war. Simon Trinidad is the alias of a FARC commander extradited to the United States in 2004 on charges of drug trafficking, who received a sentence of about 40 years. Ex-combatants who were serving prison terms in different penitentiaries and were released as part of the Peace Agreement are concentrated in this camp.

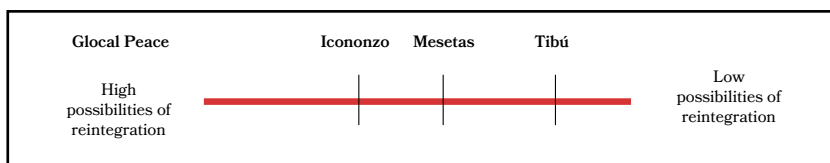
The structure of the text is as follows. In the first, brief section, reincorporation is related to peacebuilding and glocal peace. Next, the issue of security of FARC ex-combatants is discussed. Then the three territorial spaces that served as reference are analyzed: Icononzo, Mesetas, and Tibú. The first has the best chances of reintegration; one of the two spaces of the second, Mariana Páez, has good chances, while the prospects for the Simón Trinidad space are not as promising; and the ETCR in Tibú, in Caño Indio in Catatumbo, faces a difficult situation because of its location in a context of armed conflict, illicit crops, and drug trafficking on the border with Venezuela. Finally, the conclusions of the study are presented. The text is based on in-depth interviews and focus groups conducted during visits to the territorial spaces and the review of official documents and press archives.

1. Glocal peace and reintegration

A preliminary analysis of the 23 Transitional Local Zones for Normalization (ZVTN) –as the concentration areas for FARC-EP ex-combatants were initially known after the signing of the Peace Agreement in November 2016– indicates that their fate has been varied. The trajectory of each zone can be analyzed from the three dimensions associated with glocal peace, which serve to locate them in a continuum between high and low possibility of reintegration.

Each of these dimensions has concrete expressions in the concentration zones. The physical integrity of ex-combatants is largely associated with the area's relation to illegal economies; the guarantee of the exercise of individual and collective rights of ex-combatants is related to the level of institutional support for reintegration, including security; and the development of capacities for conflict transformation refers to leadership and collective management skills in each area. These are short- and medium-term conditions for which ex-combatants, now as part of society, and government structures, including the local level, are responsible.

Diagram 1. Continuum of ZVTN reintegration possibilities



The conditions for territorial spaces to approach “glocal peace,” or as the ex-combatants express it, to become Citadels of Peace (see diagram 1), are found in the “high possibility of reintegration” end of the continuum. Glocal peace means physical security for residents and an institutional framework that enables constructive conflict transformation and protects and guarantees the exercise as well as the enjoyment of fundamental individual and collective rights. For ex-combatants, this is clear: “Peace is well-being, progress, political, social, and economic equality, respect for rights, and respect for life” (Focus group with FARC ex-combatants, ETCR Mariana Páez, Buenavista, Mesetas, Meta, July 28, 2019). An ex-combatant who worked as a dentist for 16 years in the guerrillas, is in the process of “convalidation of knowledge” with a state institution, and has also taken gender courses –“I did not know this”– adds the family dimension to his idea of peace: “It is to have opportunities, that our lives are respected. It is to have peace, progress, and that there is no fear or domestic violence” (Telephone interview with ex-FARC combatant, municipality of Tibú, department of Norte de Santander, August 9, 2019).

Reaching this ideal condition is a journey, a slow and intricate process that requires building ties and relationships based on mutual trust between ex-combatants, area residents, and local authorities. This is how the area's candidate for the Mesetas City Council expresses her vision of peace:

The support of institutions is an indicator that work for peace is taking place. The reincorporation of ex-combatants into civilian life and political participation. We have ex-combatants working with the state, building families, dedicated to an individual productive unit, and others developing collective productive projects. Peace is having that kind of scenario, ex-combatants who are studying, those are the indicators of peace (Collective interview with FARC ex-combatants and neighbors, ETCR Mariana Páez, Buenavista, Mesetas, Meta, July 28, 2019).

Configuring a positive context of interaction after armed conflict takes a long time; it is neither easy nor guaranteed. It is a medium to long-term and highly fortuitous result based on the skills of the protagonists. To the extent that conditions in the territorial spaces are uncertain and do not allow a minimum of short-term stability, their position in the continuum may move towards the low possibility side of reintegration, reducing significantly opportunities for the development of glocal peace and its protagonists.

This is apparent in the Tibú space, where non-compliance by the government has led to widespread disillusionment. In the words of one ex-commander of the 33rd Front: "With all of President Duque's threats, people were disenchanted. Institutional support is very difficult. There are no guarantees for political participation. Moving around endangers us. We are here thanks to the private sector" (Collective interview with ex-FARC fighters, ETCR Negro Eliécer Gaitán, Caño Indio, municipality of Tibú, department of Norte de Santander, August 7, 2019). Of all the territorial spaces, in Caño Indio the number of ex-combatants has probably decreased the most. While in 2017 there were 316, a year later only 70 remained. Conditions in this space can also be inferred from the situation of minors. While in Icononzo there were 11 in 2017, a year later the figure increased to 32, as female combatants chose motherhood.

In Mesetas, the number of minors increased from 13 to 28, while in Caño Indio it decreased from three to two in the same period.

2. Security and geographical dispersion of ex-combatants

Although it was initially agreed that the ZVTNs would last six months, in 2020 they celebrated four years of existence. About 3,500 ex-combatants of the 6,804 who were initially part of the concentration areas (Fundación Ideas para la Paz, 2019) and of the 13,577 ex-guerrillas accredited before the national government live in them (Misión de Verificación de las Naciones Unidas en Colombia, 2020). The perseverance and tenacity of former insurgents prevailed over the lack of interest and clear policy of collective reintegration at the national level, in the governments of presidents Juan Manuel Santos and, even more so, Iván Duque.

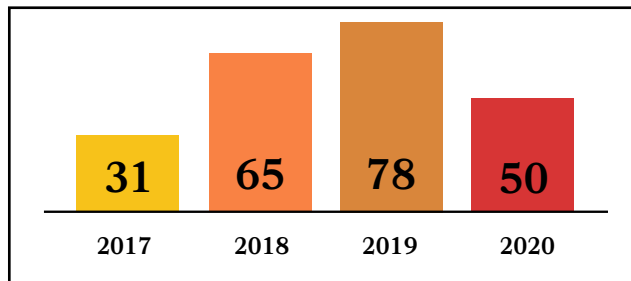
Eight transitory points of normalization where FARC units of different fronts came together were added to the 23 ZVTNs. Ex-combatants organized their new homes in 14 departments, an indication of the territorial reach of this demobilized armed organization. What was not foreseen by government negotiators and security experts in Bogotá, who did everything possible to promote individual reintegration and prevent a transition process to civilian life that would enable the reproduction of the solidarity and camaraderie of the old organization, was the dispersion of former combatants in medium-sized groups throughout the national geography.

About 90 new areas of reintegration where groups of ex-combatants and their families have come together spontaneously are located mainly in territories of former FARC-EP presence or influence (Misión de Verificación de las Naciones Unidas en Colombia, 2020). None of these spaces has been recognized by the government or has received official assistance. The exact number of ex-combatants in these areas is unknown, but 31 new settlements with close to 1800 ex-combatants were

organized in April 2018 (Fundación Ideas para la Paz, 2019). Judgment as to whether this is positive or negative must wait until facts evolve and lessons can be learned. It should not be ignored, however, that the demobilized combatants were part of a force highly specialized in irregular warfare tactics and activities that involve the reproduction of an insurgent armed organization, with clandestine networks such as the one that demobilized.

The geographical dispersion of ex-combatants has created a critical problem for the security of leaders and groups in the process of reintegration (see map 10 on the location of territorial spaces and FARC camps). The situation has been exacerbated by messages from the ruling party, the Democratic Center, against the Peace Agreement, and the national government's ambiguous position on the implementation of its main points, despite statements to the contrary by officials in charge. Disqualifying or hostile messages about the Peace Agreement and its protagonists have exposed them to stigmatization, bureaucratic obstacles, and risks to their physical integrity. Figure 11 shows the murder of FARC ex-combatants between 2017 and 2020.

Figure 11. Demobilized members of FARC-EP killed

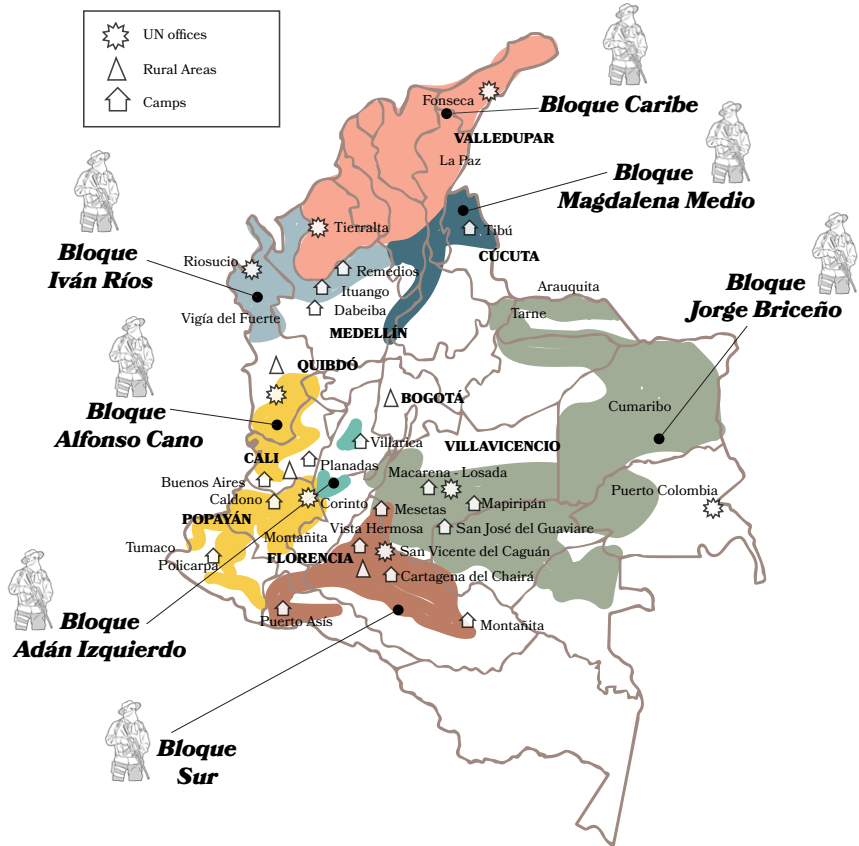


Source: UNVMC September 26th, 2020

The murder of 225 ex-combatants between the signing of the Agreement in November 2016 and September 2020 is painful testimony to the drama they face. The United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia has registered 297 additional attacks against former FARC-EP members, including 20 disappearances and 53 assassination attempts (Misión de Verificación de las Naciones Unidas en Colombia, 2020). One-third of these were committed in municipalities where the concentration areas are located.

The Mission has also supported civil society organizations' call to redesign the public policy of "dismantling illegal armed groups, criminal organizations, and their support networks", apparently responsible for 77% of attacks against former guerrillas (Fundación Ideas para la Paz, 2019). Rising deaths since the beginning of the government of President Iván Duque have resulted in minimal levels of trust in the government by demobilized combatants, who have generally complied with the terms of the agreement (Misión de Verificación de las Naciones Unidas en Colombia, 2020).

Map 10. Geographical Location of the ZVTNs and FARC camps



Anatomy of rural areas and camps

- The zones had 3 objectives: to facilitate the end of hostilities, guarantee the surrendering of arms, and to contribute to the transit of FARC combatants to civilian life. Therefore, productive and training activities would be carried out, among others.
- The zones were transitory or temporary and did not last more than 6 months.
- There were 23 transitional village areas for normalization and 8 additional unified camps. There are 33,000 trails in the country, so their extension corresponded to less than 0.1 percent of the national territory.
- Not all zones were the same size. That depended on the extension of the sidewalks and the number of guerrillas who were located in each one. Within the zones the guerrillas set up their camps.
- Aside from the zones, there were 8 small camps with an extension of less than 4 hectares in remote parts of the country, so that the guerrillas who were in remote places could have a safe place of location.
- There was a perimeter of 1 kilometer as a security strip in the areas in which there was no presence of either the military or the guerrillas.

The rules of the game during the concentration

- The guerrillas who were located in the camps kept their weapons and uniforms until their final surrendering of arms, but they could not carry them in rural areas.
- Civilians could enter the village areas but to the camps.
- Any type of political demonstration was prohibited.
- Se mantuvo la gobernabilidad civil y la presencia de todas las instituciones civiles del Estado en las veredas. A los miembros de las FARC que se ubicaron en las zonas veredales se les levantaron las órdenes de captura.
- Civil governability and the presence of all the civil institutions of the State in the villages were maintained. The FARC members who were located in the rural areas were lifted their arrest warrants.
- There were 60 FARC guerrilla members at the national level and 10 for each rural area authorized to go out to do pedagogy or actions typical of the peace process. They did so unarmed and their arrest warrants were kept up.
- The incidents that occurred were resolved by the tripartite monitoring and verification mechanism.

Source: Semana.com

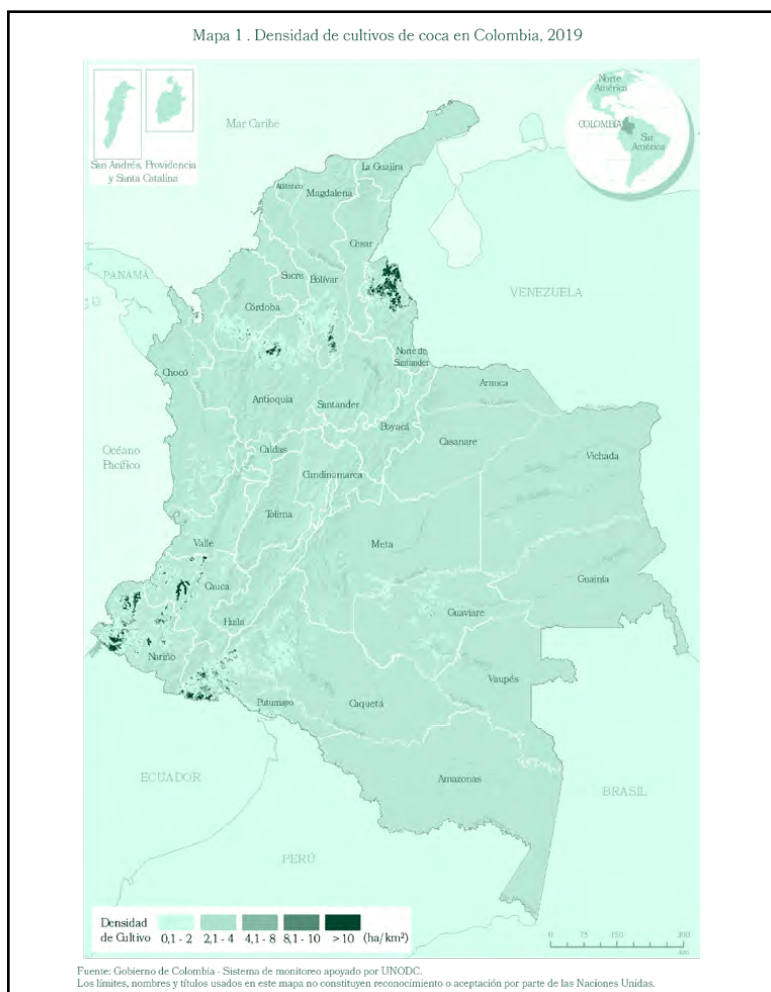
3. Regional variation of reintegration

In order to understand the regional variation of reincorporation processes in different concentration zones, it is imperative to consider the three dimensions mentioned earlier: security and articulation to the legal economy, human rights guarantees and institutional support for their exercise, and leadership and collective management capacity to create spaces for conflict transformation. When these three factors coincide, the chances of reintegration and opportunities for local peacebuilding are high.

The possibility of reintegration refers to physical integrity, articulation with the formal economy, and sustainability of the area over time, with acceptable living conditions and without specific aid for demobilized combatants. This implies close relations with state institutions, links to local politics, and support within civil society. These sets of relations enable the protection of rights in a broad sense. Getting “entry” into the local political community demands leadership for civilian life and collective management capacity, which contribute to create or strengthen institutional spaces for conflict transformation. The development of these skills must be promoted, as it cannot be assumed that they are found among ex-combatants or the municipalities where the settlements are located. These optimal conditions provide the most appropriate environment for glocal peace to flourish.

Institutional support can be understood in several ways. As an initial public investment for the construction of roads, housing, provision of services, development of productive projects, and training to facilitate social and economic integration. ZVTN’s relations with local institutions and politics are also central for security, the guarantee of rights, and possibilities for conflict transformation. It should be noted that the location of the zones in a legal environment is crucial for physical integrity. Illegal economies, whether illicit crops, illegal mining, and smuggling hinder reintegration (see map 11 on the location of coca crops). Illegal activities tend to configure local orders founded on the threat and exercise of violence in which life, rights, and conflict resolution are based on unstable and mostly arbitrary agreements, circumstances that are not conducive to local peacebuilding.

Map 11. The density of coca crops in Colombia, 2017



Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Finally, the collective management capacity recognizes the ex-combatants' agency capability inside and outside the concentration areas. A minimum level of internal cohesion and leadership is required to maintain enthusiasm for a project supported by a communal vision based on cooperative organizations. Mechanisms for resolving conflicts internally and with their environment are essential to ensure reintegration and the possibility of peacebuilding. This challenge must be observed as it evolves.

4. Icononzo: the most fortunate

The reintegration process in the Icononzo Territorial Space for Training and Reincorporation (ETCR) has been the most successful. Its location offers opportunities in terms of security, institutional support for the exercise of rights, and possibilities for conflict transformation. There are clear advantages in being three hours away from the country's capital, in an area of tourism and agricultural production for the capital and regional markets. One is the absence of illicit crops, illegal mining, or an obvious underground economy that requires illegal armed protection or corruption of local civilian and police authorities. This has a positive impact on general security conditions in the area. In addition, there is a high presence of military and police forces because of the existence of military training centers, air bases, recreation areas for retired personnel of the different forces, and recreation clubs for the families of officers and non-commissioned officers. No attacks have been reported in the region against former FARC fighters.

The initial problems created by delays in the construction of housing, infrastructure, and the road between the urban area of Icononzo and the ETCR Antonio Nariño (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2017) were overcome. FARC senator Julián Gallo, alias Carlos Antonio Lozada, was in charge of the region during the war and has a similar responsibility regarding the transit to civilian life of the ex-combatants of this ETCR. This proximity has undoubtedly contributed to the visibility of the zone in the institutional framework of the State and international cooperation. This is the only space that has managed to make progress in the acquisi-

tion of land by the government to normalize its legal status and location within the municipal system, which is crucial to receive public investment resources and channel public social spending. As the spaces were initially conceived as transitory areas, they have operated on land leased to local owners and find themselves in an unresolved legal limbo.

Luz Mery López, alias Valentina Beltrán, known as the Professor in the FARC ranks, ran for mayor of Icononzo in the 2019 local elections in coalition with other groups, including Colombia Humana, under the Icononzo Digno movement. She managed to get all candidates for mayor, including the Democratic Center candidate, who visited the ETCR, to sign a political pact in defense of the Peace Agreement and non-aggression (El Espectador, 2019). López placed third with 7% of the vote and achieved recognition for the zone in the local and institutional political space, which reduces the possibility of human rights violations against ex-combatants.

The location of the space has been an important economic asset for projects of internal consumption and the external market in the area. The markets in Bogotá and the region have offered opportunities for manufacturing craft beer and youth clothing. The best-known projects are the craft beers *La Roja*, which already has a plant in Bogotá and is sold in different entertainment places in the capital, and *La Trocha*, with a plant in Bogotá and offered in different cities in the region. They operate with cooperative structures between ex-combatants, and their performance so far has been remarkable. Something similar has occurred with the *Manifiesta* garment factory, a cooperative structure of former female combatants that used to make military uniforms for FARC. In sum, the possibility of approaching peacebuilding in the ETCR Antonio Nariño in Icononzo is high. In the continuum described in diagram 1, it is located to the end where glocal peace can become a reality.

5. Mesetas: between hope and distrust

Between the two territorial spaces in the municipality, Mesetas probably had the largest concentration of ex-combatants. Approximately 700 demobilized guerrillas were initially stationed in its territory. When government officials asked the owner of the property where the ETCR Mariana Páez was built if he approved of the arrival of ex-combatants, he replied: “If we had them here all the time when they were armed, why shouldn’t we have them when they are unarmed?” (Collective interview with FARC ex-combatants and neighbors, ETCR Mariana Páez, Buenavista, Mesetas, Meta, July 28, 2019). Indeed, for residents of this municipality, the end of the armed confrontation between the government and the guerrillas meant a change of 180 degrees, not just in terms of security, with the end of combats in the rural area and recruitment and murder in the urban area.

This relative calm generated some trust and more investment. Economic activity was repressed by the war. Coca crops were substituted for coffee and the production of gourmet coffee for export developed significantly. Tourism projects blossomed as well. Among many other commercial and agricultural businesses, milk output increased and a dairy processing plant began to buy the local production. As the Secretary of Social Welfare and tourism entrepreneur indicates:

There has been a clear economic benefit from the agreements in terms of clearer and less uncertain prospects. If we are benefiting, why should we go back to war? The agreements have been key for this territory (Interview with the Secretary of Social Welfare, Mesetas Mayor’s Office, July 27, 2019).

Demobilized combatants are not as optimistic as private individuals who have taken economic advantage of the calm environment.

People want to start producing. We need land to build a future on our own fields, but the agreements have frozen. Comprehensive rural reform has not worked. Security is poor. The United Nations has provided key political support, as has international cooperation (Focus group with former FARC fighters, ETCR Mariana Páez, Buenavista, Mesetas, Meta, July 28, 2019).

Public administration procedures and formalities are also perceived as obstacles: “We trusted the State too much. We must comply with many regulations not related to a peace process.” Relations with the mayor and the governor are not the best. They argue that “since they were not taken to Havana to sign, this is not their problem,” a position that has hardened with the government of President Iván Duque. Demobilized combatants indicate that institutional articulation with the local and departmental levels is urgent: “As the ETCR is not taken into account in the budgets, there is no money for health, education, housing improvement. We are not in the Territorial Planning Plan, nor in the Sisben” (Focus group with ex-FARC fighters, ETCR Mariana Páez, Buenavista, Mesetas, Meta, July 28, 2019).

Released ex-combatants concentrated in the ETCR Simón Trinidad are the most critical.

They haven’t kept their word. What have we received? We built the houses. There is no physical security. Productive projects have not worked. Visible needs have not been addressed. There is seed capital, but the projects are individual. Eight million pesos is not enough.

With great disillusionment, ex-combatants assert that the agreement should have been signed much earlier so that “what happened would not have happened. The change of government was fatal. People no longer believe in the government. It does not comply” (Collective interview with FARC ex-combatants, ETCR Simón Trinidad, Mesetas, Meta, July 28, 2019). They insist that “peace is not turning in the rifles. As long as there is inequality, there is no peace. Peace is life, not the precariousness we are in.”

The life trajectory of Alexander Parra, legal representative and coordinator of the ETCR Mariana Páez, summarizes well current contradictions in Mesetas:

I was forced to be a guerrilla. That was like in 1983. At that time, it was either the guerrillas or drug trafficking. I am from San Martín, and at age 13, we lost the house and the farm because of a loan from Caja Agraria that my father took out and we failed, as ha-

ppens to all peasants. The children made their way and I ended up in the FARC-EP, not knowing what that was like. I lasted 37 years and now we are here opening our eyes (Collective interview with FARC ex-combatants, ETCR Simón Trinidad, Mesetas, Meta, July 28, 2019).

For Parra, security, tranquility, and territorial development are essential to acclimate peace. Nevertheless, he insists that “a central axis of this process is the purging of hatreds, grudges, revenge, resentments” (Collective interview with FARC ex-combatants, ETCR Simón Trinidad, Mesetas, Meta, July 28, 2019).

Unfortunately, Parra was murdered within the ETCR in October 2019, a few days before the local elections in which his partner, Luz Marina Giraldo, ran for City Council for a coalition between the FARC party, Colombia Humana, and the Afro-Colombian Democratic Alliance (ADA). According to preliminary investigations, the murder is related to Parra’s discovery of a drug trafficking network in which demobilized members of the ETC Mariana Páez participated and used the security cars of the National Protection Unit (UNP) to transport drugs (El Tiempo, 2019).

This shocking murder highlighted the security risks of the region, where illicit crops or drug trafficking routes to the borders still remain. These illegal activities need “protection,” a factor that generates insecurity and violence, as tragically seen in Parra’s case.

The political participation of ex-combatants in the 2019 local elections was not easy either. These are the moments when institutional spaces dominated by political adversaries become insurmountable barriers. Such was the case with funding for the election campaign. Luz Marina Giraldo, the FARC party’s candidate for City Council in Mesetas points out that the Agreement offered them the opportunity to participate in politics, but the National Electoral Council did not provide resources for the new party to take part in the elections. “There is no equality of conditions,” says Giraldo. The reason, according to the Council, is that parties are entitled to campaign resources according to the accumulated votes of the previous election. Since the FARC party was participating in elections for the first time, it did not have accumulated votes, and therefore no right to state resources to

finance the campaign. For Giraldo, this is a clear imbalance against the new party: “We are at a distinct disadvantage compared to other parties” (Focus group with former FARC fighters, ETCR Mariana Páez, Buenavista, Mesetas, Meta, July 28, 2019).

The end of the confrontation between FARC and the state enabled the development and resurgence of institutional and collective spaces to address problems and different types of conflicts. In the rural area, the Communal Action Boards are recovering their previous capacity to mediate boundary conflicts, family disputes, cattle theft, deforestation, works of collective benefit, and fundraising. Solidary agreements with the government to repair roads have also helped to reactivate the Communal Action Boards. International cooperation training has been equally important. GIZ’s work training women leaders and for political participation stands out (interview with President of Asojuntas de Mesetas, Meta, July 29, 2019). “Today there are about 17 female presidents of Communal Action Boards of the 71 in the municipality, and we hope that in the next elections we will be 50/50,” said the president of the Association of Communal Action Boards of Mesetas.

The Mayor’s Office, the Ombudsman’s Office, the Family Commissariat, and national programs have expanded their institutional presence in the urban area to address topics not previously discussed, such as domestic violence, gender issues, youth and violence prevention, and assistance to victims of the conflict. An institutional framework, albeit incipient, has been set up to support the exercise and defense of rights and to help resolve conflicts. The signing of the Peace Agreement has facilitated the operation of this framework. In addition, international cooperation –Benposta, USAID, GIZ, the Norwegian Council, among others– has been important in funding training and empowerment projects for women and youth networks.

Mesetas is located at the mid-point in the continuum described in diagram 1, with moderate chances of consolidating peace. Security has improved, but not sufficiently. The government’s non-compliance with the implementation of the Agreement –especially the first point of comprehensive rural reform– has created confusion and mistrust among ex-combatants. The disadvantage vis-à-vis other parties in terms of resources for participation in elections has accentuated discontent. Fa-

milies and entrepreneurs who managed to consolidate productive or service activities have been the main beneficiaries of the Agreement. Economic activity and income generation have leaped forward. In terms of conflict transformation, Communal Action Boards in rural areas and new urban local institutions in collaboration with international cooperation agencies have embarked on a promising path, yet to be consolidated. The peace path followed by Mesetas is open to either side of the continuum. It will likely continue to fluctuate in an intermediate situation, as has been the case so far.

6. Tibú: Uncertainty and frustration

The breach of the peace agreement by President Duque's government was like "sprinkling gunpowder in a fire". Indeed, because of the promise of comprehensive rural reform and the Territorial Development Programs (PDETs), in which they participated, coca growers around Caño Indio eradicated a significant part of coca crops on their own initiative. The Municipal Ombudsman acknowledges that in the vicinity of the ETCR:

One hundred percent of the coca was eradicated by the peasants themselves, without the need for the government to pay them to uproot the plants. And to this day the payments have never arrived. They are in a bad economic situation and even enduring hunger (Interview with the Municipal Ombudsman, Tibú, Norte de Santander, August 6, 2019).

The Ombudsman concludes that in the region peace is "a very overused word associated today with a political device of the central power to intervene in the regions."

The ex-combatants concentrated in Caño Indio pose this question:

What has changed for the people, for the demobilized combatants? We had high hopes and violence increased, the agreements were not fulfilled. There is much disillusionment due to non-compliance. Today the main conflict is non-compliance with the agreements.

Santos and Uribe deceived us. They want war (Collective interview with FARC ex-combatants, ETCR Negro Eliécer Gaitán, Caño Indio, Tibú, Norte de Santander, August 7, 2019).

For the director of Tibú's Victims Pastoral, "FARC commanders want peace, they do not want to return to war, while young people are with the dissidents, and if they see that the state is complying, they will return" (Interview with the Director of Tibú's Victims Pastoral, August 7, 2019).

The feeling of frustration is widespread in the region. About half the hectares of coca crops in the department –about 15,000– are concentrated in the municipality of Tibú. After oil extraction, this is the main income-earning economic activity of peasants, traders, and providers of services in the urban area of Tibú. Income from coca cultivation has allowed the coca-growing peasantry to have access to the right to education of their children, the health of their families, decent housing, and the improvement of roads: "Rights are bought in this country, and coca made us subjects of rights", asserts emphatically a communal action leader of the municipality (Focus group with women leaders, Tibú, August 5, 2019).

The insecurity that affects ex-combatants increases frustration. The murder of former FARC fighter Dimar Torres in northern Catatumbo in April 2019, with the complicity of officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers of the Second Army Division in the region, alerted ex-combatants in the ETCR in Caño Indio. "We move at great risk (...) the security risk is very high" (Collective interview with FARC ex-combatants, ETCR El Negro Gaitán, Caño Indio, Tibú, Norte de Santander, August 6, 2019). In addition to FARC dissidents, territorial control is disputed by the National Liberation Army (ELN), groups associated with the former People's Liberation Army (EPL), and networks of the former United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), all linked with mafias that control legal and illegal trafficking on the Colombian-Venezuelan border. At the time of the interview, approximately 160 ex-combatants had been killed nationwide, a figure that continues to grow. In 2018, the homicide rate in Tibú was 212 per 100,000 inhabitants, a very high figure compared to 41 for the department of Norte de Santander

and an average of 28 for Colombia in the same year (see Departamento Nacional de Planeación, base de datos Terridata).

Guaranteeing the exercise of rights in the context of armed conflict is a difficult endeavor. The right to life, individual and collective freedom, freedom of expression, the right of assembly, and in general civil and political rights are currently restricted in Tibú. People are afraid of speaking or speak with caution, life stories are not shared, and for some, especially in rural areas, the priority is to survive amidst the reality they experience. Social leaders have been hit the hardest in this context. Community spokespersons who denounced human rights violations became the target of illegal armed groups operating in the municipality.

Although the demobilized FARC did not participate directly in the local elections of October 2019, it is not ruled out that it established political pacts. Silence surrounded this issue in the conversation at the ETCR in Caño Indio. However, continuing the long history of electoral political violence in the region, Bernardo Betancur, the Conservative Party's candidate for mayor of Tibú, was murdered on September 15 in the rural area during the campaign. He was replaced by his wife, Corina Durán, who was elected mayor, a post that can be exercised with relative safety in the urban area of the municipality.

One point to highlight in this risky context is the role played by Communal Action Boards in mediation, conflict resolution, and territorial governance in rural areas since the 1950s. These boards are part of civil society's governance of the territory and have established dialogues with armed actors, not only obeying, but also setting up a set of rules that they have to abide by (Interview with the advisor of the Social Pastoral of Tibú, 8 August 2019). Any attempt to build peace in Catatumbo must consider this reality of "popular sovereignty," which officials at the national level often equate with a challenge to state authority.

Also noteworthy are efforts by the Diocese of Tibú and Social Pastoral, with international cooperation resources, to eliminate violence from family, social, and political interactions and to support networks of women and youth through projects to strengthen conflict mediation. The context of armed conflict, however, keeps the region trapped in a war logic.

In this context of distrust of the national government, non-compliance with the Peace Agreement, and a buoyant illegal economy around which a “local order” has been built, the possibility of building peace is, at a minimum, very low or complex. Despite all efforts, Tibú tends to be at the far right end of diagram 1, where chances are low unless a 180-degree change in the regional situation reverses this trajectory.

7. Conclusions

This text analyzed three experiences of reintegration of FARC ex-combatants from the perspective of the three dimensions of glocal peace: security, guarantees for the exercise of rights, and an institutional framework for conflict transformation. The analysis from the glocal peace perspective shows that, in the short term, reintegration is a complex issue that requires coordination and leadership between and within the state, ex-combatants, and society. This has been in short supply, especially during the Duque government, elected by a coalition of forces largely opposed to peace negotiations and the Agreement. In other words, a favorable political context is key for the success of reintegration and peacebuilding processes.

Another point to note is the idea of process in the creation of conditions of security, guarantee for the exercise of rights, and consolidation of institutions of conflict transformation. Harmonizing these three dimensions is not easy and does not depend entirely on the will of the protagonists. There may be progress and setbacks, and not always in step. For example, international cooperation has had a major influence on strengthening actors supporting peace and the exercise of rights, even though the conflict has not ceased, or has worsened, as in Catatumbo. The diagram that describes the continuum of possibilities, from glocal peace at one end to the low possibility of reintegration at the other, gives an indication of the diversity of possible combinations along these three dimensions.

It is important to reflect on the prevention generated by collective reintegration in the high spheres of the national government since the

Santos administration. Santos pressed for the reintegration of former guerrillas according to the individual scheme followed in the process with the AUC, in the hope of breaking the solidarity and camaraderie created during the war and the loyalty to the leaders of the old organization. That could have been accomplished through compliance with the Agreement and the development of a relationship with the authorities inspired by citizenship. Instead, what prevails now is distrust and frustration with institutions and discontent that can be reaped by those who are not interested in peace. The Duque government must make a final decision to regularize ETCRs and allow them to be recipients of social investment and other services from different levels of government. If the initial plan was that the zones would disappear on their own, without institutional support, it doesn't seem like it is going to happen.

The fate of the implementation of the Agreement with the FARC has sent a discouraging message to the ELN, in case this organization planned to start negotiations with the current or a different government in the future. Noncompliance by the Duque government put an end to the hopes raised by the Havana negotiations in the regions where the concentration zones were established. Compliance with the Peace Agreement –especially the implementation of comprehensive rural reform and territorial development plans– was an opportunity to include in a more realistic way the regions affected by the armed conflict and their peasant and ethnic populations in a broader idea of a nation. Will we have to wait another decade of armed conflict and violence to finally reach the conditions of glocal peace in much of the territory? Let's hope this will not be the case.

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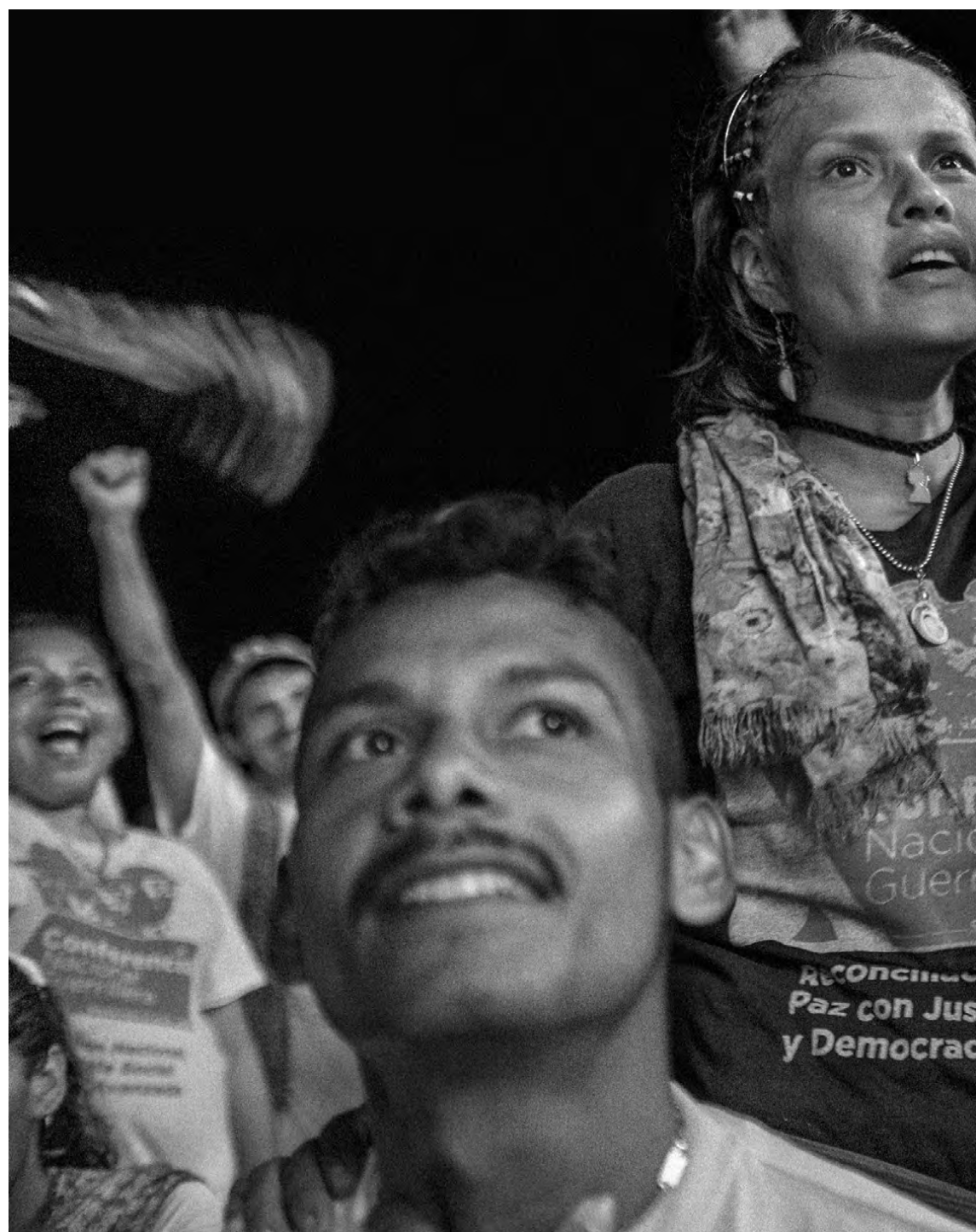
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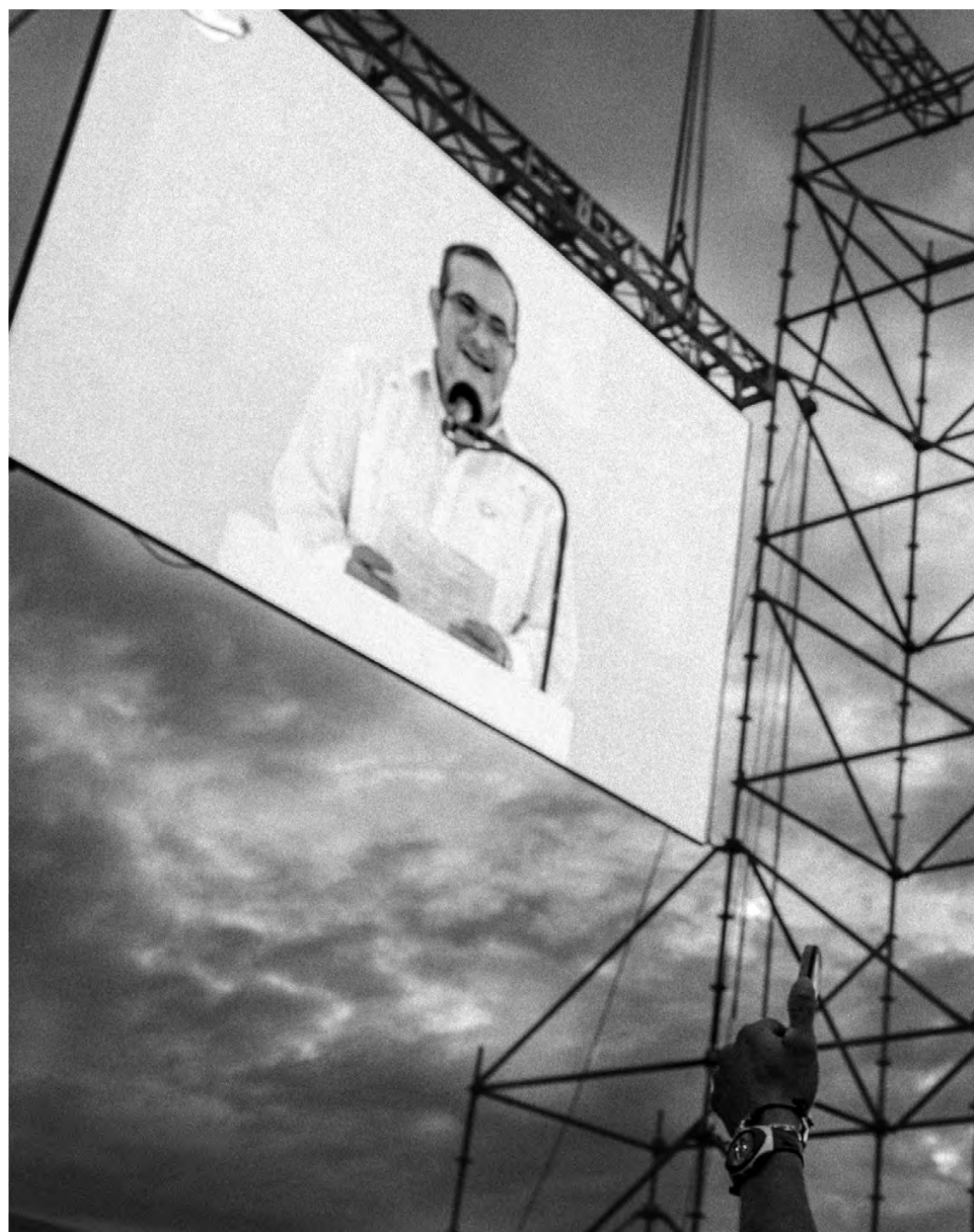
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FARC-EP guerrillas in El Diamante, department of Caquetá, during the signing of the Peace Agreement. September 23, 2016. Photo: Malcolm Linton.



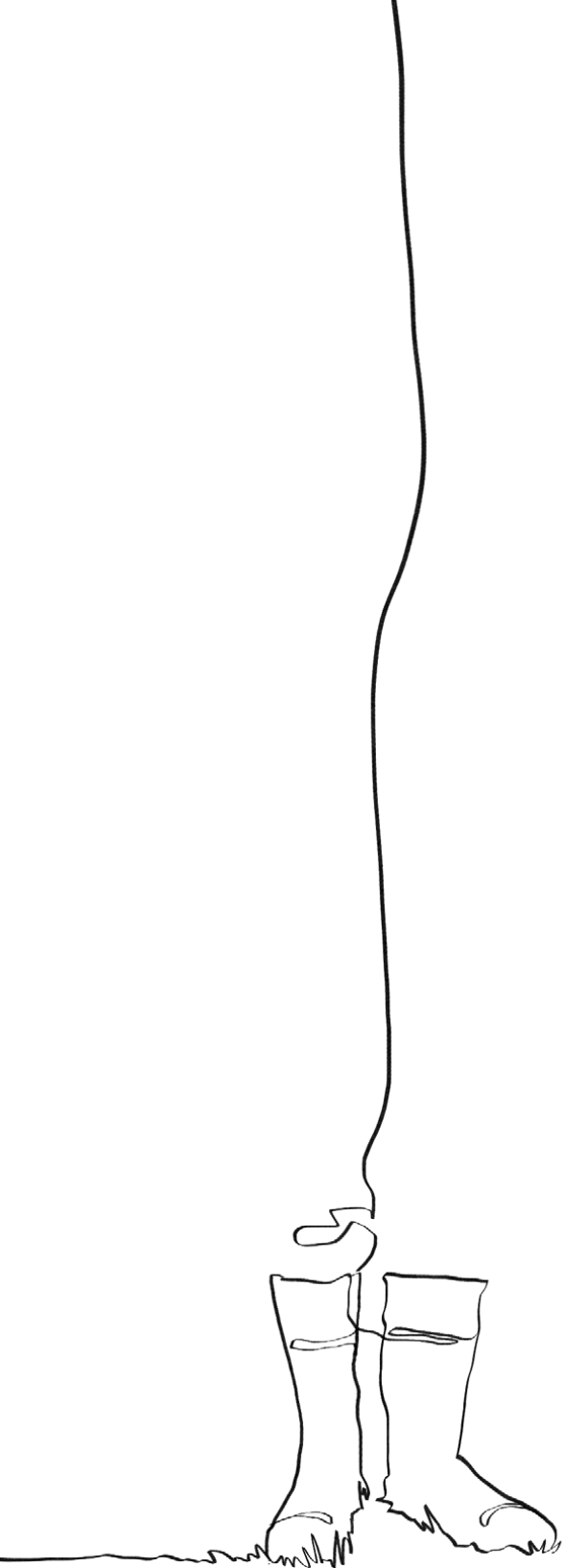


FARC-EP guerrillas in El Diamante, department of Caquetá, watch their leader Rodrigo Londoño, "Timochenko," speak during the signing of the Peace Agreement in Cartagena. September 23, 2016. Photo: Malcolm Linton.





FARC-EP guerrillas in El Diamante, department of Caquetá, watching President Juan Manuel Santos's speech during the signing of the Peace Agreement in Cartagena. September 23, 2016. Photo: Malcolm Linton.





Progress and setbacks on the road to peace: Social mobilization and murder of social leaders in Colombia

Andrés Rodas Vélez and Inge Helena Valencia

After the signing, in November 2016, of the Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace (hereinafter, the Agreement) between the Colombian state and the extinct FARC-EP (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army), Colombia has been experiencing a complex post-agreement period. Some of the great challenges to peacebuilding in the country concern the weak continuity of programs created as a result of the Agreement and, above all, the exacerbation of violence and the unceasing murder of social leaders.

Since 2000, homicidal deaths in Colombia have been substantially reduced. In 2017, when the formal implementation of the Peace Agreement began, the homicide rate was the lowest in the recent history of the conflict, falling to 23 per 100,000 inhabitants, a drop of more than half compared to the level of 2000 (Instituto Nacional de Medicina Legal y Ciencias Forenses, 2008; 2018). However, violence related to the armed conflict and its underlying causes has persisted and mutated, affecting especially social leaders.

The increasing number of murders of human rights defenders in the last 10 years (Programa Somos Defensores, 2018; 2019: 101) led the United Nations to express great concern about this historical phenomenon in the country. While a battle is taking place over the perception and interpretation of this state of affairs, hundreds of leaders continue to be the target of threats, attacks, and assassinations.

This is irrefutably linked to the internal armed conflict. State institutions (e.g. the Ombudsman's Office) and multiple human rights and peacebuilding organizations have repeatedly pointed out the importance of focusing on structural factors of violence that have existed for decades in different regions of the country: economic, political, and social factors that, despite the signing of the Peace Agreement, have brought about death and damaged the social fabric. Many murders of social leaders have occurred in regions where the presence of crops for illicit use has been documented (Comisión Colombiana de Juristas, 2018; Defensoría del Pueblo, 2019) or where Development Programs with a Territorial Approach (PDET) created by the Peace Agreement are being implemented.

However, despite the intensification of violence in recent years, peacebuilding efforts by social organizations and sectors of civil society persist beyond the institutional initiatives promoted by the Agreement. This chapter sets out to discuss these two aspects of the problems faced by Colombia today: the adamant defense of the Agreement, expressed in incessant social mobilizations and peacebuilding efforts, and the exacerbation of violence that affects, above all, social leaders. To further understand this permanent tension between the persistence of war and violence in the face of peacebuilding efforts, we will delve into the case of the northern region of the Cauca department, in southwestern Colombia.

1. Northern Cauca: between social mobilization, armed conflict, and peacebuilding

The northern region of the Cauca Department has energized processes of social mobilization in Colombia. In recent years, Indigenous organizations (e.g. Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas del Norte del Cauca, ACIN, and Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca, CRIC) have undertaken intense mobilizations, and associations like Minga of Social and Community Resistance, a coalition of Afro-descendant, Indigenous, and peasant organizations, have defended the rights of these populations. It is noteworthy that several of these processes of intense mobilization

over the last two years pertain to the defense of peace, the demand for compliance with the Peace Agreement, and the non-militarization of the territories.

A retrospective look reveals Northern Cauca as the cradle of important processes of mobilization and collective action. One example is the organizational processes of Indigenous people that began in the 1970s and led to the recognition of special rights for these communities in the multicultural Constitution of 1991, which allowed the reconfiguration of political life in Colombia. In the 1970s, CRIC emerged as an organizational benchmark in the struggles for the recovery of land, the right to bilingual education of the Nasa and Misak (Guambianos) Indigenous communities, and, despite their colonial origin, the defense of the *resguardos* and the authority of the *cabildos*, one of the principles of their political project. With CRIC as a motivating force, in a coalition, until 1977, with the National Association of Peasant Smallholders (ANUC), during the 1970s this region was marked by persistent Indigenous mobilizations for the recovery of the lands of the *resguardos*. However, this decade was also marked by intense repression that peaked during the government of President Julio César Turbay Ayala (1978-1982) with the adoption, in September 1978, of the so-called Security Statute.

Likewise, during the 1970s and 1980s, the Afro-descendant population of Northern Cauca engaged in active struggle in defense of the rights of peasants and people who, after being dispossessed of their traditional farms, became urban dwellers. Many of these mobilizations, (e.g. the 1985 civic movements in Puerto Tejada and Santander de Quilichao), were undertaken to demand better housing conditions and decent jobs. Solidarity and a shared feeling of rejection against different forms of exclusion, exploitation, and dispossession at the hands of regional elites led to the articulation of these processes of social mobilization of Indigenous organizations and Afro-descendant civic movements with different local processes.

On one hand, as mentioned earlier, these processes led to the materialization of some demands in the multicultural Constitution of 1991. On the other hand, they consolidated an important associative fabric

and allowed people to mobilize collectively in the face of persecution from powerful elite sectors linked to a development model that led to territorial dispossession and armed conflict. Currently, many of these processes continue to denounce and try to prevent dispossession, violence, and militarization of civilian life in the region. In the last two years, organizations and social mobilizations have urgently demanded compliance with a Peace Agreement that, since the advent of the government of Iván Duque, in August 2018, has been dismantled and underfunded.

Within Northern Cauca, Santander de Quilichao stands out as a municipality that invigorates the organizational life of the department. Organizations and communities leading important processes for the defense and construction of regional peace are based there. Among them, the Association of Community Councils of Northern Cauca (ACONC), which includes some of the Afro-Colombian organizational processes in the region, the aforementioned Association of Indigenous Councils of Northern Cauca (ACIN), and Indigenous communities that have resisted the dispossession caused by the expansion of the sugarcane industry and the violence inflicted by armed actors.

2. Social mobilization and peace: from the regional to the national

These organizations have undertaken important initiatives for the defense of peace in Northern Cauca. Since 2015, several of them have established inter-ethnic dialogue tables, recognizing that regional peace should be built by a variety of sectors articulating different visions of territorial development and peace. Also important has been the persistent participation of Indigenous leaders, like Feliciano Valencia –ACIN counselor and currently a senator in the Congress of the Republic– and of Afro-descendant leaders, like Francia Márquez –a member of ACONC and the Community Council of La Toma and current President of the National Peace Council– who have vigorously defended the Peace Agreement and its significance for the populations of a region that for more than 40 years has been affected by armed conflict.

Mobilizations for peace have always correlated with the dynamics of the armed conflict and the signing of peace agreements; as a result, Colombia has simultaneously experienced conflict and post-conflict conditions:

The mobilization for peace in Colombia is correlated with the dynamics of violence and armed conflict as well as the opening of opportunities to achieve peace. Processes of dialogue and negotiation are presented as windows of opportunity (García-Durán, 2006: 183, in CINEP, 2016: 17) (...) for the mobilization of social sectors to promote peace or reject violence.

In other words, situations favoring social mobilization around peace have arisen in parallel with peace processes since the 1980s. For example, towards the end of the 1980s, the mobilization for peace was motivated by the possibility of progress in dialogues with the FARC-EP and smaller guerrilla groups like M-19, the Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT), the People's Liberation Army (EPL), and the Quintin Lame Armed Movement (MAQL), an Indigenous organization created in the Cauca department. The agreements between the government of President Virgilio Barco (1986-1990) and M-19 in 1989 were a decisive step to stimulate citizen participation from the perspective of peace and democratic openness. On the other hand, the largest mobilization for peace in the last 20 years took place during the Havana peace process between the government of President Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2014, 2014-2018) and FARC. In contrast to the Caguán negotiations between the government of Andrés Pastrana (1998-2002) and FARC, when actions for peace declined significantly, in the Havana negotiations citizens were alert and active and participated in scenarios facilitated by the dialogue table. This was especially the case of the victims, who had direct participation in the process (CINEP, 2016: 17).

Concerning the 2016 Peace Agreement with FARC, broad sectors of civil society mobilized in both urban and rural areas in favor of peace. It is noteworthy the support for the victims and the defense of localities and populations most affected by the conflict, such as the municipality of Bojayá, in the Chocó department, the Catatumbo region, in Norte de Santander, or Northern Cauca, in the Cauca department. From the moment the NO option won the plebiscite for peace in October 2016 with

51% of the votes (see Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil, 2016), broad sectors decided to express support for the Agreement through pronouncements and mass mobilizations in the main cities of the country. As noted earlier, they continue to mobilize in its defense, despite the slowdown and underfunding of programs created as a result of the Agreement since President Iván Duque came to power.

In a context of social mobilization and protest in Latin America, symptomatic of generalized discontent in the region (Franz and Gómez, 2020), a national strike was organized against the lack of support for public education, the problems generated by the privatized health system, the constant violation of human rights by various actors, including state actors, and the assassination of hundreds of Indigenous, women, Afro-Colombian, and peasant social leaders. Massive mobilizations in late 2019 and early 2020 demanded structural systemic change and expressed support for the Peace Agreement.

3. Peacebuilding in Northern Cauca: Between the PDETs as an institutional initiative and peace from below

In the context of implementation of the Peace Agreement, Northern Cauca has been a region of special importance, because one of the 16 PDET, the Alto Patía and Northern Cauca, is being implemented there. These programs were designed and developed with a participatory approach to solve the most pressing problems of communities and close the gap between urban and rural areas. For this purpose, as a result of the Agreement between the Colombian State and the now demobilized FARC-EP, 16 sub-regions affected by the expansion of illegal economies, elevated poverty rates, and high incidence of armed conflict were prioritized. Since President Duque's advent to power, however, several programs and projects related to the Peace Agreement, such as the PDETs or the Comprehensive National Program for the Substitution of Illicit Crops (PNIS), are being dismantled and underfunded. This evidences the government's limited political will to comply with the Agreement.

It is important to remember that, as a result of the Agreement, three of the Territorial Training and Reincorporation Spaces (ETCR) where demobilized FARC combatants have settled to ensure their reintegration into civilian life were located in this region.

These spaces, formerly known as Transitional Local Zones for Normalization (ZVTN), are located in the municipalities of Buenos Aires (El Cedral), Caldono (Los Monos), and Miranda (Monterredondo). The lack of resources to finance their training programs, the murder of former combatants –by October 2020, 234 had been killed–, and the national government’s decision to relocate some ETCRs, including two from Cauca, have increased feelings of insecurity among ex-combatants.

War and peacebuilding efforts coexist in Northern Cauca. Communities and civil society have managed to resist violence through intense social mobilizations and proposals from associations and social organizations as part of individual and collective peacebuilding initiatives from below.

Many citizens of this region believe it is important to associate peace with tranquility and well-being, trust between different people and groups, and even confidence in state institutions. Social organizations express the need to understand peace as associated with the absence of conflict and, especially, of war, which between 2016 and 2018 was very important in the region. Two situations stand out in this regard. The first is that while peace was signed with one of the actors in the conflict (FARC), armed conflict and violence with actors like ELN, the Bacrim, and FARC dissidents persist. Several social leaders interviewed point out the changes that took place after FARC demobilized and concentrated in the ETCRs, and the deep uncertainty generated by the arrival of armed actors trying to fill the territorial void left by its departure.

The second is the need to understand that peacebuilding initiatives must include notions of *social, racial, and environmental justice*. Some social sectors acknowledge the importance of the Peace Agreement and the concept of territorial peace so central to it, and many were familiar with it because they took part in the process facilitated by the Territory Renewal Agency (ART)

for designing the PDETs. However, it is essential to recognize the need to transform the living conditions of historically excluded regions. Two additional situations stand out. The first is the insistence on the recommendation that peace should impact and contribute to transforming people's lives. Some of the leaders that participated in the focus groups raised several questions concerning the transformations undergone by land tenure in the region:

How can we speak of peace when there are no sufficient job opportunities, no decent health or education conditions? Or how can we speak of peace when the Afro-descendant populations of Northern Cauca are being dispossessed of their land in municipalities where they have traditionally settled like Santander de Quilichao, Puerto Tejada, Guachené, or Villa Rica?

The second and critical point is a persistent narrative by Afro-descendant and Indigenous leaders concerning the potential regional impacts of peace, as synthesized in the phrase: "may peace not take the little the war left behind." In the case of Santander de Quilichao and Northern Cauca, this alludes to the possibility that the peace implemented locally will accentuate the extractive logic of legal actors (logging and mining companies) and illegal armed groups seeking to capture illegal rents associated with illicit crops and gold mining. Many leaders spoke of *"the need for the State to ensure compliance with the agreements and avoid deepening the extractivist model that perpetuates the dispossession and impoverishment of many communities."*

Finally, we wish to emphasize that peace is also built from below, from grassroots social processes, and that in Santander de Quilichao two peacebuilding initiatives stand out. The first concerns building peace by articulating processes of Afro-descendant, Indigenous, and peasant populations where common interests and projects converge; in synthesis, an inter-ethnic peace that makes visible the region's conditions, problems, and particularities. The second is the importance of recognizing singular experiences marked by race, ethnicity, and gender; what could be called intersectional peace (Alves, Rodríguez, and Valencia, 2020).

4. Transformation of the dynamics of violence in the post-agreement period

Despite important processes of mobilization, Northern Cauca has experienced persistent dynamics of violence and armed conflict. One explanation is the geostrategic importance of the territory: it is a fundamental route to reach Cali (the third-largest city in the country), it provides access to the Pacific Ocean, and it is a significant corridor for the illicit traffic of arms and drugs. As a strategic point for the development and expansion of illicit economies and armed groups, the entire chain of drug trafficking is integrated into the region: crops for illicit use, laboratories for processing cocaine, routes for trafficking coca paste, cocaine, and marijuana. The latter has been greatly appreciated in recent years due to an increase in demand and has generated many disputes around its commercialization and control.

Northern Cauca has historically been disputed by the state, armed actors, and various economic agents. Because of illegal income related to illicit coca crops and illegal mining, legal and illegal actors have constantly used violence to consolidate their political and economic power. Currently, the region is experiencing a resurgence of violence by FARC dissidents and other actors financed by drug trafficking, especially in corridors or epicenters of illegal economies like Corinto, Miranda, or El Naya.

In recent years, violence in northern Cauca has mutated as a result of the Peace Agreement. Regional leaders point out that war and violence persist and have been exacerbated, and threats and murders against social leaders have worsened, as FARC's disappearance has allowed many armed actors to move more freely in the territories. In the context of the current pandemic, illegal armed actors continue to exercise violence and control movement to and from municipalities, with the excuse of protecting the community from possible contagion. They are also engaged in efforts to seize the territorial control exercised by *cimarronas*, Indigenous, and peasant guards for the protection of their territories amidst the pandemic.

Consequently, armed confrontations and violent actions in Northern Cauca have systematically increased in recent years. Three aspects must be taken into account to understand the upsurge in violence in the region. First, the increase in territorial disputes and selective assassinations, especially in strategic corridors like the Naya River, where illegal economies associated mainly with drug trafficking and mining prevail. Second, the reconfiguration of illegal armed groups, with FARC dissidents and other actors devoid of political leaders attempting to take over territories. Third, a logic of securitization is being established in Northern Cauca, projecting the region as a “future zone” or strategic area for integral intervention by the Armed Forces.

In the context of unstable transition in many areas of the country, the idea of stabilization, understood as a set of measures and plans to restore security and lay the foundations for economic reconstruction through a strong state presence and militarization, has gained favorability in the current government. Consequently, Northern Cauca has experienced intense confrontations and a resurgence of violence that has especially affected social leaders.

5. Who are the social leaders and what is their role in peacebuilding in Colombia?

It is necessary to understand the correlation between violent acts against social leaders and the implementation of the Peace Agreement signed by the Colombian government and the FARC-EP. The murder of social leaders is one of the most alarming issues in the implementation of the Agreement. Depending on the source, in a span of two years (2016-2018) there were between 260 and 622 murders. How then should the upsurge in violence against social leaders be understood? What role do they play? Why are they the target of attacks and murders? How are we to explain the paradoxical Colombian reality of experiencing simultaneously what many consider a context of peacebuilding and the increasing number of human rights defenders victimized by these events?

First, it is important to understand that social leaders are recognized as such by their communities and the groups and causes they defend. They coordinate and support collective processes that impact directly the life of their communities, dignify their conditions, and build social fabric. Social leaders work for local causes that often are their own experiences and stories. They represent a long process of formation and are, to some extent, the articulating axis of discontent in their contexts, connecting actors inside and outside of politics for the common welfare of their societies (Comisión Colombiana de Juristas, 2018: 9; Defensoría del Pueblo, 2019; González Posso, 2018: 4; Programa Somos Defensores, 2017: 14). In other words, a leader is “a human being with a vocation to serve a collective cause” (Barbosa et al., 2019: 22). This is reflected in interviews with representatives of human rights and peacebuilding organizations:

A social leader is a person capable of managing the defense of a right, or the realization of a right, on behalf of a group, that is, on behalf of a community, on behalf of a reference group. In other words, although managing something that benefits him personally, it transcends that benefit and moves to the field of collective interest.



A leader is a person who champions the defense of the rights of a community, processes that claim the rights of the territory, of women, students, trade unionists ... any person who champions a process that demands the fulfillment of constitutionally guaranteed rights neglected by the state.

The social leaders' most common fields of action are the communal, community, peasant, or agrarian spheres; the protection of environmental rights, the rights of women, LGBTI community, Afro-descendants, Indigenous people, labor unions, student councils and representatives, and Human rights activists, among others (Consejería Presidencial para los Derechos Humanos, 2019: 9; Defensoría del Pueblo, 2019; Programa Somos Defensores, 2017: 15-17). Although not exhaustive, this typology illustrates the causes behind their actions.

Second, the causes they represent are political in nature and articulate collective interests, which tends to escalate tensions that have historically generated violence in Colombia. Although not new, these tensions explain violence against human rights defenders and collective processes.

After the signing of the Peace Agreement, the demobilization of the FARC-EP, and the formal beginning of the implementation of the agreement, the social and political agendas experienced a fundamental change in the discourse of the Colombian population. The change from themes and priorities strongly focused on the military sphere led to discussions of other agendas and problems, symptomatic of structural factors of violence in a society marked by high levels of inequality and poverty. In this new context, where the agenda of peace and transformation prevails in the political arena and the internal conflict is reconfigured after the demobilization of thousands of guerrillas, social leaders have come to occupy a more prominent role in their communities and causes. Although the opening of new channels of communication and participation represents important progress in the development of the community's democratic action, it is also one of the reasons why social leaders became, once again, the target of armed groups with their own economic and political interests.

[...] Perhaps that is another reason (...), to the extent that these leaders in the negotiation process with the FARC during the Santos government became much more visible in their capacity to engage in a political exercise and direct democracy, they entered a space with a margin of greater risk, of greater visibility [...]

[...] Now, when we talk about the assassination of social leaders, that does not mean that in Colombia this happened after the signing of the Peace Agreement. What happens is that before it was less visible because the conflict made it invisible.

[The leader] is simply a person who stands out in a collective subject or who has a greater capacity to represent publicly the interests of that group, then he assumes a more visible role, tends to concentrate the representation of the interests of the organization, of users of public services, and, consequently, tends to be attacked.

The leaders' recognition in their communities translates into local legitimacy to build peace and transform realities. At the same time, their actions become, in one way or another, collective processes for the generation of alternative development plans with a local focus. This creates a more accurate image of the Colombian reality, marked by a great diversity of experiences and conditions of existence, and raises the possibility of proposing local solutions to transform the centralist nature of national politics. Their proposals for change and citizen participation call for an understanding of peace from a territorial perspective:

We are already giving a last name to peace in Colombia: we call it territorial peace [...]. Because territorial peace is the best. It is not the peace of the center in Bogotá and the guns, [...] but rather how to live in the territories with equity, how to remain in them, how not to feel that you are at risk of losing your territory to a transnational corporation.

Many of the murdered leaders in Colombia belonged to processes or organizations that defended or were part of the implementation of the Peace Agreement, of the voluntary substitution of illicit crops, the Comprehensive National Program for the Substitution of Illicit Crops, and the Development Programs with a Territorial Approach. According

to Iepri-Comisión Colombiana de Juristas (2018), the selective murder of social leaders in departments like Cauca, Valle, and Nariño is linked to the implementation of PDETs. The report indicates that 56.15% of all murders since the signing of the Peace Agreement have occurred in municipalities prioritized for the implementation of such Programs.

6. Final reflections

Colombia is torn between war and peace, between the upsurge in violence, the murder of social leaders, and the defense of the Peace Agreement. The juncture created by the signing of the Agreement led to increased mobilization in its defense in a context of marked polarization. A common explanation links the murder of social leaders to denunciations about illegal activities in regions with illicit crops, processing of drugs (in particular coca leaf into cocaine), or illegal mining extraction. Nevertheless, an important point is that the murder of social leaders is related to the way legal and illegal local elites create and sustain local and often authoritarian political orders.

When stable local orders are created jointly by criminal groups and local political actors, effective processes of social mobilization can be perceived as threatening and are violently repressed (Albarracín, Milane, Valencia, 2020). This has happened before in Colombia and has constantly trapped the country between war and peace. The momentum experienced after the signing of the Peace Agreement, despite the polarization of Colombian society, has decreased in recent years, especially on the part of the National Government. The mobilizations of late 2019 and early 2020 have lost strength in the context of the pandemic and the restrictive rules of confinement. Building a stable peace in Colombia will have to place at the center communities and groups historically marginalized from the political sphere. Social leaders must be included in collective processes for the articulation of alternative development plans with a local focus and work together to create territorial peace. The themes of social change and structural transformation included in the Peace Agreement and the growing social mobilization must frame peacebuilding work from the perspective of the protection of human rights.

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Doris Salcedo, *Quebrantos* (Devastation). The artist summoned citizens to the Plaza de Bolívar to carry out a “collective mourning” for the murders of social leaders around the country. Bogotá, June 10, 2019. Photo: Diana Rey Melo.






Feminist performance, "A rapist in your way." The event was accompanied by posters with the names of 238 women victims of femicides in Colombia. Bogotá, January 12, 2019. Photo: Diana Rey Melo



Borders, state, and armed conflict in Colombia

Diana Rico Revelo y Luis Trejos Rosero



“It would appear that in the peace that was signed other sectors emerge that complicate the life of the residents, the region, or the communities because it seems that there is a vacuum of authority or presence of authority.” These remarks of a citizen interviewed in Manaure in the framework of the Project on Glocal Peace, after the signing of the Peace Agreement between the Colombian government and the FARC-EP (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People’s Army) in 2016, reflect the institutional vacuum in border areas where the armed conflict has been most intense and a reconfiguration of socio-political dynamics linked to the implementation of the Agreement is currently taking place. Here, as in other border areas, state institutionality is precarious and the state’s presence is non-existent or extremely limited.

A precondition for peacebuilding in the borders is the establishment of the monopoly of force in the hands of the state in areas formerly controlled by the guerrillas, in order to guarantee security as well as individual and collective rights of citizens and to regulate conflicts within the institutional framework. This implies restructuring the role of the state at the borders, understanding state presence as the uninterrupted fulfillment of its fundamental obligations or functions, such as administering justice, providing security, collecting taxes, and guaranteeing the provision of and access to basic public services (Trejos, 2015).

From this perspective, the challenge of institutional peacebuilding on the borders during the post-agreement period is to restructure the historic differential presence of the Colombian state in these areas (Bitar and González, 2017; Duncan, 2014; González, 2017; Serje, 2011). Such differential presence has outlined a geography of power distribution concentrated in urban centers with integrated political, legal, economic, and social circuits, while large rural areas, including border conflict zones, are excluded and marginalized from the provision of basic services. This has facilitated and encouraged the emergence and consolidation of parallel social orders where coexistence is based on violence and the use of force (Trejos, 2015).

This context is invariable in the 12 border departments of Colombia, with a linear extension of 6,342 kilometers. To a large extent, the absence or limited presence of the state in these areas is due to their geographical characteristics and the distance that separates them from the political and productive centers in the Andean zone of the country (Bitar and González, 2017). An illustration of this is that Bogotá and some departmental capitals are only connected by air: Puerto Carreño (Vichada), Puerto Inírida (Guainía), Mitú (Vaupés), and Leticia (Amazonas). It is noteworthy that only 9.1% (4.2 million Colombians) of the total population lives in border areas (land, river, and sea), of which a large part are Afro-Colombian and Indigenous peoples (Hernández, Rincón, and Aldala, 2018).

Furthermore, the institutional and developmental backwardness of Colombian border areas is due in part to ignorance of their realities. To a large extent, policies aimed at their development fail because they have been designed in the national capital without any consideration of local actors and conditions of existence (Trejos, 2015). Among the consequences are the lack of security guarantees and the distribution of resources in remote areas from capital cities, which means that residents have fewer opportunities for human and social development. It is therefore understandable that leaders interviewed in Manaure about their perceptions of peace in the post-agreement period mention the need to achieve social justice in their territories through physical security, education, employment, and peaceful coexistence.

The absence of the state in the border regions of Colombia has created a favorable context for the emergence and evolution of the armed conflict. The limited institutional presence in these areas has allowed parastatal or insurgent groups to fulfill some functions and establish social control. However, it is expected that, as a result of the Peace Agreement with the FARC-EP, the state will come to territories where it has traditionally had a weak presence. Nevertheless, this does not depend on the existence of the Agreement but on its real and effective implementation, especially in peripheral and border areas of the country (Bitar and González, 2017). Although institutional intervention in border regions was not explicitly stipulated in the Peace Agreement, the accord asserts the relevance of

starting a transitional phase to contribute to greater integration of our territories, greater social inclusion –especially of those who have lived on the margins of development and have suffered because of the conflict–, and to strengthen our democracy so that it can spread out all over the national territory and ensure that social conflicts are processed through institutional channels (Acuerdo final para la terminación del conflicto y la construcción de una paz estable y duradera, 2016: 6).

However, almost four years after the Agreement was signed, no institutional measures for the transformation of power dynamics aimed at sustainable peace on border areas have been adopted. In this scenario, different illegal armed groups vie for control, trying to fill the power vacuum left by the FARC-EP. Meanwhile, institutional measures are limited to sending the public force whenever events of national impact occur, such as those that took place in August 2020 in Samaniego, in the department of Nariño, on the border with Ecuador (El Espectador, 2020).

In this vein, the challenge for the Colombian state is to design and implement *borderization* policies to offer conditions commensurate with the terms of the Peace Agreement. *Borderization* is understood as the process by which states establish, maintain, and transform the location, marking, and extension of borders and their associated meanings and functions (Benedetti, 2014). This will facilitate building a stable and lasting peace to break the historic cycles of violence in border areas.

Our assumption in this chapter is that borders and boundaries are not static but change continuously due to logics that are specific to each territory and differ from those of non-peripheral areas. *Borderization* processes consist of three components: districts, crossings, and posts. The border districts are divisions of the national territory created to carry out actions related to defense; security; urban, environmental, and road development; land titling and expropriation; and other actions concerning the care and protection of strategic resources (Benedetti, 2014).

The concept of *borderization* is relevant for the implementation of the Peace Agreement because it allows planning for state institutions to fully operate in peripheral border areas in order to provide public services to the population and guarantee fundamental individual and collective rights. The implementation of the Peace Agreement in border areas will reduce violence and solve historic structural problems at the root of violent conflicts, such as land distribution, security, political participation, and the upgrading of public services (Bitar and González, 2017).

1. Legal foundations of border areas

Knowledge about the legal foundations of border areas in order to materialize the idea of peace based on the constructive transformation of conflicts is important for two reasons. First, because they are referents for the adoption of development plans and policies to implement the Peace Agreement, and second, because, by their normative nature, they can facilitate or challenge its implementation. The legal system's differential approach to borders implies that peacebuilding in areas of high migratory flow will differ from other areas of the country (Tuirán and Trejos, 2017).

This process began in Colombia with Decree 3448 of 1983, which established a special statute for border areas, provided incentives for their development, and issued other provisions. Articles 80, 239, and 337 of the 1991 Political Constitution defined the state's vision of border areas, recognizing their particularities and diversity.

The 1991 Constitution addressed issues related to the development of communities in border areas (article 289), the conservation and care of border protected areas (article 80), and the creation of special regimes for border territories (article 337). Likewise, Law 191 of 1995 created a special regime for border areas in order to promote and facilitate their socio-economic, scientific, and cultural development.

Two years later, the Constitutional Court, in Ruling C-076/1997, defined border areas as:

those places where residents live a different reality from other national sectors by their proximity to neighboring countries, which notably influences their cultural activities, the exchange of goods and services, the movement of people and vehicles, and as a result of the aforementioned circumstances, generates the free circulation of currencies with the impact this entails on the regional economy (Constitutional Court, 1997).

In keeping with the foregoing, Ruling C-269 of 2000 mandated the adoption of the following measures:

a specific state mission to foster, stimulate, and promote border areas (...) To that extent, the solutions adopted must take into account the advantages of the situation in those areas, in order to benefit from them and to promote economic integration with neighboring countries, facilitating the promotion of cooperation and integration projects with neighboring territorial entities to achieve economic, social, and community development, efficient provision of public services, and preservation of the environment (Corte Constitucional, 2000: 16).

In a 2018 report, the Ombudsman's Office explains the status of Colombian regulations on immigration as follows:

Despite being a fundamental right recognized in the Constitution and international norms ratified by the country, and which would therefore require a statutory law, no migration law regulates this sector, notwithstanding progress on particular issues through specific mechanisms such as Law 1565 of 2012. On the contrary, the normative development has taken place through decrees and Conpes docu-

ments, which has led to a regulation that international forums have deemed fragmented in the past (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2017: 22).

Law 677 of 2001 declared the border municipalities of Ipiales, Cúcuta, Valledupar, and Buenaventura special economic export zones. It also addressed issues related to border development but did not create or indicate the necessary routes, institutions, or procedures to solve the problems that hinder development in these territories (Consejo Nacional de Política Económica y Social, 2014).

Subsequently, Law 1454 of 2011 indicated the state's obligation to actively promote associative dynamics between national territorial entities and those of neighboring countries in order to form strategic alliances to foster cultural and socioeconomic development. Years earlier, Conpes 3603 of 2009 stated that the "instruments to implement provisions that benefit the migrant population were not effective" (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2017: 22)

In turn, the National Development Plan 2010-2014 adopted as a national objective the formulation of differential public policies and the mobilization of human and material resources in order to stimulate strategic sectors for the development of border areas. For its part, the 2014-2018 National Development Plan put into practice the implementation of Integrated Service Centers and an operational model in Binational Border Care Centers (Cebaf), National Border Care Centers (Cenaf), and border crossings.

The 2018-2022 National Development Plan establishes the need to develop a comprehensive migration policy to respond to migratory flows from neighboring countries and stabilize and develop border territories. The Plan also states that:

Border areas face relevant challenges created by the presence of criminal economies and the activity of illegal armed actors that generate violence and insecurity, institutional erosion, and environmental depredation (p. 109).

Likewise, it recognizes that "one of the characteristics of most Colombian border areas is their distance from the great economic,

social, cultural, and political centers, among others. This reinforces their peripheral situation and marginality” (p. 109).

2. Limitations for development and peace in border areas

The obstacles to the development of border areas in Colombia are not due to a lack of laws or regulations to promote it, but to the inability of the state (national and local) to enact these policies and to the lack of political will by local elites to implement the Peace Agreement (Estrada, 2019). The marked institutional weakness at the local level has a direct impact on this situation:

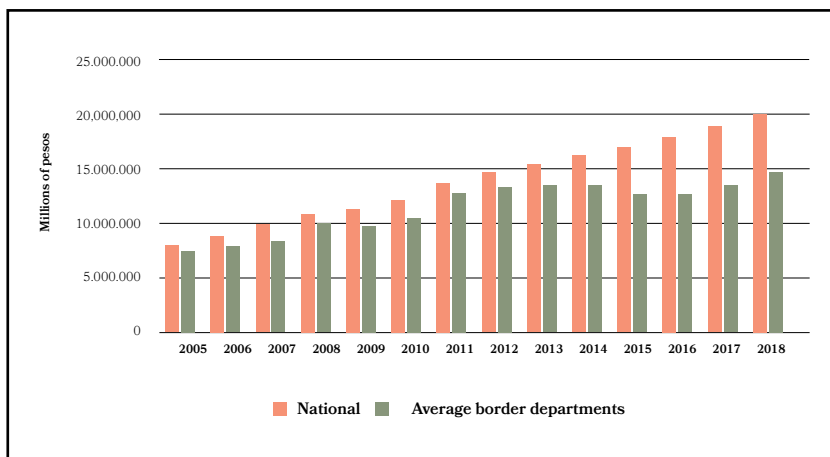
The technical and administrative weakness of territorial entities constitutes a barrier to the process of territorial implementation of public policies in Colombia. At the same time, the territories furthest from the Andean center have had to assume the administration of investment and operational resources in contexts of generalized violence (Tuirán and Trejos, 2017: 1).

Figures 12 to 14 show that per capita GDP growth is much higher at the national level than the average of the 12 border departments. This is also the case of net coverage in secondary education, which is lower in border areas; the national infant mortality rate of children under one year of age per 1000 live births is also lower. It should be noted that these figures are the average of all border departments; however, due to the large size of the Colombian territory, some areas of these departments are not part of the border regions.

In any case, what is evident in these peripheral areas is the state’s greater inability to materialize its entire institutional structure, to the detriment of populations in a situation of permanent vulnerability in many of them.

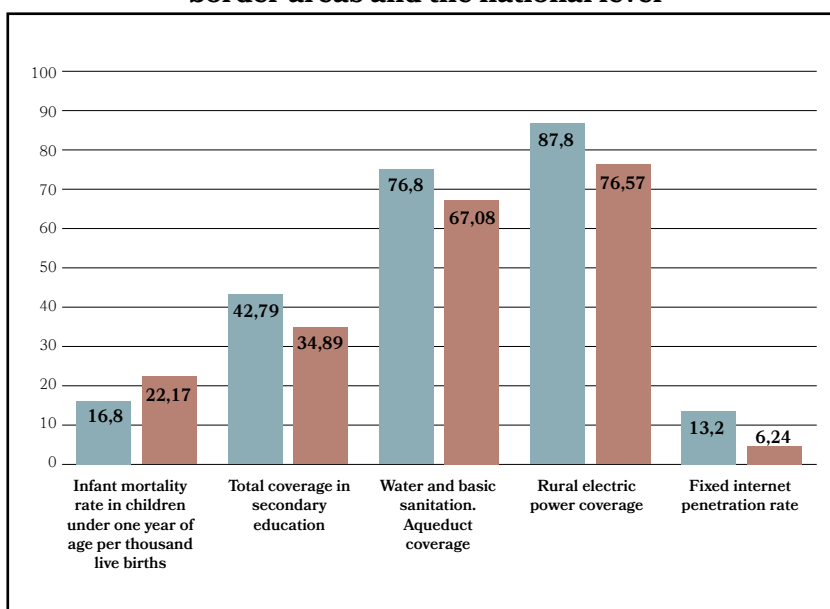


Figure 12. Gross Domestic Product per capita at current prices, 2005-2018



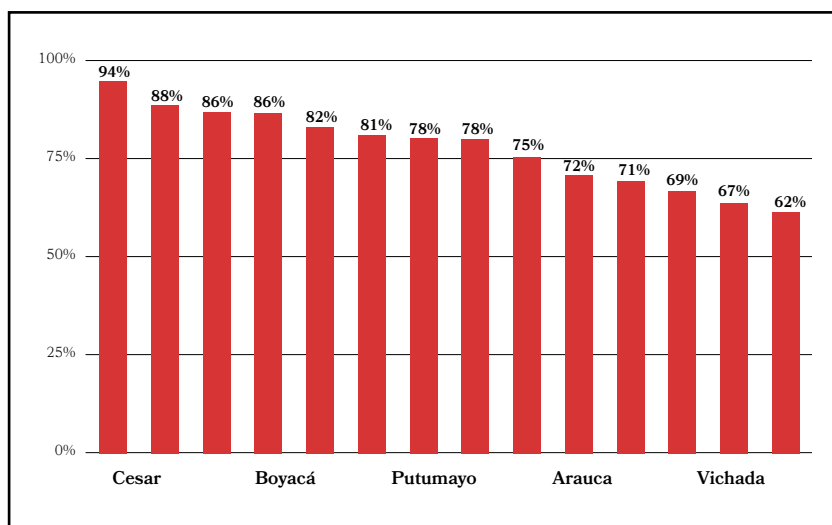
Source: Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística, 2018.

Figure 13. Comparison of indicators in border areas and the national level



Source: Estimates of the National Department of Planning based on various sources available at Terridata, DNP, 2019. Taken from Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2018-2022 (p. 109).

Figure 14. Rate of education coverage



Source: Bitar y González, 2017.

3. Hypothesis

Security problems in Colombia's borders arise from a combination of geographical and institutional (weak administrations) factors, as well as from strategic considerations of armed actors, as in armed conflicts borders become essential territories for the establishment of military, political, and economic and logistical rearguards (Linares, 2019). Hence, documents signed by criminal organizations are frequently distributed in the communities to intimidate social leaders and ex-combatants who participate in community initiatives for the defense of rights and territories (Ávila, 2018). In the interviews conducted in the framework of the Glocal Peace Project in Manaure, department of La Guajira, reference is made to the lack of security at the borders:

They are going to hinder the process...there are confrontations with other groups outside the law. We always have things that are presented as the *bellaco*, like micro-trafficking. What else? The lack of opportunities, and it is necessary to develop the educational

process more, in order to assume this process, and to have some training so that people can develop in their economic activity (interview framed in the glocal peace project, 2019).

In military terms, borders enable armed actors to evade the armed action of the state, which is limited by the sovereignty of the state in which they seek refuge. Politically, they facilitate the formation of transnational support networks with the participation of state and non-state actors; and in economic-logistical terms, they allow access to international financial resources from illicit traffic and goods and services needed to sustain armed actions (Salehyan, 2009; Jean and Rufin, 1996; Echandía and Cabrera, 2017).

4. Challenges of implementation on the border

After the signing of the Agreement to end the armed conflict with the Colombian government in 2016 and the subsequent process of disarmament, demobilization, and settlement of ex-combatants in delimited territorial spaces, there was a reconfiguration in the dynamics of the territorial presence of and military confrontation between illegal armed actors. This was particularly the case in areas where, as the hegemonic actor, the FARC-EP used to guarantee some degree of order and governance (Trejos and García, 2019).

In this new context, several armed groups vie for control over territories, income, and populations formerly controlled by FARC-EP structures. The ELN (National Liberation Army), neo-paramilitaries (Gaitanista Self-Defense Forces of Colombia and Rastrojos), and organized crime groups have now been joined by FARC-EP dissidents and rearmed groups in border areas.

As a result of the Agreement, armed violence has decreased in border departments like Guajira and Cesar, but new violent conflicts have emerged between ELN and EPL (Popular Liberation Army) in Norte de Santander or between FARC-EP dissidents and ELN for control of the territory. However, as stated in the aforementioned interview, the indicators of the economic sector, especially tourism, have improved,

as have those of the security sector: the level of violent deaths has been reduced in areas where corpses could be seen before (glocal peace project, 2019). However, the Peace Agreement has not focused particularly on borders nor has it implemented the norms on border areas that call for differential treatment because of their specific conditions.

Furthermore, the conceptions of peace of border residents must be taken into account. As stated by one of the participants in the focus group in the framework of the Glocal Peace Project, the concept of peace varies according to context (glocal peace focus group, 2019). This can be associated with the relativism of some authors when conceptualizing peace; in effect, this is an intersubjective construction of communities (Galtung, 1981; Boulding, 2000).

The end of FARC-EP's hegemonic control in the Colombian-Venezuelan border coincided with the broad institutional and humanitarian crisis in Venezuela. This has rendered this zone particularly vulnerable to armed violence and criminality and has configured a large gray area on this border, since Colombia's institutional reactions do not have a corresponding response on the Venezuelan side.

On the other hand, there has been a close association between violence in Colombia and border areas. The reason is that "internal conflicts tend towards greater *borderization* because it is there where the practices and continuities of violence find favorable scenarios in the face of conflict with the state" (Ríos, Bula and Morales, 2019: 116). One explanation is that "it is in border scenarios where the construction of communities with cultural codes and symbols may find greater distances and differences with the mono-national and mono-cultural structure of the state" (Ríos, Bula and Morales, 2019: 116). Consequently, in reference to borders, the authors assert that:

their porosity and governance deficits, associated with poverty, economic backwardness, or weak institutions end up constituting a special breeding ground for the dynamics of continuity of violence of the internal armed conflict (Ríos, Bula and Morales, 2019: 116).

The implementation of the Peace Agreement between the Colombian state and the FARC-EP requires a differential approach in border areas

to allow state institutions to come to these territories. This will prevent illegal armed groups and organizations from taking over areas where the FARC-EP used to exercise authority. Indeed, dissidents of this organization that did not join the Peace Agreement are present in border regions, especially in areas where illegal economies are more likely to emerge and develop (De Castro and Avellaneda, 2019).

In line with this, an Oxford University study revealed potential challenges on the country's borders in the context of the post-agreement period:

the reopening of the border could lead to an influx of Venezuelans entering Colombia. Without contingency plans, such movements at the border could have a destabilizing effect (...); various illegal groups will move to regions with limited state presence and will cross the borders, just as ex-combatants who reject disarmament may do themselves (...); former FARC militants can reorganize into new groups near the borders, due to illicit economic opportunities, the weak presence of the state, and the impunity that these zones provide (...); there will be a reorganization of participants in different illicit routes and power struggles over roles in drug trafficking, gasoline smuggling, human trafficking, sexual exploitation, and other forms of organized crime. This will be particularly apparent in border areas (Idler, 2016: 5).

5. Conclusion

The historic conditions of border areas in Colombia, related to institutional weakness and the limited presence of the state, have allowed illegal groups to exercise authority over the territory and the population. While this represents a great challenge for the consolidation of peace in the country, the full institutional presence of the state in these areas would guarantee a real implementation of the Peace Agreement.

It is necessary to understand that, far from being a homogeneous territory, the Colombian-Venezuelan border –which extends for more than 2,200 km– is a space where different formal and informal social orders coexist. This diversity is not only the result of irregular patterns of state

institutionality and the presence of illegal armed actors but also of the characteristics and capacity for action of local communities.

One way to better approach this multiplicity of orders is dividing these borders into three zones: northern zone, departments of La Guajira and Cesar; central zone, Norte de Santander; and southern zone, Arauca, Vichada, and Guainía. This division corresponds with the geographic location of insurgent and paramilitary structures that operated and continue to operate in these areas.

In the current situation, the Colombian-Venezuelan border is a strategic space where the type of actions undertaken can lead to peacebuilding from a territorial perspective or to the continuity of factors associated with persistent conflict, violence, and crime. It is, therefore, necessary to accompany the formulation and implementation of a comprehensive plan of participatory intervention to integrate border areas with the rest of the country and to build state, citizenship, and market. Far from following a uniform pattern, policies must be designed taking into account the particularities of local social orders. On the other hand, concerning the situation in Venezuela, support for a negotiated solution to the crisis in this country and adequate care and protection for the migrant population are recommended (Trejos and García, 2019).

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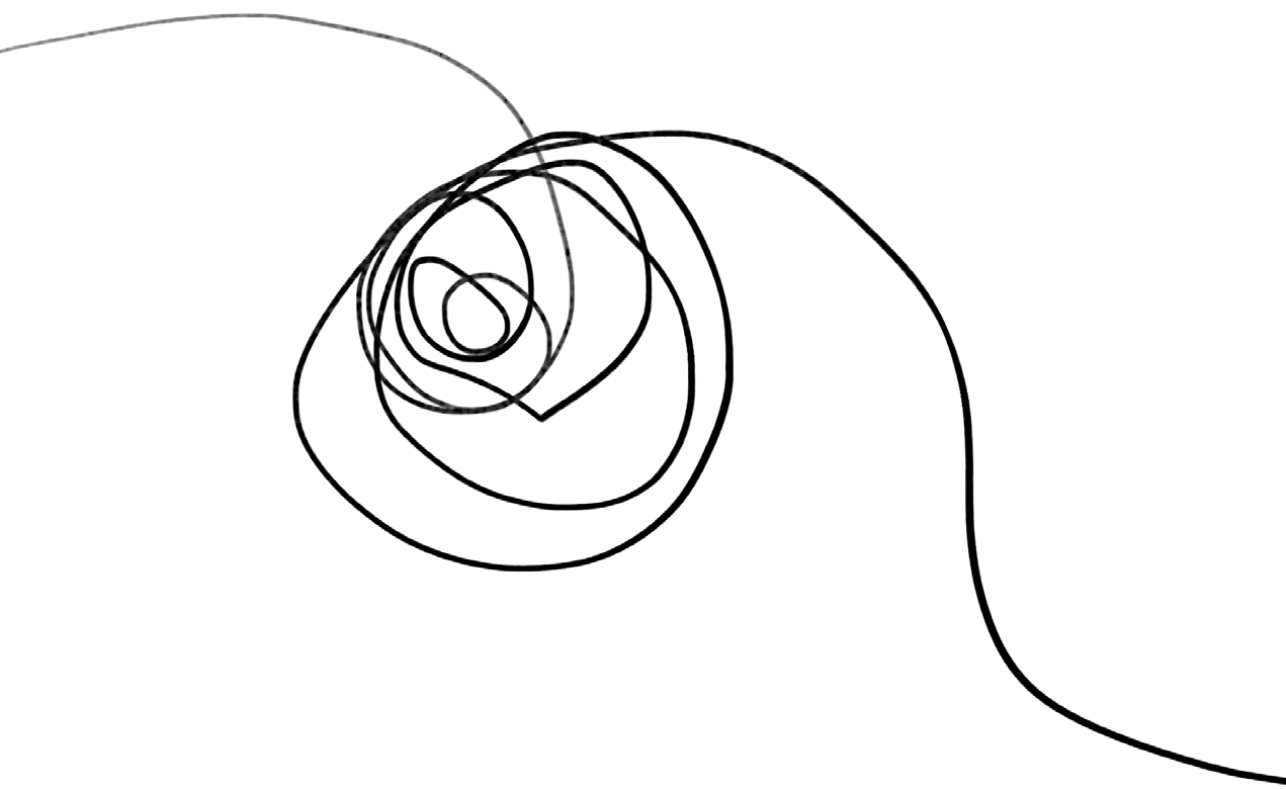
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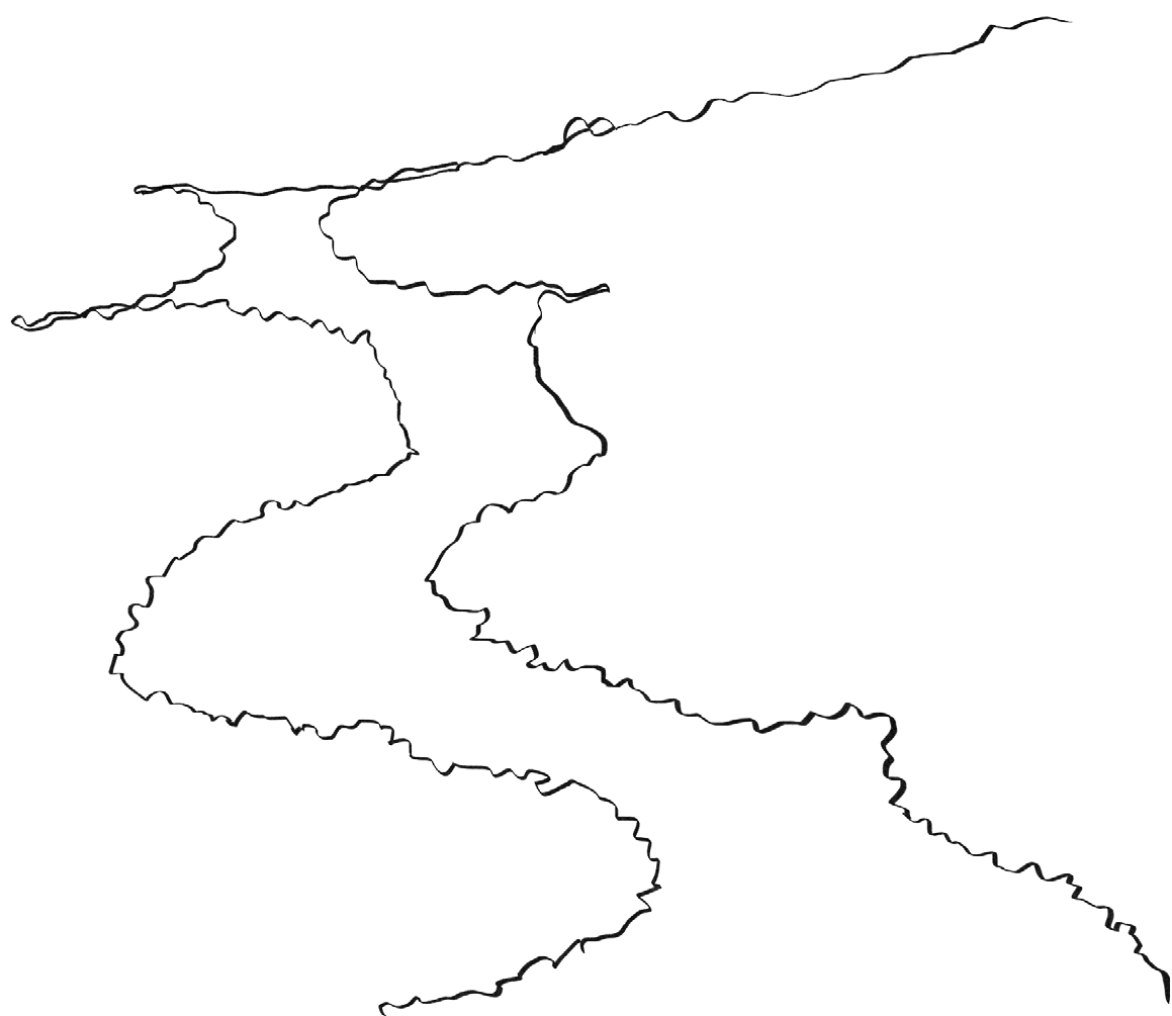
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A teacher checks the bullet hole in one of her school's windows. Limones, department of Cauca. May 13, 2014. Photo: Federico Ríos.



Glocal peace and the extractive model of development: A view from the Pacific region

Regional Office Pares-Pacífico



Slow progress in the implementation of the Peace Agreement and endless direct physical violence against communities and the civilian population are some of the hurdles on the path to peace in Colombia. After the signing of the Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace (hereinafter the Peace Agreement), criminality has metamorphosed and continues unabated. According to Fundación Paz y Reconciliación (Peace and Reconciliation Foundation, PARES), this is due to “the lack of political will of the National Government [...] the security approach happens to be anachronistic, implemented within the framework of a war context, and does not take into account the specificities of organized crime” (PARES, 2020).

A less perceptible obstacle, overshadowed by systematic violence against social leaders and communities in the territories, is the country’s extractive economic model. This model was not discussed as part of the agenda in the negotiations between the National Government and the FARC-EP (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People’s Army); on the contrary, the signing of the Agreement would facilitate the integration of areas under the armed control of the guerrillas into the national market, paving the way for the territorial expansion of the economic model.

The unequal distribution and use of land is one underlying cause of the armed conflict in Colombia. Hence, the first point of the Peace Agreement contemplates a comprehensive rural reform with measures to transform the Colombian countryside in order to reduce the inequality, social inequity, productive backwardness, and marginality that have plunged communities into poverty. Second, the Development Programs with a Territorial Approach (PDET) –integral programs of rural transformation– will carry out the comprehensive rural reform in the territories affected by the armed conflict in a period of 10 years, in order to redress inequality in the countryside through infrastructure works contemplated in the Action Plans for Regional Transformation (PATR).¹

The inequality gap has turned territories inhabited by ethnic communities into a ground of permanent conflict between illegal armed groups, national and multinational companies, and the civilian population for control of illegal economies or the exploitation or enjoyment of resources.

This prevents progress in the peace process. Although a reduction in the presence and violent actions of illegal groups is a determining factor in peacebuilding, it is not the only indicator of progress. Others, such as the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the guarantee of fundamental and collective rights of communities, must also be taken into account.

These guarantees challenge the essence of an extractive model where few companies monopolize economic activity, leaving little or nothing to local communities. By developing the communities' environment in line with the companies' worldviews and models over those of the residents in the territories, the model hinders the reduction of social and economic inequalities and inequity.

¹ The Action Plans for Regional Transformation (PATR) are the instruments for the formulation of Development Programs with a Territorial Approach (PDET). They materialize the ten-year planning and define the stakes and priorities for the comprehensive development of the Programs (Translator's note).

As a result, it has created conflicts between communities and companies that, on numerous occasions, local or national authorities have proven unable to resolve or that, as in the expansion of the port and tourism megaprojects in Buenaventura, have been resolved violently by illegal armed groups in favor of the companies.

For this reason, beyond the conceptual differences that may exist, peace is closely related to conflicts and violence and must therefore not be measured only by the absence of war or direct physical violence but, as proposed here, in an integral manner, “from the perspective of glocal peace”.

Besides bringing the war to an end, this conception of peace seeks to ensure the absence of direct physical violence. In other words, once warlike disputes like the Colombian armed conflict are resolved or ended, guarantees should be given that civil society will not be re-victimized through other forms of violence, such as organized crime or disputes over illegal economies that have thrived after the signing of the Peace Agreement. Peacebuilding also needs state and civil society institutions to contribute to constructive conflict transformation, that is, to resolve conflicts and prevent them from leading to violent disputes, in the understanding that they are intrinsic to society and that their peaceful resolution must be a priority.

From the more comprehensive peacebuilding perspective of glocal peace, in the post-conflict context, it is essential to prevent current disputes over the use of territory between companies, the state, and communities from leading to violence against social leaders opposed to activities of the extractive model, such as mining concessions or fracking. An example is the assassination of Fabiola Fajardo, the region’s anti-fracking leader, in Simacota, Santander, on August 22, 2018. In this department, tensions between residents, environmental and social organizations, and the national government increased after the government announced its intention to initiate hydraulic fracturing, an activity that, if approved, would affect 60% of the municipality’s territory.

There can be no peace without respect and guarantees for the effective enjoyment of fundamental and collective rights of civil society and communities. Unequal and inequitable conditions in the use of their

social, physical, and environmental surroundings have been the source of conflicts between communities and companies. This is aggravated by some forms of conflict resolution that have increased conditions of marginality and poverty, privileging economic, extractive, or other activities over fundamental rights. Some examples from Buenaventura are the impact of the chain of supply of coal on residents of the urban area of the port, the mining concessions in the collective territories of the rural area of the district, and the great works for the tourism industry that displace communities from land reclaimed from the sea.

1. The extractive model in Colombia: hydrocarbons and mining

By the extractive model, we understand the intensive exploitation of nature as the main source of wealth and capital accumulation. According to Gudynas, cited in Portillo (2014):

The fundamental features that characterize extractivism are: a) intensive or large-scale exploitation of renewable and non-renewable natural resources; b) minimal, if at all, degree of processing; c) extracted goods are mainly destined for export [...] The treasury's share of the income generated by extractive activities is low compared to the value of the production generated. However, in the overall structure of public revenues, it is usually significant, and therefore increase by extension, that is, by expanding production, is sought. Under this logic, reducing the tax burden would increase revenues (pp. 5-7).

Although the income from extractive activities in Colombia is relatively low compared to the profits they generate, it represents a significant share of the national economy. According to preliminary data –as of September 25, 2020– from the National Accounts of the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE), in 2019 the participation of economic activities of “Exploitation of mines and quarries” in the National GDP was 5.6%, with the extraction of mineral coal, crude oil, natural gas, uranium and thorium –which in 2017 represented 66.9% of the production of the extractive industries–, metalliferous mi-

nerals, and non-metallic minerals.

1.1 Hydrocarbons in Colombia

The exploitation of oil and gas is the main productive activity in the country, representing 55.4% of total exports. The income to the country generated by these activities comes from the economic rights paid by operators to the National Hydrocarbons Agency (ANH) for the allocation of contracts; from royalties –the economic compensation received by the nation for the exploitation of a non-renewable natural resource–; the payment of income tax, duties, and VAT by oil companies; and the dividends generated by Ecopetrol.² In the last four years –2016-2019–, the country received 5.9 trillion Colombian pesos for these concepts, equivalent to about 1.400 million dollars.

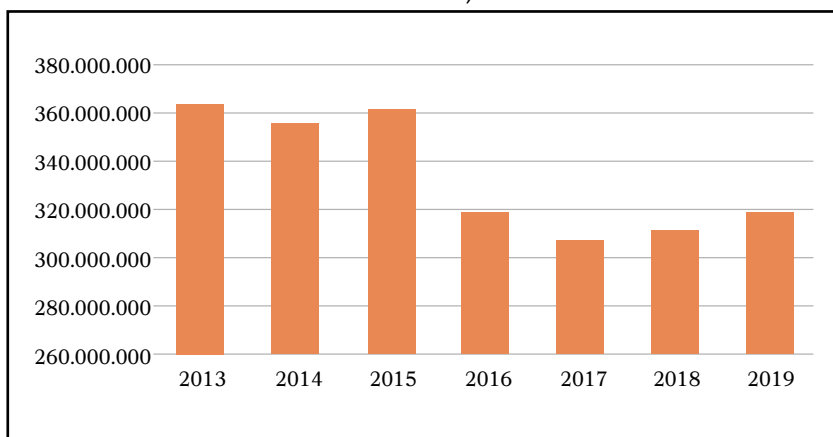
The oil potential (crude oil and natural gas) of Colombia is estimated at more than 37,000 million barrels of equivalent oil, distributed in 18 sedimentary basins encompassing an area of 1'036,400 km² (sic). Around 89% of this sedimentary area is available to carry out exploration and exploitation of oil and natural gas. The basins with the greatest exploratory activity are the Upper and Middle Magdalena Valleys, Catatumbo, La Guajira, the Eastern Cordillera, Putumayo, and the Eastern Plains (Agencia Nacional de Hidrocarburos, 2020).

² Ecopetrol is the largest oil company in Colombia and is among the five largest in the oil industry in Latin America (Translator's note).



In 2019, the production of hydrocarbons like oil increased by 2.4% compared to 2018, from 10,300,000 to 10,60,000 barrels, the highest growth since its fall in 2016 by more than 100,000 barrels of oil per day (Figure 15).

**Figure 15. Annual production of barrels
of oil in Colombia, 2013-2019**



Source: Agencia Nacional de Hidrocarburos, 2020.

Figure 15 shows the slowdown in oil production since 2016, contrary to expectations before the agreement was signed. This is due to several factors:

1. The drop in the price of oil began that year with a value of 26 dollars a barrel, reaching its lowest historic value on January 20, 2016, when it fell to 22 dollars.
2. The insecurity generated by the dispute between armed groups over territories abandoned by FARC-EP.
3. The social and environmental conflicts between communities and extractive companies. According to Camilo Silva (2017), analyst at Valora Inversiones, two factors explain the drop in oil produc-

tion: the low international demand for hydrocarbons and the rulings of the Constitutional Court in favor of communities in cases where it ordered the suspension of oil production in disputed areas. An example is Ruling T-764 of 2015, which, because of the lack of prior consultation with the communities, ordered the suspension of activities in areas located less than two kilometers from the Vencedor Pirirí Indigenous reservation in Puerto Gaitán (Meta).

The Constitutional Court's Ruling T-704 of 2016 suspended the expansion of Puerto Bolívar, which sought to increase the storage of hydrocarbons and minerals, mainly from the department of La Guajira. In this case, the Court upheld the fundamental right to prior consultation of the Media Luna Dos Indigenous community. Consequently, it reversed Resolution 0428 of May 7, 2014, which modified the Comprehensive Environmental Management Plan established by Resolution 2097 of December 16, 2005, authorizing the execution and start-up of the Expansion of Puerto Bolívar, until the consultation process takes place.

Ruling T-359 of 2015 suspended extraction in two wells operated by Ecopetrol and Petrominerales in Orito, Putumayo, due to a lawsuit filed by the Awá Indigenous community. The ruling protected the collective rights of the community, including the right to prior consultation and the preservation of the environment.

1.2 Coal mining in Colombia

Law 685 of 2001, also known as the Mining Code, promoted the exploration and exploitation of mining resources, increasing coal production in the country. According to data from the Mining National Agency (ANM, 2017), it is estimated at 16,569 million tons, of which 16% correspond to metallurgical coal and 84% to thermal coal. Colombia is the main producer of coal in Latin America and the eleventh in the world: in 2016, proven reserves reached 4,881 million tons; 90.5 million tons were produced, and 94% of national production was exported (US \$ 4,638 million).

The chain of supply of coal consists of five stages: exploration, exploitation, transformation, transportation, and marketing/export. This model is based on the decisions of the Mining and Energy Planning Unit (UPME). It is noteworthy that in all stages of its value chain coal mining activity generates economic and socio-environmental effects on the environment and the inhabitants of the area where it takes place.

Besides, ever since the peace negotiations, extractive activities have been regarded as a source to finance the post-conflict period in the country. As then Minister of Mines and Energy, Tomás González, stated about fracking:

It is necessary, because oil resources are needed to finance peace projects [...] They can help us pay for a large part of the investments required by peace and programs for the eradication of poverty in the post-conflict period (Noticias UNO, 2015).

1.3 Impacts of the extractive model in Buenaventura: the case of the coal industry chain

Although there are no coal mines in Buenaventura, the district is affected by two of the three stages of this extractive activity: transport and trade-export, for which storage is required. According to Gudynas (2013), cited in Portillo (2014):

Export orientation plays a fundamental role, as it is the channel that creates subordination and dependence. The extractive activity represents the first phase of the international production chains, which means that the industrialization of exported raw materials takes place outside the domestic economy (p. 5).

In this sense, Buenaventura plays a leading role as Colombia's main port on the Pacific Ocean, through which more than 50% of imports come into the country, having gained importance after the free trade agreements with the United States (2012) and the European Union (2014) came into force. A large part of its storage capacity is intended for incoming merchandise, and to store export products, such as coal

from municipalities like Yumbo (in the department of Valle del Cauca), it is necessary to adapt installations outside the port facilities.

The city has seven open-air coal storage yards that do not comply with the environmental measures established in the Environmental Policy for the Coal Production Chain (PACC) (see photo 1). Consequently, the health and quality of life of the city's residents have been affected, which is not only a violation of their fundamental rights but, from the glocal perspective, also an impediment to peacebuilding, since the conflict has led to direct and indirect forms of violence against communities affected by this extractive activity.

Since the installation of the yards, the conflict between the community and the mineral storage companies has triggered mobilizations that, to date, have resulted in the relocation of two of the seven yards that operate in the district: one located in the internal alternate road, and one located in front of La Inmaculada neighborhood. They were moved to the vicinity of the old free zone, bordering two other neighborhoods: Nayita and Mayolo.

Besides polluting the environment, these yards have had an impact on the health of the residents, who during mobilizations have argued that children and adults in the area are suffering from tuberculosis and respiratory problems.

The response from the state's environmental institutions was weak: for six years the yards continued to function, with warnings and promises to revamp them to meet current environmental regulations. It was only during the civic strike in May and June 2017 that the health and environmental impacts on the residents of the Nayita and Mayolo neighborhoods, which had been denounced since 2012, were discussed with the environmental table of the organizing committee.

As a result of these negotiations, which were part of the agreements between the Civic Strike Committee and the National Government, the entities of control made technical visits to the yards of the old free zone and La Inmaculada neighborhood.

After inspections and monitoring by the environmental table of the civic strike, “activities in the coal storage warehouse (were) suspended due to non-compliance with the environmental storage regulations” (Establecimiento Público Ambiental, 2017). One of the seven open-air coal storage yards operating in the former free zone was closed by the Ministry of the Environment and the Public Environmental Establishment, and three more received preventive sanctions to obligate them to make improvements following environmental regulations.

Nevertheless, the conflict persists, since the open-air coal storage yards continue to operate in the former free zone, affecting the communities of the Nayita and Mayolo neighborhoods. Besides being victims of direct physical violence from the armed conflict and organized crime, these communities are victims of the extractive model, “whose fundamental objective is to achieve high rates of economic growth through stimulation of exports” (Portillo, 2014), even if it impedes the community’s enjoyment of fundamental rights as an essential element in peacebuilding.

1.4 Mining concessions in collective territories

Law 70 of 1993, which develops transitory article 55 of the Political Constitution, recognizes Black communities that occupy vacant lands in the rural areas bordering the rivers of the Pacific basin, according to their traditional practices of production and the right to collective property. It also lays the foundations for the collective rights of Black, Afro, Raizal, and Palenquero communities (NARP), delegating them special powers of authority over the ancestral territories in which they are settled.³

³ Black community: Set of families of Afro-Colombian descent with a shared history, culture, traditions, and customs within the field-town relationship. They also reveal and preserve an awareness of identity that differentiates them from other ethnic groups.

Afro-Colombian Population: Human groups of historic, ethnic, and cultural African roots born in Colombia and present throughout the national territory (urban-rural) with their racial, linguistic and folkloric diversity.

Another mechanism is the right to prior consultation, established in Article 7 of Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization (ILO) and regulated in Ruling SU-039 of 1997 of the Constitutional Court. This fundamental right is a mandatory procedure that must be carried out according to the uses and customs of each ethnic group, every time decisions that affect the communities are made. These may be administrative measures, such as the expedition of environmental licenses for the exploitation of natural resources, and legislative measures, such as the issuance of norms that involve or affect these populations (Constitutional Court, 2006).

Law 70 and Ruling SU-039 are the legal tools for communities to defend their territories and safeguard their ways of life, development, and production. Currently, they serve as a defense against the indiscriminate exploitation of non-renewable natural resources like mining, especially since the Constitutional Court, through Sentence SU095 of 2018, ruled that popular consultations, municipal agreements, and land use plans (POT) cannot prohibit extractive activities in the territories. Prior consultation remains as the normative reference in the defense of collective rights in conflicts associated with the extractive model in the post-conflict context.

Although prior consultation has yielded results in the cases of the Indigenous communities in Meta and Putumayo mentioned earlier, the processes of Black communities in Buenaventura and the Community

Raizal Population: Native population of the Islands of San Andrés, Providencia, and Santa Catalina, descendants of the union between Europeans (mainly English, Spanish, and Dutch) and African slaves. They are distinguished by their culture, language (Creole), religious beliefs (Baptist church), and a historical past similar to that of Antillean peoples such as Jamaicans and Haitians. Because of its cultural specificity, it has been the subject of socio-cultural policies, plans, and programs differentiated from other black communities in continental Colombia.

Palenquera population: The Palenquera community is made up of the descendants of enslaved blacks who, through acts of resistance and freedom, from the XVI century sought refuge in territories of the Northern Coast of Colombia known as palenques (Translator's note).

Council of the Río Naya are not proceeding with the same celerity. The latter has denounced that, besides illegal mining, five mining concessions have been established in the upper part of the river without prior consultation. This is a violation of their fundamental and collective rights as well as an obstacle to their vision of peace: in the post-conflict context, these communities seek to eradicate crops for illicit use and prohibit illegal mining in order to replace them with sustainable productive activities like agricultural crops, artisanal mining, and the production of typical beverages based on viche.⁴

Since 2014, before the signing of the Peace Agreement, in the San Cipriano forest reserve, the community and the Regional Autonomous Corporation of Valle del Cauca (CVC) have expressed concern about mining activities taking place nearby. Although not carried out within the collective territories or the Los Farallones natural park, the impact of this extractive activity on the environment has been felt. An example is the contamination of rivers in the Anchicayá area during the mining boom of vereda Zaragoza. The communities continue to file legal appeals to stop mining in these territories, where currently three mining estates exist practically on the border of the San Cipriano reserve and one more in Los Farallones park.

In line with Kurtenbach's conception of glocal peace (Chapter 2), the crux of the matter is not to conceive peace as a state, but as a process with normative benchmarks. According to this author, fundamental and collective rights are relevant frames of reference because everyone has the right to claim and enjoy them. One of the main difficulties in the peace process is that they have only been partially implemented. In the aforementioned cases, there is evidence of a violation of Article 79 of the Political Constitution, which establishes that "all people have the right to enjoy a healthy environment", right that should not be conditioned to the activities of the economic extractive model.

⁴ Traditional beverage of Black communities of the Colombian Pacific region elaborated following traditional methods.

2. Local authorities as institutions for the peaceful resolution of conflicts and comprehensive peacebuilding

The great challenge on the road to peace is to transform these conflicts to prevent them from becoming violent. Formal and informal institutions play an important role because they “integrate” conflicts, that is, establish norms and procedures to manage them peacefully.

The response of the local authorities and entities of control in the aforementioned cases has been weak. Consequently, conflicts have persisted, and fundamental and collective rights continue to be violated by the activities of the extractive model, which in turn constitutes an obstacle to the peace process.

From the perspective of conflict transformation, institutions must create or support processes of constructive change aimed at reducing violence and promoting justice. This ideal scenario has not been put into practice in territories like Buenaventura, where state institutions have been bystanders or have favored the extractive model and the companies that promote it.

Such was the case of the communities settled in lands reclaimed from the sea of Commune 4, where residents of the Lleras and San José neighborhoods were resettled without prior consultation. In Deleuze and Guattari’s terms (2002), they were “de-territorialized”, removed from a cultural environment determined by the dynamics of life around the sea, and transferred to a lush territory, away from the water, in the Ciudadela San Antonio project. Their old territory became “re-territorialized” by infrastructures for economic activities associated with tourism.

However, these conflicts led to the reconfiguration of the district’s power networks. The peace process reconfigured the illegal structure in the country and evidenced that illegal armed groups other than the FARC were exercising territorial control. Although organizations like Clan del Golfo, La Empresa, and ELN (National Liberation Army) mainly control illegal economies, they also influence the political-electoral scene. In 2019, during the first local electoral process since the

signing of the Peace Agreement, they promoted their candidates and restricted the ability of others to campaign in the neighborhoods.

This has been a characteristic of Buenaventura's political dynamics since 2007, when the port experienced a kind of an early post-conflict period, without the presence of guerrillas but under the control of paramilitary successor groups. This was not, however, the focus of attention, as it was overshadowed by the violence of the armed conflict, especially in rural areas or in neighboring municipalities. The political-electoral contests were normally led by two candidates, each supported by one of the illegal armed groups in conflict during the electoral period.

This happened again during the local elections of October 2019, with one difference: for the first time, a candidate from the social organizations had a chance at winning. What does the extractive model have to do with it? The answer is that between May and June 2017, just six months after the signing of the Peace Agreement, there was a civic strike in Buenaventura. The main demand of this massive mobilization was to reduce the inequality gap between this district and the main municipalities of the country and to improve the quality of life of the population.

Once the post-conflict period and the road to peace became a reality, social organizations in Buenaventura understood that the signing of the Peace Agreement could mean, in the short term, the end of the armed confrontation and possibly the absence of direct physical violence. However, they also understood that in order to speak of comprehensive peace it was necessary to transform the backward social and economic conditions that were initially the cause of the armed conflict, and over time also its consequence.

Therefore, they put forward a development agenda that privileges the role of the territory and the communities over the established economic model. They also opposed the way the extractive model was being implemented in the city, which, instead of providing benefits, was abusing a population victimized by the armed conflict and the hegemonic model of development.

After 27 days of mobilization and negotiation with the National Government, the Civic Strike Committee –an inter-union and inter-organizational association composed of leaders of organizations that for years have claimed collective rights and oppose the extractive model– was in a much stronger position. It took advantage of the situation and its organizational strength to challenge established development agendas and its proposals.

Since then, greater control of the open-pit coal storage yards has been exercised, and as a result two of the five that were in operation were closed. The Land Use Plan that designed tourism megaprojects like the Bahia de la Cruz boardwalk will be subject to prior consultation. Consequently, the Civic Strike Committee became a leading actor in Buenaventura, influencing and generating opinion in the political and social life of the city for two years. It became the representative of ethnic and urban communities, capitalizing on the social and socio-environmental conflicts generated by the economic activities of a model of development imposed from outside.

Consequently, this social movement beat political machines and criminal structures in the mayoral elections in Buenaventura. Besides being an actor of great political influence, formerly in opposition to the establishment, it is now the first institutional authority. In other words, the Civic Strike Committee not only channeled discontent through affiliated organizations and leaders but, as the local government, it can also address the issues that generated disgruntlement. This is the contribution of the extractive model in Buenaventura: opposition to it led to a reconfiguration of local political power with an agenda that promotes peace and the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

3. Conclusions

Following Kurtenbach (Chapter 2), we argue that social changes and the evolution of society transform social structures and alter the distribution of power between different parties. In general, conflicts arise when interests collide or individuals or social groups oppose each other.

These conflicts can be repressed, managed constructively and peacefully, or lead to different forms of violence.

As said in chapter 2 of this book, “some scholars of the complexity of certain situations (Vallacher et al., 2010: 120) argue that peace can only be achieved with a “tandem” strategy that, in addition to reducing or eliminating negative factors, should promote and stimulate positive relationships. With this in mind, ending –or achieving the absence of– war will be, at best, the first step towards peace. Other forms of direct physical violence should be reduced and positive relations between people should be promoted. This means that peace processes are complex and non-linear processes.”

Consequently, it cannot be categorically affirmed that the extractive model has only been an obstacle to the peace process. Although activities associated with it violate the individual and collective integrity of communities, the model has brought to light conflicts around the territories and the communities’ protagonism and visions of development. These factors are essential in the construction of comprehensive peace in the understanding that peace is not hindered by conflict but by the ways to address it.

Cases like the civic strike in Buenaventura in May and June 2017 are forms of peacebuilding. The civic strike demanded a change in the economic activities of the extractive model in order to generate benefits for the population, and beyond the absence of violence, promoted an environmentally friendly model of economic and social development of the community.

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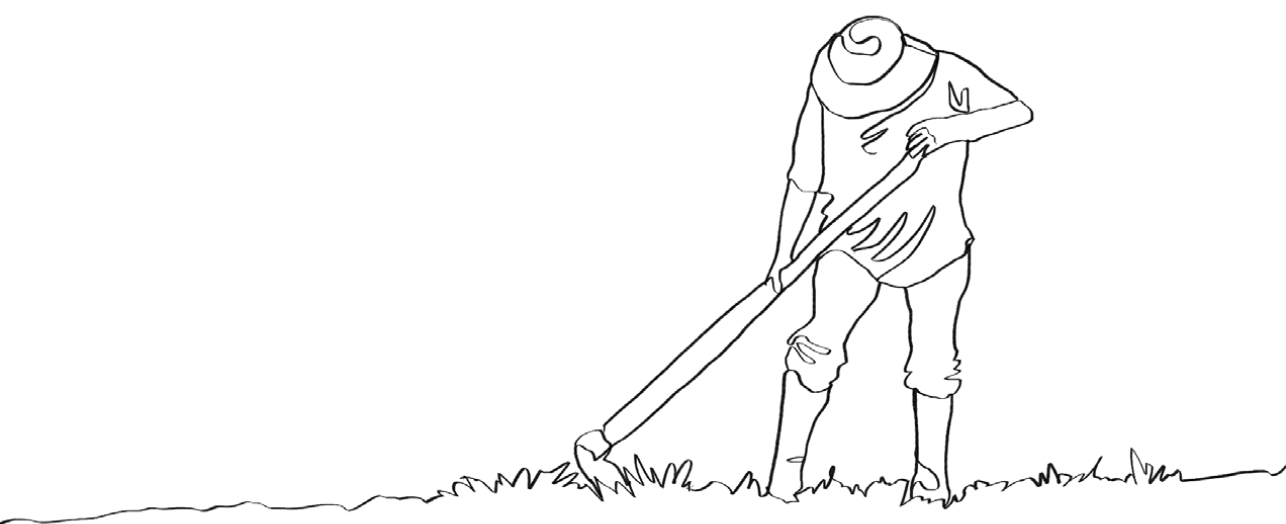
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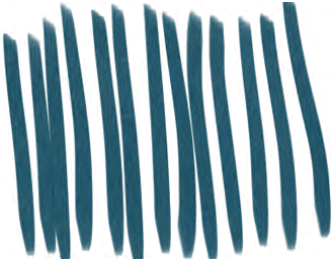


A miner shows the result of melting a small portion of gold. Marmato, department of Caldas, June 11, 2011. Photo: Federico Ríos.



Illegal economies and peace in Colombia

Catalina Niño Guarnizo



As evidenced by the majority of interviews in this book, illegal economies have been a major factor in the dynamics of conflict and conflictivity in Colombia, from interpersonal relations and citizen coexistence to the national social and political spheres, albeit more apparent at the local and regional levels. This chapter compiles testimonies gathered in interviews and focus groups to illustrate the impact of illegal economies on the territories and the communities' conceptions of peace in a context where other interrelated factors exacerbate this impact: a long and degraded armed conflict, the absence or ineffectiveness of state institutions, and community distrust towards authorities. The text also points out the opportunity that the Havana Peace Agreement represents (or used to represent?) in the face of illegal economies and implementation problems linked to their impact on physical integrity and human rights. In line with the interviews, possibilities to transform the dynamics of violence generated by illegal markets are discussed and actors able to influence this transformation are identified. Finally, the text outlines reflections on the current situation and the effects the pandemic may have on illegal economies and actors working on the ground to build better conditions of coexistence and peace for communities around the country.

1. Illegal economies: one of several ingredients in our broth of violence

For at least 30 years, illegal economies have played a central role in the dynamics of the armed conflict and other social and political conflicts in Colombia, mainly at the local and regional levels but with impacts at the national level as well. The resources of these economies, especially drug trafficking but also illegal mining, smuggling, small and large-scale extortion, human trafficking, or money laundering have been a key source of funding for left and right-wing illegal armed groups with political aspirations or purely criminal discourses. They have also provided social mobility opportunities for sectors of the population that feel neglected by the State. The following testimony reflects this situation well:

Coca made many people subjects of rights. Why? Because rights are bought in this country. Then, if coca gave me money, with coca I had a medical examination, with coca I sent my son to university, with coca I fixed up my house, and with coca, we donate money to fix the road (Focus group in Tibú).

There is a relative consensus among experts and analysts that, without these illegal resources, the armed conflict in Colombia could have ended a long time ago. This does not mean that the unavailability of resources would directly lead to sustainable peace. Many other factors influence the country's difficulties in transforming the way citizens coexist and relate to each other. Among the obstacles mentioned in the interviews are the way the decentralization process has taken place, the classism and racism of the country's centralist elites, and the clientelistic and corrupt political game.

The absence or weakness of state institutions has been a major hurdle in building more peaceful conditions of coexistence at all levels, and has particularly enhanced the role of illegal economies and the actors that control them in political, social, and economic life in many regions of the country (Felbab-Brown, 2020; Crisis Group, 2019). This is evidenced in the lack of access to public goods and services, such as education and health, but, above all, to mechanisms of conflict resolution between citizens, access to justice and security, and guarantees to the life and

property of the population. As noted, for example, in an interview in Buenaventura,

In the context of the family, conflicts are associated with verbal and physical aggression, as a result of the lack of agreements of settlement or dialogic procedures regarding the causes of conflicts. The intimidating intervention of some family members, generally linked to illicit activities of armed groups outside the law, is frequently observed.

The historic absence of the state has caused communities to lose confidence in the capacity of the central state and its disposition to fulfill its functions. In these regions, public institutions lack legitimacy in the eyes of the people. A participant in Tibú points out in an interview conducted in the framework of this project,

Tibú is characterized for having 99% of unsatisfied needs in all sectors; this generates a certain degree of rejection by the communities towards institutions and, in turn, affinity with illegal groups within the community, because they bring productive projects, providing tools for self-sustenance.

The flip side of the coin is the central elites' distrust concerning the capacities of local communities and their leaders to manage resources and make decisions about issues that affect them. In the centers of power, particularly in Bogotá, it is assumed that the needs of the regions and the means to address them are self-evident. Therefore, there is little space to consult the opinion or summon the participation of rural populations who are generally perceived as backward, prisoners of clientelistic practices, and dependent on state assistentialism.

The vicious cycle of mutual distrust in the relationship between the center and the regions of the country has become the fundamental obstacle for the construction of a social contract to strengthen democracy and build sustainable peace (Rettberg, 2018).

As shown by the interviews conducted for this project, this is readily observed in the territories. In Catatumbo, Buenaventura, Northern Cauca, La Guajira, and Meta the state—at least in the way it is conceived from the center—has had little or no presence. All are peripheral re-

gions, border areas in terms of development and links to the most urbanized, industrialized, and developed parts of the country, and all exhibit complex dynamics of violence and the presence of illegal economies.

Until relatively recently, Meta was an area of settlement for people displaced from other parts of the country by the lack of opportunities or the bipartisan violence of the Mid-Twentieth Century. In Mesetas—one of the municipalities of the demilitarized zone during the failed Caguán peace process between the administration of Andrés Pastrana (1998–2002) and the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia)—, FARC was for a long time the only state, acting as the local authority and mediating in relations between residents:

There were good things like there were no robberies, you could leave anything open, the house open, and there were no robberies at all. A fellow student once stole some chickens and was ordered to sweep the park with a sign: “They have me sweeping the park because I stole chickens.” Who was going to do something? (Interview in Mesetas).

Buenaventura and Northern Cauca, areas with a high proportion of Afro-descendant and Indigenous populations, have been marked by ethnic and armed conflicts and violent disputes between organized criminal groups that have established transit corridors for illicit goods. This has been a constant source of insecurity and violence against local communities, as shown by the respective interviews.

Because of its status as a border territory with Venezuela and the Caribbean Sea and its socio-demographic dynamics, smuggling has historically taken place in La Guajira, and in the 1970s and 1980s, it became the epicenter of the so-called *bonanza marimbera*,¹ Colombia’s entry

¹ The *bonanza marimbera* was a period (approximately between 1974 and 1985) during which large sums of money entered Colombia as a result of the activity of drug trafficking gangs dedicated to the illicit cultivation and export of marijuana on the Colombian Caribbean coast (Translator’s note).

into the international drug market. The other part of the Colombian-Venezuelan border studied for this book –Catatumbo– and Cúcuta have also served as a transit zone for different illegal goods and services: contraband, drugs and gasoline trafficking, illegal migration, and human trafficking.

2. The peace agreement: a (lost) opportunity in the face of illegal economies?

The peace negotiations between the government of Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018) and FARC, which took place in Havana between 2012 and 2016, seemed like a golden opportunity to address not only the historic problem of illegal economies but also to transform the regions most affected by the armed conflict, consolidate the state's presence and legitimacy throughout the national territory, and begin to build sustainable peace. The process generated high expectations –perhaps too high–, particularly in the territories most affected by the conflict:

There were big expectations, because the Peace Agreement would be the solution to many things; above all, there would be social investment, since that is what Catatumbo demands. Even the people of Caño Indio said that because they were a ZVTN they would have, to a certain extent, priority for the solution of so many problems (Interview in Tibú).

The initial agenda of negotiation indicates that both parties were aware of the importance of the transformation of the territories. This is evidenced in the inclusion of point 1 on comprehensive rural reform, point 2 on political participation, and point 4 on the solution to the drug problem. In this vein, the Final Agreement outlined strategies that, if implemented, could have a transformative impact on the development of the country and the way the regions relate to the center.

As part of the transformation of the countryside, the Agreement contemplated the creation of a Land Fund to distribute 3.000.000 hectares in 10 years and a program for the massive formalization of land for

small and medium farmers, as well as investments in infrastructure, adaptation and recovery of soils, productive and marketing projects, technical assistance, and training of beneficiaries. A crucial element was the creation of Development Programs with a Territorial Approach (PDET) as tools for development planning and management, elaborated and monitored with a participatory approach from the territories of the 170 prioritized municipalities.²

A new approach to the problem of illicit drugs, from cultivation to consumption, was sought from a public health and human rights perspective. An ambitious Comprehensive National Program for the Substitution of Illicit Crops (PNIS) was created to prioritize voluntary substitution, generate development in the affected regions and integrate them into national economic circuits, facilitate overcoming historic mistrust between authorities and communities, and implement mechanisms to protect national natural parks and other sensitive areas.

However, the opportunity presented by the Agreement seems to be evaporating due to implementation problems as a result of several interrelated factors. On one hand, the position and policies of the current National Government, elected on an agenda explicitly opposed to the Havana Agreement, weaken implementation efforts and ignore key issues related to the most transformative points of the agreement: comprehensive rural reform and political participation.

The process gave victims hope to find commiseration, an opportunity to find out the truth of what happened. Today that hope is not very real, because this government is more interested in investing in war than in social projects. Santos was not a saint, but in Buenaventura the war subsided. Since Duque came to power, the war returned to Buenaventura: now there is a curfew, there are patrols in the neighborhoods, an increase in violence. Hope for peace was lost (Focus group in Buenaventura).

² For further details, see: http://www.odc.gov.co/Portals/1/encuentro-regiones/docs/programas_desarrollo_enfoque_territorial_ART.pdf

The government's vision of rural development involves strengthening large-scale agribusiness, in direct contradiction to the conception established in the Agreement, which focuses on generating opportunities for small producers. The government agencies created for its implementation are underfunded, unable to work in concert, and, in several cases, led by people who opposed the Agreement even while negotiations were taking place (Díaz, 2019).

Apart from the ART (Territory Renewal Agency), other agencies created for the implementation of the peace agreement as part of the state's institutional offer have not been functional, ... it is very complex for a productive organization to access the ADR's offer (Rural Development Agency); those with a higher production level or with financial muscle end up getting access, the rest do not. Not to mention the ANT (National Land Agency). The state's offer as such is inoperative (Interview in Tibú).³

On the other hand, several armed groups, including the ELN (National Liberation Army), FARC dissidents, and other criminal actors still present in the territories, vie for control of trafficking routes and ille-

³ The Rural Development Agency (ADR) is the entity responsible for managing, promoting, and financing agricultural and rural development to facilitate the transformation of the countryside and carry out programs with regional impact. It helps the agricultural community to improve land productivity and the living conditions of rural inhabitants. The National Land Agency (ANT) was created by Decree 2363 of 2015, as the highest land authority, to implement the policy of social ordering of rural property formulated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. For this purpose, it must manage access to land as a productive factor, achieve legal security over it, promote its use in compliance with the social function of property, and administer and dispose of rural properties owned by the country (Translator's note).

gal markets and exercise control over populations in their areas of influence. Consequently, violence has been on the rise after 2017, the safest year in three decades. Several participants in the Santander de Quilichao focus group mentioned the exacerbation of the conflict after FARC's departure and the "deep uncertainty that began to be felt" with the arrival of other actors "such as the ELN or dissidents." As one leader put it, "it is not very clear who they are, but it is clear that they are closer to common criminals" than to preserving a political project as the FARC did before.

The relentless murder of social leaders and human rights defenders dramatically attests to the exacerbation of the conflict. Although data vary between sources, the murder of social leaders is a real phenomenon, as evidenced by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights' call on the Colombian government to prevent attacks against them, noting that in 2019 at least 107 leaders and activists were assassinated, 115 in 2018, and 10 in the first two weeks of 2020 (*Semana.com*, 2020). The government's response to this tragedy has been slow, ineffective, and devoid of empathy.⁴

On the other hand, parts of what was agreed in Havana, specifically some characteristics of the Comprehensive National Program for the Substitution of Illicit Crops (PNIS), carry implementation challenges that even the most committed government would be hard-pressed to overcome. The program's plan to provide subsidies to cultivating families to uproot their coca plants created negative incentives for other families to start cultivating in order to receive the benefit, or generated discontent among those not eligible to receive it because they were not part of the coca economy. Although this is not the only cause of the growth of coca crops, it is undeniable that these began to increase substantially since 2013 and reached a historic maximum in 2017, according to data from the State Department and the Integrated Illicit Crops Monitoring System (*Oficina de las Naciones Unidas contra la Droga y el Delito*, UNODC-Sistema Integrado de Monitoreo de Cultivos Ilícitos, SIMCI, 2020). The reasons for this increase are multiple: the reconfiguration of the armed actors in the territories abandoned by FARC;

⁴ Minister of Interior Alicia Arango's remarks comparing the death of social leaders with those related to the robbery of cellular phones are the clearest example of this position.

the low levels of manual eradication and substitution in key production areas, due to access difficulties and security risks for eradication teams; the prohibition of aerial spraying with glyphosate as of 2015; the rise in cocaine seizures that could have stimulated coca planting; and the perverse incentives to farming families generated by benefits agreed to in the peace process (Garzón and Llorente, 2018).

Another problem with the Comprehensive National Program for the Substitution of Illicit Crops is that, because of its focus on the family nucleus, it does not strengthen the social fabric in the communities where it is implemented. Furthermore, the program is extremely expensive. Around 130,000 families signed collective agreements for voluntary substitution, and close to 99,000 joined PNIS through individual agreements. For 2019, the Program required an investment of 1.6 trillion pesos to fulfill its basic commitments, excluding those who only have collective agreements. Voluntary eradication has been very successful: the level of compliance of the families is 94%, and the level of replanting, according to UNODC, is 0.6%. According to the words of one participant in the focus group in Tibú in 2019, when asked what peace is:

In the ZVTN Caño Indio, where there were five more villages, they eradicated 100% of the coca themselves, without the need for the government to pay them to do it, to save the government that money, and to date, the payments did not come. Talking about peace for the people is something ephemeral, for them, peace is being able to substitute coca and they want to substitute it.

However, the government of President Duque has prioritized the forced eradication of crops and intends to resume aerial spraying with glyphosate. It also decided not to involve the more than 33,000 families that signed collective agreements, because doing so would require \$1.3 trillion additional pesos (Fundación Ideas para la Paz, 2019). This position only deepens the communities' distrust towards the state and undermines support for the Agreement in the regions. This much was expressed in the focus group in Tibú:

People had great expectations about the peace process, which was a bad example because negotiations with ELN will no longer be possible. Communities that gave it their all, like Caño Indio, com-

munities that are starving today because they completely eradicated their coca, had a concept of peace; you name the word peace to them and they get their machetes and kick you out of there at once (Focus group in Tibú).

Other communities that were engaged in dialogues to sign agreements but were unable to do so before the change of government will not have this possibility either. Bearing this in mind, the question is whether focusing on a more comprehensive transformation of these territories, providing them with transportation and communications infrastructure and services to promote their inclusion in the country's legal economic and commercial circuits would make more sense and be more successful than granting subsidies to farming families.

A final factor that impacts negatively on the implementation of the agreement is the problem of inter-institutional coordination, particularly between the Development Programs with a Territorial Approach and the Comprehensive National Program for the Substitution of Illicit Crops, but also the division of responsibilities on drug issues among multiple instances and government agencies. This problem, inherited from the Santos administration,⁵ duplicates efforts and generates non-optimized expenditures of the limited resources available to the program and significant delays in fulfilling the state's commitments with the peasants who uprooted their crops (Colombia2020, 2020a b and c).

As indicated in the interviews, families in some of the regions analyzed in this book are registered in the PNIS: in Meta, Cauca, and Norte de Santander there are more than 18,000, and almost 4,000 hectares of coca have been eradicated voluntarily. However, the current situation in these regions is dramatic. In Mesetas (Meta), two ex-FARC combatants have been assassinated in less than a year and other demobilized people have reported serious cases of persecution and intimidation. For its part, Cauca is yet to enjoy the dividends of peace. Violence between armed groups continues and the murder of social leaders, FARC ex-combatants, and members of Indigenous communities has increased in recent

⁵ As pointed out in the first report “¿En qué va la sustitución de cultivos ilícitos?”, published in July 2017 by Fundación Ideas para la Paz (Translator's note).

months: 215 leaders and at least 36 ex-combatants have been assassinated since the Peace Agreement was signed in events in 37 of the 42 municipalities of the department. Death threats and intimidation have also increased, generally endorsed by Águilas Negras (Black Eagles) and the Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia (Gaitanista Self-Defense Forces of Colombia) (El Espectador, 2020).

As reflected in the testimonies in the interviews and focus groups, the situation in Catatumbo is extremely complex, fueled by multiple factors that should be comprehensively addressed: several armed groups vying for control of the region and its illegal economies, the impact of the Venezuelan crisis and the dynamics of the mass migration of Venezuelans across the border, and the deterioration of security as well as the humanitarian impact caused by the first two (Fundación Ideas para la Paz, 2020).

As the interviews show, violence in Buenaventura increased after the signing of the Agreement, and homicides, extortion, and threats, whether or not associated with drug trafficking, are a serious problem. According to a report by the International Crisis Group (2019), the sophisticated model of extortion in the port is the cause of the high cost of living in one of the poorest cities in Colombia. The lack of opportunities for social mobility, especially for the youth, complicates finding a sustainable solution to the factors that generate violence and insecurity in the most important port in the country, which has historically grown and operated with its back to the local population. All of this was evidenced in the conversations within the focus groups held for this project:

Due to the lack of education and economic stability, other dynamics have been generated in the population, especially in young people, who, because of lack of job opportunities, begin to participate in illegal economies or groups outside the law.

Of course, this legitimizes the armed actors, who exercise authority and give opportunities to the local population.

In Buenaventura, the authority has lost legitimacy, it has become blurry, therefore, people have begun to identify armed groups outside the law as the authority.

Illegal mining, the other important business in illicit economies, is the only means of livelihood for some populations in regions like Pacific Nariño, Lower Cauca, and Chocó, and is an important activity in Northern Cauca, as indicated in the interviews in Santander de Quilichao. This reinforces the power and control of the armed groups over the residents and puts a strain on the communities' relations with the State. It is important to mention that illegal mining and drug trafficking involve in many cases the active participation of the local population, who receive concrete benefits like "compensation" payments for environmental damage caused by illegal mining or collecting or transporting drug shipments in speedboats to Central America. Although the current government stands firm on its "defense of legality," the reality in the territories is that, without the resources from illegal economies, the livelihoods and lives of extremely vulnerable populations are also affected.

However, the common denominator of interventions by state institutions has been the emphasis on increasing the military presence in the territories and the reiteration of the need to combat and eradicate illegal economies, without measures to counteract the negative impact on local populations. A true institutional articulation to create the necessary conditions to build sustainable peace and transform the situation in the territories is yet to be achieved. This was mentioned in the interviews and focus groups:

Why speak of peace when there are no sufficient job opportunities, no decent health or education conditions? Or why speak of peace when in municipalities like Santander de Quilichao, Puerto Tejada, Guachené, or Villa Rica Afro people have been dispossessed of their land? (Focus group in Santander de Quilichao).

To achieve sustainable peace, it is necessary to solve the problems of inequality, housing, education, health, land, and decent work (Interview in Mesetas).

3. Opportunities for conflict transformation

As the interviews show, formal and informal, public, community, and private institutions in the territories work in the organization and management of community life, productive and social development, conflict resolution, and political activism. These institutions play diverse roles in conflict transformation at the local, regional, and national levels. The degree of dependence of a community or territory on illegal economies determines the role of each institution/actor in the transformation of conflicts generated by them.

In this vein, in regions with Indigenous and Afro populations, like Santander de Quilichao and Buenaventura, the traditional authorities (community councils and cabildos or associations of cabildos) perform functions of internal political organization, mediation and conflict resolution, and defense of their rights vis-à-vis authorities of the National Government and even illegal armed actors that control (or vie for control of) illegal economies in the territories. This is the emblematic case of the Indigenous Guard of Northern Cauca, which for years has confronted armed actors who tried to control their territories to benefit especially from the drug trafficking economy, at great cost in terms of lives of members of the Guard and weakening of the social fabric of the community. For their part, peasant communities are organized in Community Action Boards (Juntas de Acción Comunal), which in some regions, like Catatumbo, have been fundamental in generating bonds of solidarity and healthy coexistence as well as promoting collective actions to avoid or mitigate the impact of the armed conflict and the presence of illegal armed actors in the territory, as in the example of the Pacielli community.

At the same time, it must be recognized that the local populations' relations with illegal economies and the actors that control them are complex and can range from confrontation to cooperation and mutual collaboration, bearing in mind that in some regions the livelihoods of many people depend on working in the framework of these economies. This is observed in the village of Caño Indio, in Tibú, as reflected in the testimonies collected in the focus group: many residents depend on the cultivation of coca, and many were willing to substitute these crops in the hope that the Peace Agreement would generate sustainable changes

in the region. In Buenaventura, the existence of relations of cooperation and coercion also emerged in conversations in the focus groups:

Initially, these illegal armed actors were outsiders who came to the communities and settled in the most remote neighborhoods, but over time they were involving the most vulnerable youth in the area and the villages. They offered people a million pesos and a gun, regardless of the use they made of them.

Demobilized groups are also becoming part of the local social and political life, and although in some regions ex-combatants are being persecuted and killed, their potential as transformers of conflicts in the communities in which they have settled cannot be ignored.

In some regions, the Catholic Church has also played an important role, supporting community organizations in the creation of conflict resolution mechanisms, making visible the problems that affect local populations, and even as part of alliances between local authorities, the international community, entrepreneurs, and communities, as in the case of the purchase of the land where the ETCR of Caño Indio is located. The Church has also been a key actor in Buenaventura, supporting community and ethnic organizations in their struggles at the local and national levels to address the grave socio-economic, political, and security problems facing the city.

Entrepreneurs and business associations have also played positive and negative roles in conflicts in their areas of operation. Faced with the influence of illegal economies, companies are in a privileged position insofar as they can generate employment or productive projects in association with local organizations or cooperatives, and even facilitate dialogues between various actors in the community for the promotion of local development. The Vallenpaz Corporation, mentioned in interviews in Santander de Quilichao, is an example of this type of action with great potential for conflict transformation.

The role of local, departmental, and national authorities in conflict management varies greatly depending on the characteristics of the territory. The interviews and focus groups in Buenaventura evidenced the communities' distrust, especially towards national authorities and the

Public Force, which they perceive as indifferent to the problems of the territory or as defamers and even victimizers of the local population. This also explains why criminal actors associated with illicit economies are more legitimate among some social sectors than public entities. In other cases, as in Tibú, the communities recognize the commitment of institutions, especially of mayors and governors, to support transformative processes, particularly concerning the reintegration of demobilized FARC combatants.

In several cases, international cooperation organizations have supported local communities and taken on a role as spokespersons of their problems, including those generated by illegal economies, before national authorities, public opinion, and other international actors.

Concerning opportunities for the transformation of conflicts related to illegal economies, the central role of local initiatives should be highlighted. A recent publication by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung in Colombia (Fescol) and Fundación Ideas para la Paz (Ideas for Peace Foundation)⁶ points out the importance of focusing on the local level and recognizing that illicit crops, a central factor of illegal economies in Colombia, are not just a single identical problem everywhere but “a set of concrete problems that, properly identified and understood, can be solved, one at a time” (Bermúdez Liévano and Garzón, 2020: 15). The book examines 10 cases of local communities that tried to disassociate themselves from illegal economies linked to drug trafficking, and analyzes the obstacles faced, the solutions sought to overcome them, and the achievements. The purpose is to feed the debate and give ideas on how other actors (public officials, local and national institutions, international cooperation agencies, and large companies) can support initiatives to offer concrete solutions to the specific problems of each community, rather than pursuing a non-existent one-size-fits-all solution.

⁶ “El catálogo de las pequeñas soluciones. Alternativas para sustituir los cultivos de coca en Colombia,” by Andrés Bermúdez Liévano y Juan Carlos Garzón (2020).

4. The coronavirus conjuncture

The official handling of illicit crops in the context of the pandemic is one more example of the difficulties in generating conditions of peace and transformation of the territories. The forced eradication of crops has continued in Putumayo, Catatumbo, Cauca, Chocó, Nariño, Córdoba, and Caquetá, contravening the Peace Agreement and the national quarantine ordered by President Iván Duque. Eradication jeopardizes the health and food security of communities who are forced to violate the quarantine and leave their homes to defend their crops, ultimately their only source of livelihood.

As of this writing,⁷ an Indigenous Awá and two peasants have died in eradication operations in Tumaco and Catatumbo, respectively. In all areas where eradication is taking place communities and many local authorities have requested the suspension of these activities during the pandemic. However, in an interview with the newspaper *El Espectador*, Defense Minister Carlos Holmes Trujillo defended eradication, wielding the “defense of legality” discourse and answering concretely and directly questions about the survival of communities concerning food and health (*El Espectador*, 2020).

When asked about the concentration of people in areas of eradication, contravening the measures decreed by the government in the face of the pandemic, the Minister replied that the operations of the public force have continued because “their purpose is the security and tranquility of Colombians.” Faced with questions about how to avoid concentrations when peasants go out to defend their crops and how to guarantee food security for cultivating families, he mentioned the illegality of coca crops and the mission of the public force to defend the constitutional order. His answer to the question about the deaths that occurred in the middle of operations was that they and the El Tandil massacre in Tumaco were under investigation. He failed to mention that this massacre, where eight people were killed, occurred in 2017, and to date, none of the 40 members of the Public Force under investigation have been convicted or sanctioned by the Attorney General’s Office.

⁷ 20 June 2020.

At the same time, armed actors have taken advantage of the pandemic to gain legitimacy vis-à-vis local communities. In regions like Cauca, Nariño, Meta, or Arauca they act as health authorities, resorting to violence to force the population to comply with the quarantine. This allows them to increase their control over the territories and legitimize themselves. The effectiveness of this strategy is illustrated by the fact that even when many local leaders denounce and condemn these actions, sectors of the communities appreciate the armed groups' help in preventing the spread of the pandemic (La Silla Vacía, 2020).

Taking up the words of Vanda Felbab Brown in an interview on organized crime and covid-19:

Latin American governments must realize that they are competing with criminals for state-building and must fight to gain the support of local populations. To win, they need to become better providers of security, order, conflict resolution, employment, and services than criminal groups (Fescol, 2020).

Many researchers, experts, and political actors agree on this point. This is also recognized in the Havana Peace Agreement with its focus on the so-called territorial peace. However, the current government's policies weaken the chances of implementing a very ambitious agreement (Felbab Brown, 2018). And if the Agreement is not implemented, it will be very difficult to transform the territories and compete with criminal groups and illegal economies that provide jobs and livelihoods for many rural populations.

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Family of Indigenous Governor Cristina Bautista after her burial in La Susana village, close to Tacueyó, department of Cauca. November 2, 2019. Photo: Malcolm Linton.



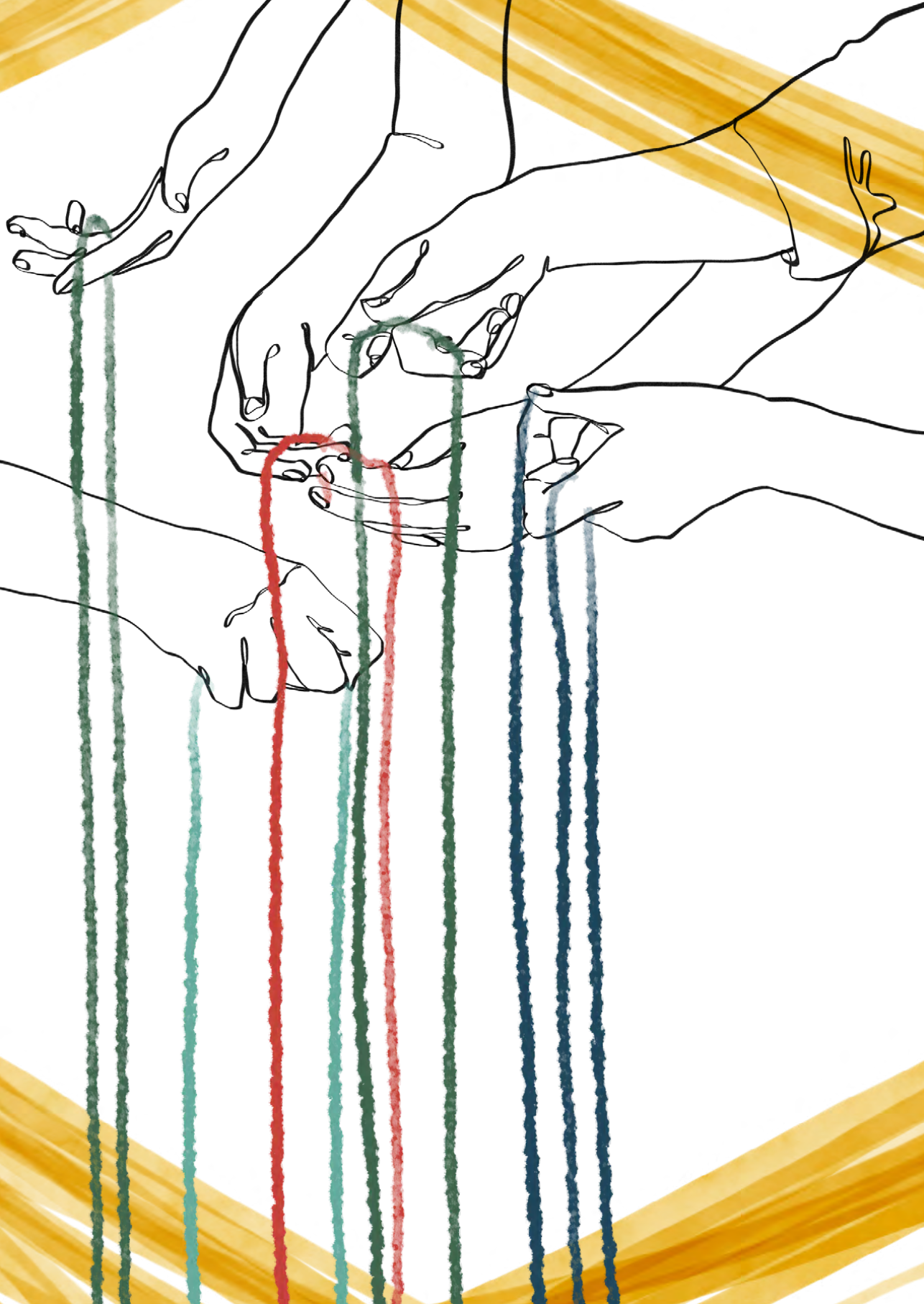


Members of the indigenous community of Governor Cristina Bautista during her funeral in La Susana village, close to Tacueyó, department of Cauca. November 2, 2019. Photo: Malcolm Linton.





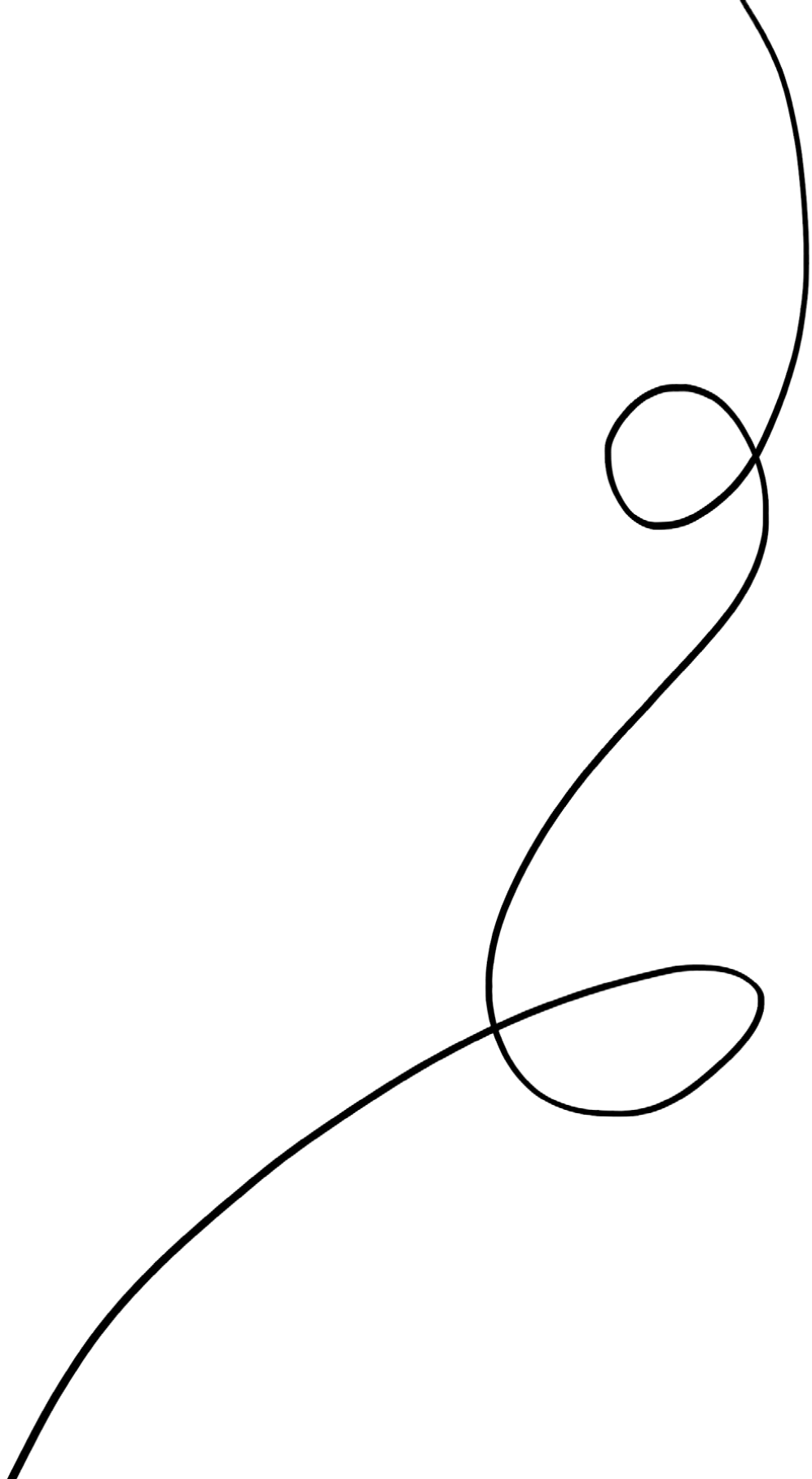
Fish farming project established by demobilized FARC-EP combatants in a transition area close to Colinas, department of Guaviare. May 15, 2017. Photo: Malcolm Linton.






PART III

Decisive Actory



National actors in peacebuilding

Kristina Birke Daniels y Sabine Kurtenbach



As a complex, multilevel process, peacebuilding depends on a series of local, sub-national, national, and international actors. Notably, because of the emphasis on a “territorial approach” aimed at expanding the legitimacy of peacebuilding, attention at the national level waned during the peace process between the government of President Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018) and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People’s Army (FARC-EP) that ended in 2016 with the signing of the Peace Agreement. At the same time, the central state demanded a pivotal role for national actors and institutions, as they define the political, legal, and economic framework for peacebuilding, and, as signatories, would be key actors in the implementation of an eventual agreement. Colombia is therefore an exceptional case to analyze the complexity of these processes.

First, in the context of previous peace processes, different state and civil society actors have developed capacities to promote inclusive and peaceful developments. The peace agreement with the FARC-EP must be one of the best monitored in the world: the United Nations and the Kroc Institute of the University of Notre Dame are in charge of the official

monitoring and publish reports regularly. But the multiparty bench for peace in Congress and various civil society organizations, including the diverse social movement *Defendamos la Paz* (Let's Defend the Peace), also conduct periodical evaluations and publish important reports.¹

Second, before the signing of the Peace Agreement between the Santos government and the FARC-EP, in 2011 the Colombian Congress approved Law 1448 (the Victims Law), an important step on the road from war to peace. Through a legislative act in 2017 endorsed by the Constitutional Court, the Santos government shielded and protected the Peace Agreement, giving it the status of state policy for three legislative periods.

Third, the political context changed drastically with the 2018 presidential and congressional elections, as during the campaign Iván Duque spoke of substantially changing the Agreement, despite promising not to destroy it. To date, restrained by the opposition within Congress and by the courts, he has not managed to achieve this objective. Despite programs to support the productive processes of reintegrated ex-combatants, the implementation of the Agreement has been underfunded and slowed down, as it is not a policy priority of his government.

It is possible to analyze differences in conception and action concerning peace between presidents as chief executives and their governments, as well as between different actors and levels. We start by presenting different meanings of the concept of peace based on an analysis of speeches, government documents, and tweets from presidents or candidates.² In the second part, we analyze the institutionality of peace and the role of

¹ Besides the Annual Reports of the “bench for peace” (made up of members of seven political parties and various individuals) and the public letters of the Defense of Peace movement, other examples are the publications of the Center for Studies on Security and Drugs of the University of Los Andes (Cesed), the Ideas for Peace Foundation, Pares, and the Center for Research and Popular Education / Program for Peace (Cinep), among others.

² We are grateful for the research support of María Fernanda Ramírez Medina, Daniel Rodríguez Aldana, and Andrés Rodas Vélez during their internship at GIGA in early 2019.

Congress and the judicial system. We end with an analysis of the role of civil society organizations. This analysis will help us evaluate the power relations in favor of and against certain conceptions of peace and the possibilities or limits of transformation concerning peace.

1. The peace conceptions of Presidents Santos and Duque³

It is particularly important to analyze the different conceptions of peace of Presidents Santos and Duque (2018-) because they give rise to policies to promote peace and implement the Agreement (Santos) or try to reduce it to mere formal aspects, leaving aside substantial issues such as changes in the rural sector, the reduction of inequity, and the empowerment of historically discriminated populations (Duque).

As a signatory to the Agreement, Juan Manuel Santos' conception of peace reflected the broad and transformative vision of the Agreement and the notion of peace as a transformative process (Valenzuela, 2019). This vision is easily related to the three pillars of peace that we developed in the concept of glocal peace (Chapter 2). This can be illustrated with tweets from the president in which he associates peace to:

- The reduction of violence: “Let us think about the lives that peace will save, the victims who will not have to suffer, and the opportunities for progress. #AFirmarLaPaz”⁴.
- The recognition of human rights: “Respect for human rights is our North Star. We will continue to focus on that line of action.

³ The following is based on an analysis of various sources, such as the Twitter accounts of Iván Duque and Juan Manuel Santos during the 2018 presidential campaign and the development plans “All for a new country”, 2014-2018 and the “Pact for Colombia”, 2018-2022.

⁴ <https://twitter.com/JuanManSantos/status/801241917258432512>

Thank you @OEA_oficial and @CIDH for supporting our peace-building effort, a Colombian progress that belongs to humanity;”⁵ and The constructive transformation of conflicts: “With the peace agreement we open the doors to life, progress, and the construction of a better country. It is proof that with dialogue, and respecting differences, conflicts can be solved.”⁶

This is not to say that the peace of the Santos government was based on a similar concept, but at least on the surface, it resonates with the same issues. The Development Plan “All for a new country”, 2014-2018 (Departamento Nacional de Planeación, 2014) and even more the concept of territorial peace also take up these aspects.

Iván Duque’s conception of peace, as a candidate and as president, is much more limited, emphasizing two elements:

- Security: “The challenge for Colombia is very great, that is why I want to be president so that security returns to the entire territory. Security is neither of the right or of the left, it is a public good and a right of all.”⁷
- Legality: “Our premise of legality will be: ‘if you commit a crime, you’ll do the time.’ This is how peace with justice is built, not with selectivity.”⁸

Despite claiming to seek legality and security for the country, it is clear that this does not apply to the FARC because, in his view, they remain “unpunished.” This discourse against the Peace Agreement will be the central axis of his term as president. In the National Development Plan 2018-2022 “Pact for Colombia, pact for equity” (Departamento Nacio-

⁵ <https://twitter.com/JuanManSantos/status/966717627182866432>

⁶ <https://twitter.com/JuanManSantos/status/930602328943726592>

⁷ <https://twitter.com/IvanDuque/status/987409054703259648>

⁸ <https://twitter.com/IvanDuque/status/982369001396408321>

nal de Planeación, 2018)”plainCitation”:”(Departamento Nacional de Planeación 2018 it is clearly stated that “[p]eace is built with legality and legality is built with security and justice” (Departamento Nacional de Planeación, 2018: 749). Processes of social change or transformation of the structural causes of violence are not considered necessary or legitimate. The wave of protests at the end of 2019, which continued during the pandemic in 2020, met repression, slander, and criminalization. State security forces repressed with great violence, causing severe injuries and even the death of several peaceful protesters. Dilan Cruz, an 18-year-old student, died on November 23, 2019, and became the symbol of the protest against the government of President Duque and its neoliberal and violent agenda. Besides the violence against citizens by state security agents, violence against social leaders, which is multi-causal, has increased considerably during the Duque administration. Although the government is not directly involved, it has not done enough to stop it, nor has it fulfilled its duty of protection.

Several formal and informal institutions are important to implement the Agreement and accompany the transformative process on which the conception of peace is based. They include state institutions designed to develop specific parts of the Agreement, the Legislative Branch, because it must formulate the legal foundation for this process, the judiciary as a key institution for managing the conflicts that arise in the process, and not least important, institutions and civil society organizations that support (or resist) this transformative process. After the Havana negotiations, these institutions have played a key role in the implementation of the Agreement and in the design of relevant public policies.

2. The institutionality of peace

Numerous existing and newly created institutions play a central role in the implementation of the Peace Agreement. The Office of the High Commissioner for Peace (OACP) has coordinated and advised the presidency on this matter since 1994. In 1998, it became a permanent institution, ratified by the Álvaro Uribe government. Since 2010 the presidential administration has been repeatedly restructured. In 2014,

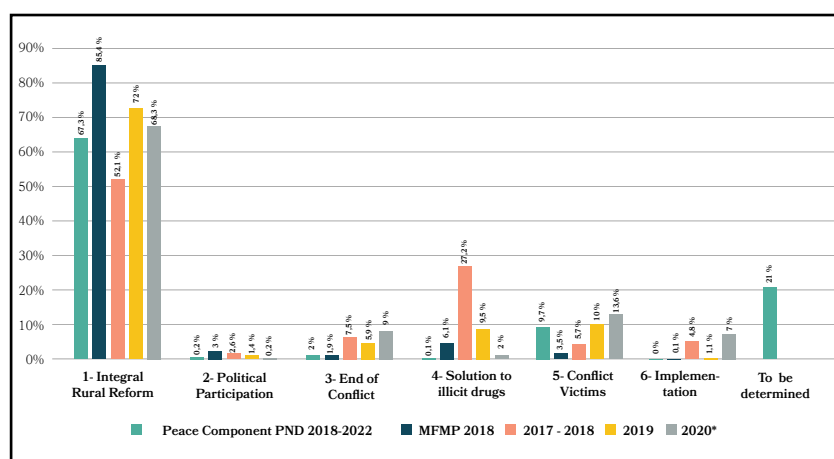
the High Council for Post-Conflict was created, but the lack of a clear demarcation between the two institutions generated coordination problems between them. The government of Iván Duque revoked the High Council for Post-Conflict and changed its name to Presidential Council for Stabilization and Consolidation. The absence of the term “peace” in the denomination is revealing.

The government of Juan Manuel Santos promoted important projects of reform even before the signing of the Agreement, especially during his second term (beginning in 2014). The central guidelines are formulated in the national development plan “All for a new country, 2014-2018” (Departamento Nacional de Planeación, 2014). The entire development plan is relevant for reforms in the context of the peace process, as it already addresses the key issues of the negotiations. Actions concerning the core reforms of the peace process are guided by the chapters on peace development, social justice and security, and justice and democracy. Central reform projects are formulated in the Plan. In 2011, the Victims and Land Restitution Act (1448) provided the legal foundation for the compensation of victims and restitution of land. On this basis, among others, the Victims Unit was created, in whose registry (as of September 5, 2020) 9,041,303 victims have been listed. The National Center for Historical Memory (CNMH), which has published important reports, was founded in 2011. Furthermore, institutions began to prepare to implement an agreement with the FARC-EP. An example is an increasing institutionalization and change in the content approach of the Agency for Reincorporation and Standardization (ARN).

As a result of negotiations in Havana and the signing of the Peace Agreement, reform efforts intensified. In the course of negotiations, some reforms were more precisely defined; for example, the criminal prosecution of certain crimes (violence and participation in coca cultivation and drug trafficking), a subject of heated controversy in sectors of Colombian society. Since the signing of the Agreement, reforms have mainly focused on the implementation of central points, including the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of FARC combatants, as well as their political participation; the prosecution of serious human rights violations in the context of war by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP); an agrarian reform, albeit limited; and the substitution of coca crops for legal products.

However, many of these peace institutions are temporary and depend on government commitment and state funding. While funding was already precarious during the Santos government –among other reasons, due to the fall in the price of oil, the most important source of financial support–, the budget was further reduced by the government of President Iván Duque. Graph 16, from the fourth Report of the Office of the Comptroller General of the Republic (2020), offers a detailed image of the development of funding for different provisions of the Peace Agreement.

Figure 16. Financing the Agreement



Source: Office of the Comptroller General of the Republic, 2020: 30.

2.1 Congress

Congress plays such a central role because the implementation of the reforms must be anchored in the law (Rettberg and Quiroga, 2014). Two structural problems have a significant impact on peace legislation: first, the fragmentation of the Colombian party system during the last decades is faithfully reflected in Congress; and second, forming alliances and coalitions is problematic. The two-party system, which dominated Colombian politics in the 20th century, disappeared as a result of the allocation of representation to minorities in the 1991 Constitution

and the founding of new parties and electoral alliances. If the 1990 elections were the last with strong support for the traditional parties, as of 2002, when Álvaro Uribe (2002-2010) was elected president in the first round, the number of parties had already increased to six or seven (Gutiérrez Sanín, 2007: 467). Currently, 15 parties are represented in the House of Representatives and 13 in the Senate. This implies that forming and organizing majorities to legislate has become increasingly difficult, more so in a matter as controversial as the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

In 2017, the first legislative year after the Agreement was signed, some compromises were reached, albeit with significant difficulties. Legislation milestones that year were the law that allowed the FARC-EP to become a political party (April) and the Law of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (November). The Agreement stipulated that, regardless of the electoral results, FARC's representation in the Congress of the Republic would be guaranteed for two legislatures (that is, until 2026), with five representatives and five senators.⁹ However, the "fast track" procedure for laws concerning the Peace Agreement expired on November 30, 2017. By then, 11 laws had been approved. Eight bills were not approved, including one on Special Circumscriptions for Peace, designed to expand the representation of social organizations and victims, especially in the territories most affected by violence. President Santos also issued 36 legislative decrees and 60 more implementing the Peace Agreement. As elections approached (in March and May 2018), a growing number of parties and politicians distanced themselves from the government's peace agenda.

The inauguration of the government of Iván Duque in August 2018 significantly hindered compliance with the Agreement. However, since the government did not have a majority in the House or the Senate, it could not "shred" the Agreement, although it substantially slowed its implementation on such issues as transitional justice. A coalition in the legislative branch and the Constitutional Court protected the core elements of the Accord. One of the most controversial points was the JEP's statute, necessary for this Jurisdiction to start working. As a result, it

⁹ With the change of government in 2018, the JEP and the presence of the FARC in Congress met with considerable resistance from the president and his party.

only began to operate at the beginning of June 2019. The majority of the Duque government's legislative initiatives promote neoliberal economic policies that aggravate rather than mitigate the structural causes of the conflict.

In this complex context, with a government that lacks the motivation or the political will to implement a broad concept of peace, there were two signs that the country had not turned its back on the Agreement. First, the strengthening in Bogotá and many large and medium-sized cities of political actors with an agenda of alternative policies that, among other reforms, also promote the implementation of the Peace Agreement. In the 2019 regional elections, these alternative candidates received significant support, while support for the candidates of the *Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común* (FARC) (Common Alternative Revolutionary Force), the political party created by the FARC after the signing of the Peace Agreement, was limited.¹⁰ Although the first elections after the end of a war or an armed conflict do not usually determine the future of rebels that made the transition to a political party, it is clear that the propaganda that argues that the country will be handed over to the FARC if they participate in elections instead of going to jail is a black legend and not a reflection of reality.

Second, to challenge governmental policies, groups that favor peace and the process of change mobilized in Congress and civil society (see below). The “bench for peace, life, and democracy,” made up of about fifty parliamentarians—in both chambers—includes a spectrum of seven political parties and a few individuals. Over the course of three years, it has drafted bills and held public hearings, monitored the implementation of the Agreement, and carried out joint territorial activities in areas affected by the conflict. It has become highly visible for its excellent monitoring reports, prepared mainly by the office of Juanita Goebertus, a member of the House of Representatives for *Alianza Verde* (Green Alliance). The 25 senators who make up the Peace Commission in Congress have also made efforts to consolidate peace and protect social leaders and victims of the conflict, questioning the government on these issues. However, within this Commission, there are divergent concepts

¹⁰ A single ex-combatant was elected, but with the endorsement of a different party from the then called FARC party. Neither were non-FARC ex-combatant candidates elected.

of peace that on occasion have complicated its agenda. Paralleling the initiative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to face the pandemic, it called for a ceasefire from all violent groups and organizations as a humanitarian measure. The government did not heed this proposal nor the communiqué of the National Liberation Army (ELN), which had earlier made a declaration along the same lines. Furthermore, the Commission has made visits to the territories to discuss progress in the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

2.2 The Judicial Branch

The Colombian judiciary has contributed significantly to the transformation of the armed conflict in recent decades. First, because, as elsewhere, it is a key actor for the constructive transformation of conflicts. The 1991 Constitution established a solid basis for judicial independence and the guarantee of human rights (see the chapter on the pillars of peace at the national level). Second, the high courts, especially the Constitutional Court, have played a key role in the implementation of the Peace Agreement, due to a high level of political polarization around this topic. They have protected central parts of the Agreement, such as the JEP, from the opposition of the Duque government, as well as fundamental rights. This is one reason why it is part of the conflict between the government and the opposition. The active role of the judiciary has generated new conflicts and a series of efforts to limit its independence.

Another process is the politicization of justice. The Duque government appointed a close friend of the president as attorney general (January 2020) and another as head of the Ombudsman's Office (August 2020). The government seeks to undermine the independence of the judiciary under the title "Reform." The problem is that politicization in a highly polarized context weakens the credibility of institutions that are essential for the constructive transformation of conflicts. The criminal proceedings against former President Álvaro Uribe, for which he was placed under house arrest in early August 2020, intensified the debate on the role of the judiciary.

The option of the Peace Agreement for a transitional justice system oriented towards reconciliation, in contrast to the punitive tendency of

Colombia's legalism,¹¹ has created many conflicts. The Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation, and Non-Repetition (SIVJRNR), composed of three organizations,¹² has been the target of many political attacks over the years. The system has a comprehensive approach and is closely linked to the implementation of other points of the Agreement. However, its organizations, particularly the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, have been the subject of public criticism in the capital and the focus of many urban debates about the implementation of the agreement. The JEP must investigate and punish serious crimes committed by civilians, military, and guerrillas during the war (crimes against humanity, genocide, extrajudicial executions, hostage-taking, torture, sexual violence, forced disappearance, recruitment of minors, forced displacement) up to the year 2031. Those who cooperate with the Jurisdiction and help establish the truth can expect reduced sentences of up to eight years. Preventing new cycles of violence and compensating the victims are core objectives. Special attention is given to violence against women, who represent more than half (52%) of the more than nine million victims of various forms of violence registered in the Victims Unit.

The JEP has prioritized politically sensitive issues, such as the practice of kidnapping by the FARC and the participation of members of the State security forces (police and military) in extrajudicial executions. In January 2020, two and a half years after it began to function, it published the first accusation in case 001 concerning kidnappings by FARC guerrillas. Accusing the FARC of war crimes and crimes against huma-

¹¹ Rodrigo Uprimny (2010) has described Colombia as a paradoxical country. It is legalistic, because many social and political discussions have an inevitable legal component. And, in turn, many legal debates have considerable political impact. This contrasts with the high use of violence, the lack of accessibility to the rule of law, and even more, the lack of the rule of law in many regions.

¹² The three organizations that are part of this system are the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence, and Non-Repetition; the Search Unit for Presumed Disappeared Persons; and the Special Jurisdiction for Peace.

nity, it made clear that its role was not to distribute impunity,¹³ as the critics claimed. More than likely, ordinary courts would not have made as clear a pronouncement as did the JEP in this ruling, that it would have taken much longer, and that there would not have been such a significant contribution to the truth.

In 2019, the cases of extrajudicial executions by the military between 2002 and 2008, the so-called false positives, reached the JEP. According to information compiled by the Chamber of Acknowledgement of Truth and Responsibility, during those years, at least 6,402 people were illegally murdered in the national territory and presented as people killed in action. Relatives of the victims were also present at the hearings for this macro-case in September 2019. A report about 72 victims in the Catatumbo region, based on the testimony of members of the Armed Forces, found that the murders, which were to be covered up, were not accidental but planned by the military. Furthermore, according to testimonies by the military in this macro case, a system of rewards and incentives for soldiers involved in these acts was in place.

3. Civil society

Peace perspectives within organized civil society are as different as the organizations that represent it. Furthermore, they reflect constantly changing dynamics in their political environments. Like the entire Colombian society, organized citizens have been strongly affected by decades of armed conflict. Between 2010 and 2018, capacities, empowerment, and collective actions for peace increased. However, after the October 2016 referendum, peace organizations have faced the stigma generated by the politicization of peace. Nevertheless, collective actions only began to decline in 2018, possibly due to lack of government support. To a large extent, after the referendum, organized civil society has tried to establish a dialogue with obstinate actors and opponents of peace, as evidenced, for example, in a series of Improbable Dialogues, the work of the Episcopal Conference with the National Conciliation

¹³ *El Tiempo*, January 31, 2021. “No, la JEP no iba a ser un tribunal de indulgencias.”

Commission, and the Dialogues of non-repetition of the Truth Commission. Conversations that “promote a public dialogue around the difficult questions that the country has not faced and the causes and consequences of the armed conflict.”¹⁴ In research conducted by Cinep, several relevant peace organizations and networks agree that:

It is evident that for a large part of society as a whole peace does not only mean the end of an armed conflict but also overcoming the structural factors of inequality and exclusion that condition it. This implies a process of integral transformation of the relations between State and society in which civil society has an important mediation function to prevent the violent outcomes that this process can generate. For organized civil society, resistance [against armed violence] has a meaning of survival, which is a vital and concrete content that organized civil society cannot ignore (Cinep 2019, 135).

Civil society’s possibilities to participate in the national peace policy have been reduced since the beginning of the Duque administration, although the National Council for Peace, Reconciliation, and Coexistence has served as an advisory and consultative body to the government. The Council is highly representative of Colombian society and brings together many civil society sectors, representatives of state overseeing bodies, the national government, ministers, high commissioners, and President Duque. The body showed promise with a non-violence pact during the 2019 electoral process, but, in general terms, so far it has not been able to develop its full potential.

The dialogues with the opponents of peace did not produce a minimum consensus on the implementation of the Agreement, and over two years the strategy of civil society has become increasingly defensive. President Duque’s objections to the JEP, in February 2019, prompted an alliance of politicians (among them Iván Cepeda, a senator for the Alternative Democratic Pole (PDA); Juan Fernando Cristo, Minister of the Interior of the Santos government; and Humberto de la Calle, peace negotiator of the Santos government) to create the Defense of Peace movement (MDLP). Through a national dialogue, the movement is de-

¹⁴ <https://comisiondelaverdad.co/actualidad/noticias/arrancan-los-dialogos-para-la-no-repeticion-de-la-comision-de-la-verdad> July 2019

veloping a political agenda for the implementation of the Agreement. The initiative encompasses multipliers from sectors of victims, social leaders, human rights defenders, and constituents, and includes former negotiators, reintegrated ex-combatants, politicians, military, businessmen, and former ministers. Defendamos la Paz works “to consolidate peace and proposes to continue to defend the historical gains made thus far, to assume peace as state policy, and to contribute to adding new achievements to consolidate it for good.”¹⁵ Making the most of digital tools, Defendamos la Paz has seven sectoral and 34 territorial chapters, grouping 3,453 diverse people from all over the Colombian territory. Additionally, it has an international chapter with 322 activists in 28 countries on four continents.¹⁶ Despite a great diversity of political positions and perceptions of peace, the group has maintained a firm consensus on peace as “a supreme end of the nation.” In two years, Defendamos la Paz has published more than 50 communiqués on urgent matters, letters and complaints to the government and international bodies. Its capacity to mobilize was evidenced during 2019 and 2020 in conferences and large demonstrations at the national and international levels. Among the most important and outstanding issues of Defendamos la Paz have been the struggle for the lives of social leaders and ex-combatants, demanding the approval of the 16 special circumscriptions for peace, and the search for a comprehensive peace, including negotiations with the ELN.

In 2019, however, peace suffered another blow after two former FARC-EP commanders (Seuxis Paucias Hernández Solarte, Jesús Santrich, FARC congressman, and Luciano Marín Arango, Iván Márquez, main guerrilla negotiator in the peace negotiations in Havana) announced their decision to re-arm. This action has been condemned not only by FARC ex-combatants in Congress, but also publicly by all the promoters of the peace process. In 2021, the FARC party changed its name to

¹⁵ Defendamos la Paz, presentation during the First National Meeting of Defendamos la Paz, Centro Cultural García Márquez, Bogotá, June 17, 2019.

¹⁶ Report Defendamos la Paz 2019, published in 2019 by <https://www.facebook.com/DefendamosLaPazColombia>, and @DefendamosPaz on Twitter.

the Comunes party, which implies a significant political break with its guerrilla past.

Throughout 2019, Colombia experienced massive demonstrations and citizen mobilizations, especially in large cities, with the participation of a greater variety of sectors of society that lack organizational structures. The largest national strike in recent Colombian history took place in November of that year. Besides the unions, most participants were students as well as popular and peasant organizations. The initial backdrop was a reform package announced by President Duque which, among other points, proposes to reduce the minimum wage for young people and to change the pension system. The peaceful protest intensified after the government, which had fueled fear of violent protests beforehand, sent special police forces into the streets to attack the protesters with tear gas and rubber bullets. An 18-year-old schoolboy died, who thus became a symbol of the state's repressive action against the protests.

It is difficult to assess whether the protests were anything more than an accumulation of different causes and indignation from society in general. But some groups stood out with much more concrete demands. Such was the case of ex-combatants and social leaders demanding respect for their lives, Indigenous women calling for prior consultations, and Venezuelan migrants requesting assistance to alleviate their humanitarian crisis. For much of 2019 and 2020, the government did not listen to any of the complaints. Late in 2019, however, it launched the so-called "great national conversation", a purported national dialogue, guided by its own expectations and without the participation of many organizations and sectors of civil society that did not consider it to be a true dialogue.

It can be highlighted that in late 2020 and early 2021, the general dissatisfaction of Colombian society with its government is reflected in the consistently poor rate of support for the President. Among other reasons, this disenchantment is due to the entanglements of peace and the lack of implementation of fundamental aspects in the country's development (see Chapter 16). The development of the country according to different territorial needs continues to be as important a task as democratic openness. Together with the parliamentary opposition, civil

society currently has an important and transcendent role in monitoring the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

The only solution to avoid another cycle of violence is persevering in a national political pact for peace, with a stable coalition and the possibility of winning political power in 2022 (Gutiérrez Sanín, 2020). During 2021, the creation of at least two alliances between alternative powers will be observed, although it is yet to be decided whether they will make a policy of peace a higher political end for which they are willing to change and transform essential structures of Colombia's political economy and political system. This would be the only opportunity to guarantee that society truly finds greater tranquility and equality of options to live life in peace.

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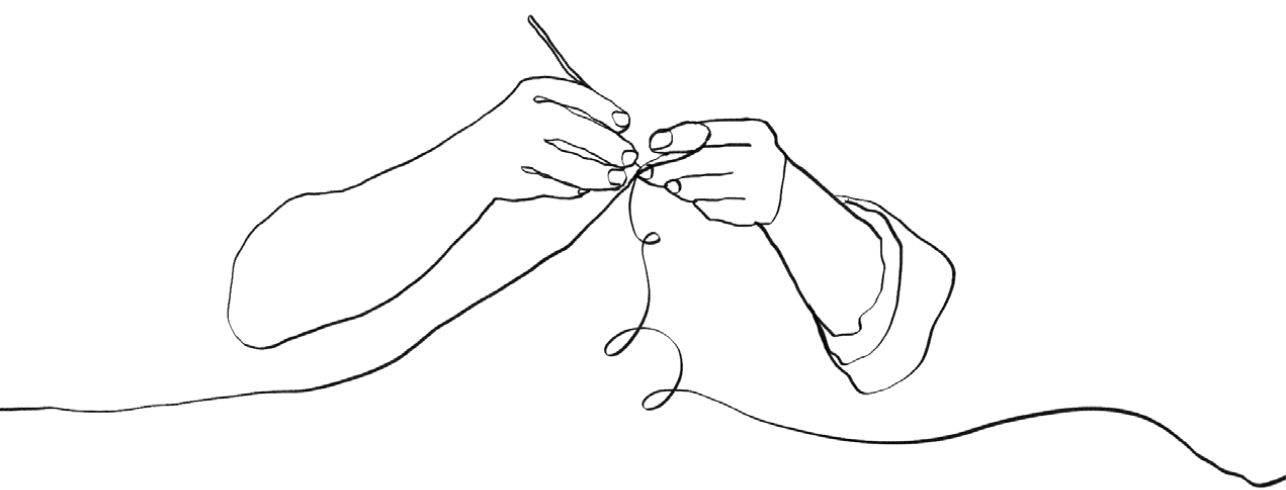
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Group of guerrilla women talking on the patio of a peasant house. Mandé, department of Antioquia, May 3, 2016. Photo: Federico Ríos.



Women: Increasing inclusion

Theresa Bachmann y Kristina Birke Daniels



Peace without women does not go!

(Céspedes-Báez and Jaramillo Ruiz 2018: 83)

To have peace, tranquility is essential, to have a dignified life free of violence, as well as a job to help us meet daily individual and family needs.

(A young woman from Guapi)

Women¹ have been fundamental in peace processes in Colombia, especially in the last one with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). They have prepared and participated in peace building at the local, regional and national level for decades. As a result of the pressure, they brought to bear during the negotiations, women from

¹ For visual reasons, the concept of ‘gender’ in the national survey only makes use of binary categories. Other parts of the study left room for diverse gender self-identification. The conception of women used in this chapter refers to all those who self-determined in this way.

both parties participated as negotiators at the table. In addition, women represent almost half of the people included in the Single Registry of Victims. Finally, due to international pressure, the Colombian Peace Agreement was the first in the world with an explicit and comprehensive gender approach. What is the role and what are the specific challenges of women in this peace process? How can they promote it? And what are their perceptions of peace? Before answering these questions, it is important to bear in mind the starting assumption: Colombian society is highly patriarchal, with many manifestations of misogyny in public and private settings. Real spaces for women's participation are few, even more so in politics. Their voting rights were only introduced in 1957.

Beyond being disproportionately affected by the conflict, over the past decades, women have mobilized to end various types and structures of local, regional, and national violence. Even during crises in the peace negotiations, an important tradition of anti-militarist women's movements in Colombia tried to promote negotiated solutions to the armed conflict.

The gender perspective in the Peace Agreement signed in 2016 has been widely recognized at the international level (Barometer Initiative et al., 2019; Oettler, 2019). However, three main obstacles characterize the current peacebuilding prospects for women and girls: a high level of violence, structural discrimination, especially in economic terms, and recurrently low political representation. Four years after the signing of the Agreement, achieving structural political changes seems challenging, especially concerning democratic opening and comprehensive rural reform. The implementation of measures related to these two points is just beginning to make progress, even though they represent critical preconditions for building a more inclusive and sustainable peace *with* women and girls.

This chapter bases its analysis on different data sources. First, it conducts a quantitative analysis of the results of the project's national survey from a gender perspective. It also examines a series of qualitative interviews and focus groups in various regions of the country to illustrate how Colombian women take the initiative to promote a conception

of peace that transcends security and the Agreement with the FARC and challenges the fundamental causes that gave rise to several conflicts in the country.

The first part highlights the importance of women's participation in peacebuilding. The next section introduces how the global context within the framework of the United Nations Women, Peace, and Security Agenda enabled Colombian women to demand their inclusion in the peace process. This is followed by a critical look at the national debate. Finally, the qualitative analysis examines women's perceptions of peace in Colombia and evaluates the results of the survey in light of the current peace process.

1. From victims to key peacebuilding actors in Colombia

The role of women and girls in armed conflict and peacebuilding was traditionally limited to their status as victims. However, in the last two decades, a prolific body of literature has emphasized their agency instead of viewing them as passive subjects in violent contexts. Restrepo (2016) analyzes how some victims overcome this condition and become peacebuilding leaders at considerable personal risks. From her perspective, they are “powerful agents of change: capable of achieving healing, empowerment, and even reconciliation of society.” This was confirmed by many women in the interviews conducted for the study. A member of the Association of Community Action Boards (Asojuntas) explains it as follows:

We do not need a policy to take care of us, we do not need an army battalion to guard the mountain, we need projects and resources for the people who are in the farm, in the mountain, regardless of race, color, beliefs, regardless of all that; that everyone is given the opportunities to work, the opportunities to study, to get ahead, to prepare to be someone in life.

In reference to the Ruta Pacífica de Mujeres, which managed to collect testimonies from female victims as an exemplary exercise of recons-

truction of individual and collective memory, and the Alianza Iniciativa de Mujeres Colombianas por la Paz, Sánchez Mora and Rodríguez Lara (2015) underline the political action of women in peacebuilding and the construction of historical memory.

Several authors devoted themselves to investigating female pressure for greater inclusion of women in the Havana negotiations. Céspedes-Báez and Jaramillo Ruiz (2018), for example, study the tactics deployed by various civil society actors in Colombia to “challenge masculinism in the peace negotiations.” Gruner and Rojas (2018) analyze from a territorial perspective Afro-Colombian and Indigenous women’s mobilization for peace in post-agreement Colombia and the implications of the wave of murders that affect them directly in their peace activism.

Oettler (2019) places the Peace Agreement within the context of decades of struggle for democracy, peace, and the human rights of women and the LGBTI community. Recognizing the role of local, national, and international actors, she identifies long-term strategies to “locate gender violence within the framework of the armed conflict and to articulate coherent strategies for change” (Ibid.: 4). In a feminist critique of the Peace Accord, Paarlberg-Kvam (2018: 2) asserts that “the anti-militarist, anti-neoliberal, and anti-patriarchal peace proposed by feminist activists is more comprehensive, more transformative, and more stable” than the Accord’s conception of peace.

However, important progress must also be recognized. Three years after the signing of the Agreement, the Alta Instancia de Género (High Gender Instance) (2019: 7) highlights three dimensions of a comprehensive implementation of the gender approach:

The economic-social, to guarantee women equal opportunities in access to development resources and assets, especially land ownership; the cultural, to challenge the prevailing androcentric order and change customs as well as cultural practices that discriminate, subordinate, and violate women and the feminine; and the political dimension, to guarantee women in their diversity and differences equality in political representation.

Despite growing academic interest in the participation of women in peacebuilding processes, little is known about their notions of peace in the

Colombian context. Furthermore, most studies are limited to qualitative analyses. Therefore, this book contributes to closing a significant gap by presenting the results of a representative national survey that enables us to draw conclusions about the conceptions of peace of Colombian women. However, it is important to contextualize the data within the Colombian and the global context, closely related to the so-called Women, Peace, and Security Agenda of the United Nations.

2. The United Nations and the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda.

Since the beginning of the new century, the Security Council has emphasized in various resolutions the importance of women and girls for global peace. At the same time, it highlights the importance of protecting them from sexual violence that frequently occurs in areas affected by armed conflict and war. These validations constitute the basis of the so-called Women, Peace, and Security Agenda. In 2000, Resolution 1325 –voted unanimously– established a series of mechanisms to build a just and sustainable peace from a gender perspective. Among other demands, it calls for considering the specific needs of female ex-combatants in demobilization and reintegration processes. Reconfirming and expanding Resolution 1325, eight more resolutions are now considered the foundation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda. On Germany’s initiative, Resolution 2467 (United Nations, 2019a) was recently adopted, in an effort to draw the world’s attention to the individual human rights of women and to improve the protection and rehabilitation of victims of sexual violence (Wisotzki, 2019).

However, Wisotzki (2019) asserts that several observers and governments (for example, Russia and China) reject the responsibility of the Security Council, as the highest instance in matters of global peace and security, for “soft” issues such as women and girls. Because of the position of the government of Donald Trump (2017-2021), Resolution 2467 (United Nations, 2019) even contains provisions strongly criticized as setbacks regarding the reproductive rights of women affected by sexual violence.

According to the United Nations (2019b), “women continue to be excluded from political and peace processes.” Where there is progress, as in Guinea-Bissau, cited by the United Nations, it is because women led an unprecedented mobilization in favor of parity laws. Beyond such rhetorical debates, implementation reveals even more serious problems. For example, in the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of Resolution 1325, the Secretary General of the United Nations recognized that:

Despite the broad international consensus generated by the inclusion of women in matters of peace and security, whether through resolutions passed in the Security Council or through global recognition of the central role that women should play in conflict prevention and resolution, reality does not translate into real progress (Ibid.).

The lack of real and tangible progress threatens to turn strong rhetoric into an empty discourse with little relevance in areas affected by violence and war. The case of Colombia, analyzed below, provides important evidence for this claim, but at the same time illustrates how the global agenda helped to encourage Colombian women in their quest for peace.

3. Women’s challenges in the Colombian armed conflict and the Havana process

Approximately 40% of FARC combatants were women (Castrillón Pulido, 2015: 77). At the same time, women are more affected by sexual violence and threats. Besides, women and girls also constitute the majority of victims of internal forced displacement (National Unit for Victims, 2021). The National Unit for Victims (2021) registers on the date of writing, 500,065 female fatalities and 73,100 cases of dispossession of land or property during the armed conflict. Likewise, there is abundant evidence of women and local, regional, and national women’s groups as key actors in promoting non-violence, peacebuilding, and support for victims of the conflict.

However, the leading role of Colombian women was not initially reflected in their participation in the Havana negotiations between the Colombian government and the FARC. Of the twenty official negotiators in the first phase of dialogues in 2012, only one was a woman (Bouvier, 2016: 19). That figure significantly increased on both sides, after several actions and demands for an inclusive peace process from various organizations of Colombian civil society, and more notably from the Cumbre Nacional de Mujeres y Paz (National Summit of Women and Peace) in 2013 (Ibid.). Today women's rights activists state that the support and encouragement of the international community pursuing the United Nations Agenda helped to strengthen their position.

The Peace Agreement (Colombia, 2016: 35) pioneered the inclusion of a comprehensive gender approach recognizing that:

Women face greater social and institutional barriers to the exercise of political participation as a result of profound discrimination and inequality, as well as structural conditions of exclusion and subordination, which create greater challenges to guarantee their right to participation.

The Peace Agreement signed by the government of President Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018) and the FARC in 2016 was widely recognized in the international arena. Above all, for its comprehensive content but also for the participation of civil society actors, including several women's groups, and for the recognition of women in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Furthermore, as a result of the pioneering work of a Gender Subcommittee in 2014, made up of about twenty women's organizations, the gender perspective was included as a cross-cutting issue in all chapters of the Agreement (Paarlberg-Kvam, 2018). This is reflected, for example, in the adoption of the principle of parity in the institutional structure of the Transitional Justice System called Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation, and Non-Repetition (SIVJRNR). Besides international monitoring and a complementary verification process, several instances, including the Special Women's Instance, were created to monitor its implementation (Barometer Initiative et al., 2019).

However, the gender approach was the subject of political discussions and controversies that gained prominence in the Colombian national debate around the referendum on the Peace Agreement. Under the leadership of former President Álvaro Uribe Vélez (2002-2010), opponents resorted to a discourse that characterized the Agreement as a means to establish a “gender ideology” to devalue the institution of the family by supporting abortion and LGBTI communities (Oettler, 2019). The issue became highly politicized, and thus the international community somewhat began to refrain from stressing the gender component of the agreement, especially through the later implementation phase.

4. Notions of peace from a gender perspective: A national survey

The national survey, whose results are analyzed below from a gender perspective, was carried out in this socio-political context. The data generally show little difference between the sexes, with an important exception: within a low level of information in the entire population, women report even less knowledge of the content of the Peace Agreement than their counterparts of other sexes. Thus, 40% of men, compared to 28.9% of women, claim to know the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP). A similar result is observed in terms of the Victims’ Law: 39.5% of women contend to have knowledge of this law. Despite frequently lacking detailed knowledge, 60% of them (53% of men) acknowledge the importance of the Victim’s Law for peaceful coexistence. Beyond the Peace Agreement, the majority of Colombians do not believe that reconciliation with the FARC is possible. It is notable that the percentage of men willing to reconcile is 40.3%, while the figure decreases to only 35.8% among women.

The challenges with regard to the implementation of the Agreement and peacebuilding are also reflected in the Colombian population’s evaluation of questions related to the pillars of peace illustrated in Chapter 2. The existence of few significant differences between genders is notable. Thus, both men and women express a relatively comparable level of experiences of violence and conflict. About 16% claim to be registered in

the Single Registry of Victims, while 18% of the total population affirm to have been forcibly displaced.

The questions related to the second pillar of our peace concept, the protection of human rights individually or collectively, yield the same results. This implies that gender does not appear as a key factor in evaluating the status of human rights protection in Colombia. Thus, a third of the participants believe that human rights are respected in their respective communities, a third think the opposite, and a third choose not to respond. The gender analysis also coincides with the analysis from the youth perspective (see Chapter 12), where there is little differentiation between relevant actors for the protection of human rights. This is expressed emblematically in the evaluation of the president: while Colombians identify him as the most important actor for guaranteeing human rights, people of all genders and ages identify him as the actor who violates them the most.

Finally, the analysis of institutions for conflict transformation and their interaction with the pillars analyzed above enables us to present a more detailed image of the notions of peace of the Colombian population. Consistent with the results presented, there is a general distrust towards most institutions. Thus, for example, three out of four Colombians argue that laws are not respected in the country. This explains why citizens of all genders evaluate the work of justice for peace more negatively than that of the Armed Forces. However, given that the percentage of non-responses is very high, reaching levels above 80% in some cases, the evaluation of the peace work of specific actors and institutions lacks validity. However, it is possible to identify certain trends. Beyond state institutions, only traditional authorities are perceived neutrally or positively by the entire population. Meanwhile, the presence of many NGOs is not necessarily reflected in the way the population evaluates their contribution to peace: more than 50% of men and women express dissatisfaction, with high response rates of 99%.



The results of the survey evidence great challenges in peacebuilding that transcend the lack of implementation of the Peace Agreement; among them, frequent experiences of violence, the lack of protection of human rights, and the existence of few institutions deemed capable of resolving conflicts. Women are vital in searching for solutions to these challenges. Therefore, the next section qualitatively approaches the proposals of several women from different regions of Colombia.

5. Comparative analysis of the case studies

Two dimensions stand out in the conceptions of peace of the women interviewed. First, women's peace is personal and political: in the interviews, it is frequently associated with the unity of the family. Several women from the town of Fonseca, in the department of La Guajira, argue, for example, that peace means "living in harmony with the family." This contrasts with the high levels of physical abuse, rape, and femicides of women and girls within the family in all social strata in Colombia. Second, in reference to the point just discussed, there is a tendency to associate peace with economic well-being, education, and the creation of opportunities for youth. In her thoughts regarding what peace would be like in the border city of Cúcuta, a woman interviewed for this project highlights "social justice, opportunities, job opportunities, opportunity to access higher education, not to mention basic education." This gives rise to a very broad notion of peace, important from a feminine perspective, that could be summarized in the words of two participants from Cúcuta: "Peace is non-violence, it is not being afraid." In contrast, "it is not peace to walk in fear in the streets." In turn, another woman from Mesetas in the department of Meta, explains: "For me, peace is having an environment free of violence. It is being able to speak and say what I think and what I feel without fear that someone is going to harm me or my family".

Regardless of the level of violence associated with the armed conflict and the situation in the post-agreement phase, the participants in the study mentioned domestic and gender-based violence as common forms of violence in their communities. At the same time, they link this

type of violence to the broader context of the armed conflict and the signing of the Peace Agreement. For example, a victims' liaison person in the Mesetas community, recounts that:

Regarding gender, there are already many empowered women because they have received a lot of training, with the help of the EICOS platform, with LIMPAL, they have received a lot of training, guidance, and support because, generally, women have been victims. So, in a way, they have supported them so that they can get out of it.

One of the focus group with women even emphasizes how they use their identity as women to promote peace: "It is not a mystery that women are more active than men, so much so that we create the identity of the community. We even have unarmed peasant guards."

However, the post-agreement context since 2016 also generated changes in the way Colombian women deal with gender violence. For example, one participant states, "these femicides in communes 6, 7 and 8, where the poorest women live, are now made visible; but in general, Cúcuta is a dangerous city for women." In Mesetas, one of the interviewees asserts that "we can now speak freely and nobody says anything to us". She highlights that, as a result, since 2016 women's complaints about cases of domestic violence have increased. There seems to be a similar situation in the town of Ramiriquí, department of Boyacá. A former mayor of the municipality claims that women tend to be less silent in the face of cases of domestic violence, something that the focus group of women in the same locality confirmed. In addition, they mention that "many women in the municipality have taken the initiative to get ahead on their own", despite experiencing discrimination for it.

However, in every region included in this study, women express dissatisfaction with the lack of institutional support to address the gender dimension in peacebuilding in the country. A female activist from Ramiriquí, remarks that "many people do not like us, especially the administrations, because we do different things that are not within the priorities. They have never given us a budget, we get everything with independent calls for proposals". From the

perspective of several participants, this lack of willingness is due to the fact that throughout the entire society there is little disposition to empower women. One of them adds that “there is another rather large conflict in terms of support for women”, and the institutions responsible for dealing with cases of gender violence “sometimes do not take relevant measures or perhaps the attention is not the most suitable.” Therefore, a change in the responses of state institutions to gender violence would only be the first step in a peacebuilding process recognized as such by Colombian women. To introduce these changes, greater political participation of women is essential.

6. Evaluation of the results in light of the peace process in Colombia

Women’s political action in peacebuilding and historical memory receives more attention every day. Among many examples, the Ruta Pacífica de Mujeres –which achieved the collection of testimonies from female victims as an exemplary exercise in the reconstruction of individual and collective memory– stands out, as does the Iniciativa de Mujeres Colombianas por la Paz (Sánchez Mora and Rodríguez Lara, 2015). Lesbian and bisexual women from Colombia Diversa presented for the first time in the world a report on sexual violence to a transitional court of justice (Colombia Diversa, 2020) (see also Chapter 14). From a territorial perspective, in post-agreement Colombia, Afro-Colombian and Indigenous women still mobilize for peace and the implications of the wave of murders that directly affect them in their activism for peace (Gruner and Rojas, 2018).

However, the active and diverse participation of women in peacebuilding has generated violent resistance. The report “Defensoras, voces de vida y resistencia” (2019), prepared by the program Somos Defensores, Sisma Mujer, Limpal and the Cumbre Nacional de Mujeres y Paz shows that politically active women are exposed to “specific and differentiated violence because they are women in a society in which male voices have predominated and machista practices and discrimination

are far from disappearing.” Activists emphasize that “the risks in the family environment are focused, for example, on forced recruitment and the intimidation of being forced to move. And in the community, threats against them or the process they are leading” (Ortiz, 2020).

In general, the political actions investigated are concentrated at the level of peace builders and women’s rights leaders. But there is little concern about the low and declining political representation of women that, according to the United Nations, could make a difference in promoting a greater degree of inclusion of women in peacebuilding.

It can thus be argued that women in Colombia have been partially successful in participating in the peace tables, especially in the negotiations and adoption of the Agreement that creates spaces for structural changes. However, they have not achieved pro-women political representation to promote structural changes. A potential transformative effect for peace with women in Colombian society still appears uncertain and not quite visible. To a large extent, this is due to the slow implementation of the Agreement in general. But it also has a clear gender dimension. The fourth report of the Kroc Institute (2020) on the gender approach points out the lack of implementation in three points almost coincident with the points highlighted by the High Instance: agrarian reform, political reforms, and the problem of illicit drugs (point 4). The report concludes that ensuring safety continues to be the biggest threat to implementation, which is reflected in the experience of many women as well.

Amidst a favorable global context, Colombian women have been successfully promoting their empowerment and inclusion in the negotiations and the final Agreement with the FARC. However, waves of political resistance against women’s demands have slowed down this process both nationally and globally. Important challenges persist that threaten to undermine the progress made since the beginning of the Havana process. The lack of implementation and the under-financing of the Agreement, especially its gender and ethnic components, are only a symptom of a broader problem with gender relations that prevails in Colombia. It is thus not surprising that many women interviewed for this study highlight a worrying level of gender violence and have a conception of peace that includes ending structural gender inequalities. Considering the visions of peace of all Colombian women, including

the peace of women with diverse sexes and genders, therefore implies a notion of peace that transcends national, regional, and local levels and includes family conflicts and individual capacities of response to domestic violence, as well as the resolution of other structural problems, such as economic and political inequality. Such capacities have been increasing during decades of armed conflict. Regarding the construction of sustainable and inclusive peace, the Colombian Congress made a historic decision in 2020 as a result of the “ParidadYa” campaign, a citizen mobilization articulated in collaboration with members of Congress from different parties: for the first time in the history of Colombia, the lists for the congressional elections in 2022 must be paritarian. Hopefully, this will imply transformations and reflections on gender and peace agendas within all parties.

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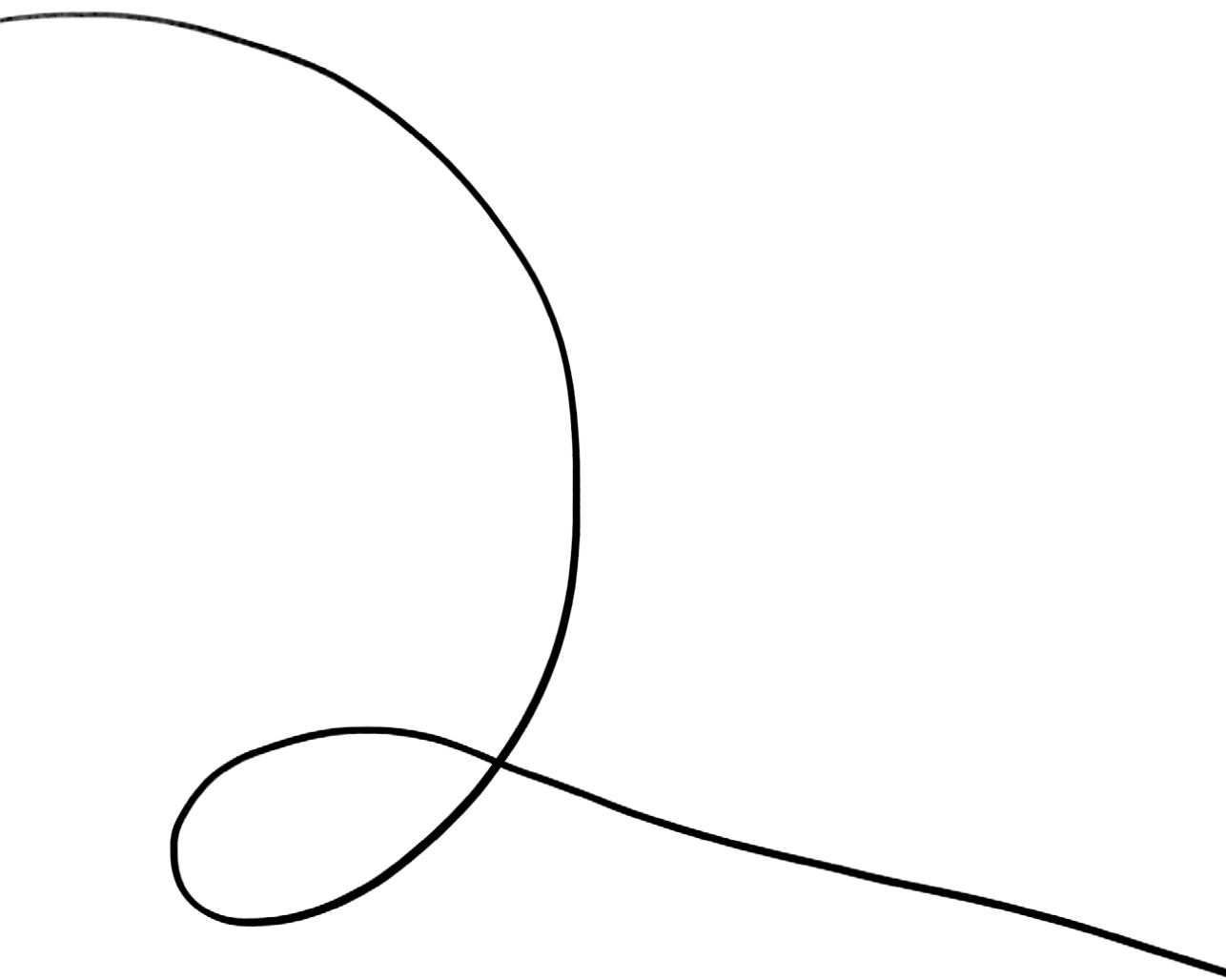
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Let's build the world, let's change history. Demonstration in the Plaza de Bolívar. Bogotá, November 24, 2019. Photo: Diana Rey Melo.





Youth: Neglected but essential for the sustainability of peace

Theresa Bachmann y Sabine Kurtenbach

“We currently have a large presence of armed actors, paramilitaries, for control of the territory. We don’t feel peace here”
(MLC, member of Las Policarpas collective, Cúcuta).

Colombian youth are extremely important actors in peace processes and armed conflicts in the country. Forced and need-based recruitment has been a permanent feature of the Colombian war, but the youth have also played a leading role in some peace processes. Thirty years ago, they mobilized in support of the celebrated Seventh Ballot for a Constituent Assembly, and today they have taken to the streets to support compliance with the Peace Agreement and necessary changes for sustainable peace.¹ The challenges faced by young people transcend generational issues.

A variety of experiences and social realities related to differences in gender, social status, and place of residence characterize everyday life in the post-agreement period. MLC is a young citizen who lives in Cúcuta, the capital city of the department of Norte de Santander, on the

¹ The Seventh Ballot (*Séptima Papeleta*) was a proposal that arose from a student movement before the elections of March 11, 1990, for the Senate, the House of Representatives, Departmental Assemblies, Local Administrative Boards (JAL), Municipal Councils, and Mayors. The proposal was to include an additional seventh ballot to carry out a new social pact, seek alternative solutions to the crisis of violence in Colombia, and promote the convening of a Constituent Assembly (Translator’s note).

Venezuelan border. Since the signing of the Peace Agreement in September 2016, little has changed in terms of physical violence. In other areas, such as Ramiriquí, a rural district in the department of Boyacá, the level of violence dropped years ago.

This chapter examines the multiple notions, ideas, and expectations of peace held by Colombian youth, according to the concept of peace adopted in this book. In turn, it shows that the conflicts perceived as obstacles to peace in their communities take place at various levels, from the personal to the communal and national.

The chapter consists of four sections. In the first, we analyze the concept of youth. Next, we examine recent literature on youth in Colombia, which reveals something in common with the international arena: an approach to youth as victims and perpetrators of violence. Nevertheless, ethnographic studies have started to incorporate new perspectives into the study of youth in the Colombian context. In the third section, we analyze the notions of peace of Colombian youth at the national level, based on the results of the national survey commissioned for this study (Chapter 3). We will complement our survey with the report of the national consultation with Colombian youth for the dossier on the implementation of United Nations Resolution 2250 (John, 2017). Finally, we present the comparative analysis of youth in different localities of the study where focus groups were held: Cúcuta, Ramiriquí, Tibú, in Norte de Santander, and Mesetas, in the department of Meta.

1. Youth, a socially constructed category

Although everyone has a clear understanding of the meaning of youth, the concept is closely linked to processes of social change, such as industrialization and urbanization. In traditional agrarian societies, there is no extended period of youth to educate and prepare young people for adult life. In rural contexts, children slowly take on communal duties. Despite the existence of rites of passage from childhood to adulthood, the ceremonies that tend to survive are rather specific, such as the 15th birthday celebration in many Latin American countries. Therefore, the

concept of youth depends on specific contexts, although three rather universal transitions exist: financial independence from the family, marriage and the founding of a family, and the procurement of citizenship rights, such as taking part in elections or being elected (Kurtenbach, 2012; Kurtenbach and Pawelz, 2015). In contexts of war or violence, young people are greatly affected by the dynamics and consequences of armed conflicts (Berents, 2018: 3).

The role of children and youth has been recognized in recent years in the international arena. The unanimous adoption at the United Nations Security Council of Resolution 2250 on “Youth, peace, and security” on December 9, 2015, was an important sign of recognition of the leading role of youth (Naciones Unidas, 2015). For the first time, children and youth were perceived not only as victims of violence or as violent actors but as important peacebuilders who, besides being protected, must also participate actively. After the approval of the resolution, a very interesting process was launched in which young people with diverse backgrounds in many countries were invited to give their opinion on what they think and want concerning peace. Emphasizing youth’s conceptualizations of peace is important because it leads to a focus on the traditionally marginalized and can be useful in identifying new paths towards building sustainable and inclusive peace.

2. The debate on youth in Colombia

For a long time, the academic and political debate on youth in Colombia was limited to investigating their role in acts of violence and the impact of the structural context of the armed conflict on them (Aguilar-Fore-ro and Muñoz, 2015). Based on the life stories of children disengaged from the conflict, Andrade (2010) offers an analysis of different types of ties and trajectories of children in illegal armed groups in Colombia.²

² The term disengaged refers to boys, girls, and adolescents under 18 years of age who were linked (recruited or used) to an Illegal Armed Group (GAOML) and who later abandoned the group or were rescued by the public force, and were certified by the Operational Committee for the Disposal of Arms (CODA) as persons who must participate

In turn, Downing (2014) focuses on the challenges for peacebuilding and development posed by the recruitment of children and youth in Colombian armed groups. Denoy and Marchand (2014) investigate the rejection and stigmas usually faced by former child soldiers.

Only recently have several authors broadened their perspective to include the role of youth in peacebuilding. In a comparison of experiences in the Congo, Nepal, and Colombia McGill and colleagues (2015) argue that greater youth participation leads to a reduction in violence and discrimination and generates greater support for vulnerable groups. Masullo (2018) shows that the lack of civic cooperation in the municipality of San Carlos during the armed conflict facilitated the emergence of a new generation of young community leaders who received substantial community support for peacebuilding from below. Calling attention to the role of boys and girls as peacebuilding actors, Nabuco Martuscelli and Duarte Villa (2018) present a critical discursive analysis of the Peace Agreement. The study suggests that child soldiers are simultaneously categorized as victims with opportunities to participate in peacebuilding and as potential spoilers of the peace process.

Several contributions have highlighted the role of the arts in conflict narratives and the peace process. Amador-Baquiro (2016) focuses on young participants in a community film festival in Ciudad Bolívar (Bogotá) to investigate their social construction of time in the context of the Colombian armed conflict. Defining social relations as a key determinant of conflict and peace, Fisher-Yoshida and colleagues (2017) investigate how young people in a Medellín neighborhood use the arts to promote peacebuilding in their community. In turn, Thomas (2019) examines the performance of peace and the (re)creation of images of urban youth through hip hop.

in a reintegration process upon coming of age. Individual demobilization (reintegration) refers to the personal decision by a member of an illegal armed group to leave the organization. It allows a person to register in the corresponding institutional route, formalize the demobilization process, and receive benefits. It is managed by the Group for Humanitarian Attention to the Demobilized (GAHD) (Translator's note).

Criticizing the absence of children and youth in traditional peacebuilding discourses and practices, a growing number of authors (Berents, 2014, 2018; Lederach, 2019) use ethnographic methods to understand the quotidian dimension of experiences and imaginary spaces of young Colombians before and after the signing of the peace accords. While the literature on children and youth affected by violent conflict emphasizes the need to create a sense of stability and security through institutions such as schools, Berents (2014) analyzes how young Colombians perceive these institutions in their everyday lives in a violent context. She also (2015, 2018) investigates how young people from a peripheral neighborhood in the south of Bogotá negotiate the daily dimensions of violence and social exclusion. From her perspective, understanding peace as embodied, quotidian, and located amidst constant violence helps to theorize peacebuilding and specific efforts to that effect. In line with a logic of intersectional exploration, Lederach (2019) investigates territorial peacebuilding processes in the organization Jóvenes Provocadores de Paz de la Alta Montaña and concludes that participation in an intergenerational peace movement facilitates the construction of youth identities against networks connected with patriarchal, military, and racist violence.

However, in quantitative terms, little is known about the opinions and expectations of young people about peacebuilding in Colombia. The study by Wilches Tinjacá and Hernández Pérez (2016) is a notable exception. Surveys with several hundred students led them to the conclusion that:

Questions related to the war-peace bipolarity are easier to answer than those associated with the recognition of actors, discourses, and strategies that have influenced the understanding of the war in Colombia. The issue is even more complex when proposals for solutions or ideas in a possible post-conflict scenario are requested (Ibid.: 33).

Despite lacking representativeness, some variables are still unknown. Extending the work of Wilches Tinjacá and Hernández Pérez, below we evaluate the results of the aforementioned national survey (conducted in mid-2019) to provide a more detailed image of the notions and expectations of young Colombians regarding peacebuilding in the country.

3. Notions of peace of Colombian youth: The national survey

The notions of peace and peacebuilding of young Colombians seem to be based more on personal and everyday experiences than on knowledge of the content of the Peace Agreement.

This is reflected in the fact that more than half of respondents between 18 and 25 years of age do not know the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP) or the Victims and Land Restitution Law. Therefore, they do not have an opinion on the contribution of these mechanisms to peacebuilding in Colombia. Although a general lack of knowledge can be observed among the Colombian population, this trend is even stronger among young people. The majority of the population, including those under 35 years of age, do not think that reconciliation with FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) is possible. However, the under-35 group shows the greatest optimism regarding this question: while more than 40% of young Colombians think reconciliation with FARC is possible, the percentage drops to just 28% among those between 36 and 45 years of age.

Taking these results as the starting point for the analysis, the responses of young Colombians reveal great challenges in terms of the three pillars of peace that inform this book.

3.1 Physical integrity

13.2% of Colombians under the age of 25 reported having been forcibly displaced. This figure rises to more than 25% when the displacement of a relative is included. 14% of young people are part of the Single Registry of Victims, which is comparable to the average of the total population. Beyond assaults on physical security in the past, one in five young people claims to have been the victim of a crime during the previous 12 months.

3.2 Human rights guarantees

The experience of young people resembles that of the general population: only between 30% and 40% believe that human rights are guaranteed in their communities, and a comparable percentage believe that they are not. Among the various institutions responsible for guaranteeing human rights, the president is perceived as the greatest violator, followed by Congress, the military forces, the National Police, mayors, municipal councils, and the Judiciary. Confirming the results of the study by Wilches Tinjacá and Hernández Pérez (2016) with Colombian university students, in the entire Colombian population there are few differences concerning the status of protection of specific human rights. However, two exceptions stand out: the majority of respondents (more than 60%) of all ages respond that workers' rights are not protected. On the other hand, the right to participate in elections is perceived as the most protected, with positive evaluations greater than 50%. This perception is shared even more by Colombians between 18 and 25 years of age: one in five considers that the right to participate in elections is protected "a lot" (the highest category among seven options). Once again, without marked differences in terms of age, the majority of the population surveyed considers respect for human rights as important for peacebuilding.

3.3 Institutions

Finally, people have little trust in conflict resolution institutions. However, this trend is not necessarily linked to age. Approximately 75% of the Colombian adult population believe that laws are not respected in Colombia. Although 15% identify the FARC and illegal armed groups as actors that are above the law, a very high rate of more than 80% do not respond about the causes of this phenomenon.

At the same time, young Colombians are even more critical than their fellow citizens in their evaluation of specific institutions or actors. Within a generally negative evaluation, 30% of Colombians between 18 and 25 years of age—at least 5% more than other age groups—evaluate the president's work for peace very negatively. This result is consistent with the general approval rate of President Iván Duque: while only 12%

of young people evaluated him positively, the approval rate rises with age, reaching a maximum point of 46% among those over 65 years of age. Although less marked in comparison to the president's assessment, age appears to play a minimal role in determining negative evaluations of most other institutions covered in the study, including Congress, governors, the Judiciary, the military, the National Police, and municipal councils, among others. However, two results deserve greater attention: despite their involvement in the armed conflict, the study shows that more Colombians of all ages evaluate the armed forces more positively than the Judiciary. Furthermore, a substantial part of almost 25% of the population expresses dissatisfaction with the peace work of non-governmental organizations. Altogether, only traditional authorities are perceived more neutrally or positively by the young and the old. Distrust in political institutions is also reflected in electoral behavior. While the participation of other age groups in the 2018 presidential elections reached a maximum point of 87%, only 44% of Colombians aged 18 to 25 voted.

3.4 Notions of peace

Concerning notions of peace at the national level, the young people's perspectives are somewhat different from those of adults. Like most people, they prioritize respect as a central element of peace, followed by rights and tranquility, and finally justice and well-being. The latter could be explained because this age group has less experience with violence, which has decreased significantly in the last decade.

Interestingly, the participants in the national consultation for the United Nations report seem to have a broader conception of peace. Young people emphasize the need for social reconstruction, justice and human rights, and opportunities (John, 2017). The fact that this national consultation was not representative but included many young people active in peacebuilding explains to a large extent why they seem to be more knowledgeable of debates about it.

4. Peace in the interviews

Beyond general national trends, the Colombian youth's notions and expectations of peace vary according to social, economic, and political conditions and realities at the local level. It is, therefore, necessary to complement the results of the survey and contrast them with the experiences of young people in different Colombian localities. The areas chosen for this study (Tibú, Cúcuta, Ramiriquí, and Mesetas) help us contextualize the analysis and demonstrate the need to adopt a notion of glocal peace sufficiently flexible and open to be meaningful in multiple everyday realities.

As the introductory quote illustrates, there is a first great dividing line in the interviews between cities and rural areas. The comparative analysis of the data collected in Tibú and Cúcuta offers important lessons in this regard. Located in the Norte de Santander department on the border with Venezuela, both towns exhibited high levels of violence before and after the Peace Agreement. While Tibú has approximately 30,000 inhabitants, more than 775,000 people live in Cúcuta.

The young participants in the Tibú focus group highlight the armed conflict as the main conflict in the territory affecting the entire community. In economic terms, this is reflected in the fact that they identify illegal economies linked to the conflict as an obstacle to peace and the economic development of the area. Furthermore, they indirectly link state failures with the strength of illegal economies, since, in their opinion, poor road conditions complicate the transportation of food and lead peasants to view coca cultivation as the only way out. They are also critical of the education system in their community: "There is no educational outlet for young people, we are stuck in the middle of the war." Faced with constant feelings of insecurity and the fear that the war may continue, they reduce peace to basic issues of tranquility, security, freedom, and opportunity.³ This predominant notion of peace is

³ They also mention communal conflicts caused by what they perceive as overpopulation of the municipality and ecological damage caused by the cultivation of African palm and tree felling. However, these do not affect their notions of peace to the same extent as the factors illustrated above.

due in part to the young people's perception that they do not have the support of public institutions of the Colombian State, except for the contribution of the House of Culture of the municipality. Beyond the financial support of the UNDP (United Nations Development Program) to CorpoCatatumbo, they believe that the three most important actors for peace in the community are FARC, NGOs, and the Church.

The individual level also plays an important role in the notions of peace of Cúcuta's youth. Furthermore, peace is strongly related to everyday acts and family life, and requires "a rational way of solving differences." The contrasts with Tibú's youth concerning the public dimension of their notions of peace are considerable. While the young in Tibú criticize the lack of public support, in Cúcuta they blame state representatives for the continuation of violence in their community. From their perspective, paramilitary structures linked to local and regional politicians "are exercising social control in the neighborhoods," including territorial control in peripheral areas of the city. In their opinion, as a result of the armed actors' infiltration of politics, the community has no real political options. Activist ML argues that, beyond the fight against corruption, a precondition for building sustainable peace in Cúcuta is the realization of "clean democratic exercises in which people would have the possibility to choose."

Besides important territorial differences that influence notions of peace, the experience with violence has a significant impact on young Colombians' understanding of the concept and what they perceive as the most relevant conflicts in their community. While Tibú and Cúcuta are closely associated with armed conflict and high levels of physical violence, the interviews in Ramiriquí, Boyacá, and Mesetas, Meta, were conducted in areas comparatively little affected by physical violence. Both are small municipalities of approximately 11,000 inhabitants.

While the focus groups in the aforementioned localities largely emphasize the armed conflict and the actors involved, the young participants in the focus group in Mesetas make an important differentiation between the armed conflict and other types of conflicts. Since their reality is not determined by the armed conflict to the same extent as their fellow citizens of Cúcuta and Tibú, their ideas of peace are formed in scenarios free of fear and physical violence that recognize peace as a

multilevel process built gradually in different scales. This is evidenced in the fact that the youth in Mesetas highlight the impossibility of living in peace amidst war and death, while at the same time they refer to intra or inter-family, gender, or school conflicts as important causes of non-peace. They reach a significant level of differentiation between conflict and violence. At the same time, they focus peacebuilding on social and community conflicts identified as important in everyday life that do not necessarily involve violence. This perspective informs their need to “leave behind the violence of the armed conflict of the past”, and at the same time their demand for greater capacity for action in transforming the conflicts they experience in their daily lives.

The youth of Ramiriquí present a different image. While recognizing conflicts within the student community, they focus on community processes from which they are relatively disassociated. Thus, they refer to the problem of discrimination and lack of acceptance, especially concerning the LGBTI community (see Chapter 14). They also identify within their community a deeply rooted macho culture, especially strong in the rural areas of the municipality. Except for community theater and cultural groups, they do not identify other actors working for the transformation of local conflicts. On the contrary, they point out problems with the mayor’s office, influenced by a shared perception of corruption and patronage in local political processes. From a comparative perspective, this reveals a common point: beyond their ideas and perceptions of peace, conflicts, and possibilities for transformation, the young participants in the focus groups and the national survey evidence great distrust in state representatives and institutions in their community. Despite territorial variations and differences in levels of violence and human rights abuses, this result evidences the key role that young Colombians attribute to state institutions in the construction of a multi-dimensional peace and indicates the steps to follow in local and national peace processes.

5. There is no peace without the youth

Peacebuilding in Colombia must take into account the perspectives of several key actors, and young people are, undoubtedly, one of them. Long marginalized from dominant peacebuilding discourses and practices, academics and field workers are slowly recognizing the vital importance of increasing youth participation in peacebuilding and the sustainable transformation of conflicts. At the same time, many of them mobilized for peace after the failed plebiscite in 2016, and in the most important protests experienced by the country in recent decades in 2019. It is also important to note that some of the politicians most committed to the implementation of the Peace Agreement and structural changes in the country were part of an earlier generation that struggled for peace. The current mayor of Bogotá, Claudia López, was one of the students who promoted the Seventh Ballot for peace three decades ago. This personal trajectory evidences that peacebuilding is a long-term project.

One lesson of this study is that Colombians have a variety of conceptions, notions, and ideas about peace. While some of these differences originate in the individual experience of participants, a comparison of interviews indicates the importance of local solutions that include and value differences between urban and rural areas and between communities affected by high or low levels of physical violence. In this sense, the chapter reveals the need to put individual, local, national, and universal notions of peace into dialogue with the specific ideas of Colombian youth on how to achieve peace, in order to move forward the different peacebuilding processes currently taking place in the country.

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Indigenous and Afro-Colombian populations and current challenges in the implementation of the Peace Agreement

Pares-Pacífico Regional Office



In the last decades, Colombia has undergone a process of political and cultural ethnic recognition with legal support in the 1991 Political Constitution. However, such recognition was initially absent from the peace talks between the Colombian state and the FARC-EP (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army). Indigenous, Black, Afro-descendant, Raizal, and Palenquero (NARP) populations had to create the Ethnic Commission for Peace and the Defense of Territorial Rights (hereinafter the Ethnic Commission) in order to have some level of communication with the dialogue table and, mainly, to include safeguards for ethnic and territorial rights in the process of negotiation and implementation of the Peace Agreement.

The work of the Ethnic Commission was fundamental for the elaboration of the Ethnic Chapter and its subsequent inclusion in paragraph 6.2 of the final document, which also included the Roma (gypsy) people, affected by the internal armed conflict as well (Comisión Étnica para la Paz, 2019).

The Ethnic Chapter is the result of the joint work of ethnic peoples for the recognition at the dialogue table of their differentiated victimization at the hands of armed groups. This marks a precedent in peace agreements in the country and the world: it is the only accord that de-

mands the participation of ethnic populations in the implementation of the Agreement and guarantees for the exercise of their individual and collective rights, following their interests and worldviews (Acuerdo Final, 2016).

Almost four years after the signing of the Peace Agreement and two years after the inauguration of Iván Duque as President (2018), progress has been made in the reincorporation of ex-combatants, the political participation of the FARC party (Alternative Revolutionary Force of the Common), the design of the Action Plans for Regional Transformation (PATR), and the implementation, albeit with setbacks, of the components of the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation, and non-Repetition (SIVJNR): the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP), the Commission for the Clarification of the Truth (CEV), and the Unit for the Search of Persons Presumed Missing (UBPD). However, the assassination of ethnic leaders and the upsurge in violence in their territories tarnished the implementation process.

Given that, because of the grave violations of their human, collective, and territorial rights in the framework of the armed conflict, ethnic populations play a leading role in the implementation of the Peace Agreement, the purpose of this chapter is to discuss the *main challenges* they face concerning the commitments adopted in the Ethnic Chapter of the five central points of the Agreement.

At the end of the analysis of point 3, we present an example of the possibilities for ethnic populations to promote the peace process and show how territorial actors can come together in favor of peace in the case of the community guards in Northern Cauca.¹

¹ *Note on the pandemic.* We cannot be sure about the consequences of the global pandemic of Covid-19, although we recognize that it has affected several critical points of the Peace Agreement in a context of social, economic, and political uncertainty. In this chapter, we will present the results of research conducted since 2018 by Pares-Pacific on the fulfillment of the Peace Agreement for ethnic-racial groups in Colombia and the southwestern region.

1. First point: Towards a New Colombian Countryside. Comprehensive Rural Reform

Headway in the implementation of this point has been slow. In February 2019, the Kroc Institute acknowledged progress in the elaboration of the main instruments of the Land Fund, but expressed concern about the status of the Development Programs with a Territorial Approach (PDET)² and plans related to investment in public goods and services in the prioritized municipalities:

It is a cause of concern that the implementation of this point continues to be slow. It is necessary to accelerate the pace and advance on pending regulatory issues such as the reform of Law 160 of 1994 (land law) and the mechanisms to democratize and generate legal security on the use of and access to land (Instituto Kroc, 2019: 3).

On the other hand, in a recent report on the post-agreement period in ethnic territories, the Ombudsman Office (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2020) calls attention to the fact that the National Land Agency (ANT) has not regulated the sub-account of lands for the endowment of ethnic communities and the purchase and process of restitution of land for ethnic-racial groups has not been operationalized. Ethnic-territorial organizations are concerned about the 19% reduction in the ANT's budget for the year 2021.

The design of the 16 Action Plans for Regional Transformation was completed in February 2019, after an arduous participatory planning process led by the Territory Renewal Agency (ART) since 2017. Ethnic

² The planning process of the Development Programs with a Territorial Approach took place in three phases: In the first, called *veredal*, each municipality formed groups at the village level in charge of preparing the Community Pact for Regional Transformation (PCTR), in which visions of productive and social development of the municipality were presented. In a subsequent, municipal phase, based on the Community Pact, representatives of the private sector, local institutions, and peasant, ethnic, and other civil society organizations agreed on a Municipal Pact. Finally, in the sub-regional phase, the delegates of the municipalities of the sub-region drew up the Action Plan for Regional Transformation (PATR).

peoples had a strong influence in this process because 15 of the 16 Development Programs with a Territorial Approach affect their territories, as in the Western Colombian Programs: Middle Pacific; Alto Patía and Northern Cauca; Pacific and Nariño's Border; and Chocó. However, almost three years after the elaboration of the first Action Plan for Regional Transformation, execution is stagnant, given ART's insufficient budgetary allocation to launch territorial initiatives, especially in ethnic territories.

Besides budgetary problems, their execution does not depend exclusively on the ART but on other public entities with whom it must coordinate routes of action and prioritize budgets.

1.1 Four challenges in the implementation of the first point

The Pares-Pacific office identified four main challenges in the implementation of the peace process in ethnic territories. According to sources consulted, the first is uncertainty about the government of President Duque, who does not favor progress in the implementation of the Ethnic Chapter and the Peace Agreement in general. An example is the low budget allocated for this process, which destabilizes the institutions in charge of implementation and harms the peace initiatives of communities in the territories. Against this background, communities view international cooperation as a means to support the proposals contemplated in the Action Plan for Regional Transformation.

The second challenge is for municipal administrations to position themselves in order to postulate projects and execute those contemplated in the Action Plan for regional transformation; otherwise, this would merely be an empty and exhausting exercise valid only on paper. Likewise, incumbent governments must commit to the implementation of these Plans, recognizing that in many cases they are already articulated with the local governments' development plans, with prioritized projects and a diversity of funding sources. In the case of Buenaventura, Afro-descendants and Indigenous organizations have high expectations about

the new local administration, considering that the last five mayors have been jailed for acts of corruption.

The third challenge is the non-prioritization of projects and the lack of community participation in discussions about budgets and related matters, because the legitimacy of this exercise depends on real and effective participation in the entire process.

[...] Let's say that today the Territory Renewal Agency is trying to make a roadmap for the prioritization issue; today, there are no prioritized projects either by the communities or by the Territory Renewal Agency. It is being done as calls for proposals are made and funding is available; that is what they are presenting as progress (interview with Álvaro Arroyo, PCN activist, 2019).

The fourth challenge is the limited time for implementation: ten years. Three have already passed (the fourth is coming up), and the execution of some initiatives of the Action Plan for Regional Transformation is just in the initial stages. According to the Technical Secretariat of the Cinep/PPP-Cerac International Verification Component, "it is clear that a single government will not be able to fully execute the plans. But it is also clear that the first years of implementation are key to achieving good results in the transformation" (Instituto Kroc, 2019: 24).

Finally, now that the National Government merged the PEDTs Middle Pacific and Alto Patía, it is imperative to clarify the operation, the execution of resources, and the participatory route between ART and social organizations, taking into account the particularities of each context and the complexity of the implementation process in the municipalities of the region.

2. Second point: Political Participation. A Democratic Opportunity to Build Peace

Point 2 of the Peace Agreement –Political Participation: A Democratic Opportunity to Build Peace– considers democratic expansion and political participation as crucial aspects of peacebuilding in the country. In this respect, the Ethnic Chapter contemplates guarantees for full and effective participation of ethnic authorities and their organizations in different instances created for the implementation of the Peace Agreement. It also calls for strengthening spaces for participation in order to guarantee the democratic exercise and the inclusion of candidates from ethnic groups in the Special Transitory Peace Constituencies (Acuerdo Final, 2016).³

In dialogue with the ethnic team, the Framework Implementation Plan (PMI) defined 25 indicators of the political participation agreement to be achieved between 2017 and 2029. These concern the following topics:

1. Preventive deployment of security for social leaders and human rights defenders.
2. Ethnic participation in normative adjustments to guarantee the right to free expression, protest, and social mobilization.

³ The Peace Agreement decided to focus the peace process on the victims and not the perpetrators. To this aim, 16 Transitory Special Circumscriptions of Peace (CTEP) would be created to increase the spectrum of democratic representation, give victims greater influence and capacity to process citizen demands, and be a counterweight to guarantee the construction of peace from the decision-making spaces in the post-conflict framework. For the 2018 and 2022 elections, the 16 zones were to be located in 19 departments and comprise 170 municipalities affected by the armed conflict. Since their inception, they have been at the center of political debates, and their creation and applicability are still contested (Translator's note).

3. Ethnic participation in the National Council for Reconciliation and Coexistence as well as in the Territorial Planning Councils.⁴
4. Creation of citizen oversight bodies and transparency observatories in ethnic territories.
5. Conditions to exercise the right to vote.
6. Ethnic participation in public media.
7. Promotion of the political participation of ethnic women.
8. Inclusion in the election exercises of the Special Transitory Peace Constituencies (Comisión Étnica para la Paz, 2019).

However, this point of the Peace Agreement has encountered many stumbling blocks in the implementation stage. In its latest report, the Kroc Institute noted in June 2020 that progress on this point is practically non-existent, especially in terms of the Special Transitory Peace Constituencies, political reform, and regulatory adjustments to guarantee mobilization and peaceful protest. In its previous report in 2019, the Institute had already presented alarming data, arguing that only 13% of the Agreement had been fully implemented, while 35% had been minimally implemented, that is, progress had been insignificant or implementation had not even started (Instituto Kroc, 2019). In short, compliance with ethnic and other indicators for this point is in suspense.

⁴ The National Council for Reconciliation and Coexistence is an advisory and consultative body of the Colombian Government, created by Law 434 of 1998 and modified by Decree 885 of 2017. Its main tasks are to advise on the policy of peace, reconciliation, coexistence, and non-stigmatization and to facilitate the harmonious collaboration of state entities and bodies on the subject. The Territorial Planning Councils (CTP) represent civil society in development planning (Development Plan). Its functions include: Analyzing and discussing the Development Plan project, organizing and coordinating discussions on the Development Plan project, formulating recommendations for the Development Plan, and periodically monitoring the goals of continuity, coverage, and quality of the services defined in the respective sector plans (Translator's note).

In the reports “Cómo va la paz” (2017, 2018), Fundación Paz y Reconciliación (Peace and Reconciliation Foundation, PARES) pointed out the difficulties faced in Congress by the Special Transitory Constituencies of Peace and the electoral political reform. They were finally not approved due to harsh political disputes and, particularly, to the opposition of the Democratic Center party, currently in control of the Executive Branch of government.

The issue of special territorial peace constituencies aroused great expectations among ethnic peoples, and their rejection in Congress has been interpreted as a clear example of the historic discrimination and segregation experienced by peasant and ethnic communities remote from the centers of power of the country. These were the main victims of the armed conflict and had the right to be repaired through the Constituencies. Furthermore, this was a great opportunity for them to have direct and meaningful representation in Congress, which has never happened (interview with a person from the Technical Secretariat of the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia [ONIC], 2019).

The main challenge for ethnic groups stems from the political will of Congress and the National Government. However, alternative sectors have been working on proposals to revive the possibility of establishing Special Constituencies and are gradually gaining ground to submit the subject to the consideration of Congress once again. Despite the political divisions in the country and the slight advantage of the ruling party, the process of expanding political participation, initiated in the Agreement and promoted by the Ethnic Commission, has not come to an end.

3. Third point: End of the conflict

In point 3 –End of the conflict–, measures established to comply with the definitive and bilateral ceasefire can be grouped into three categories: Laying down arms and implementation of the Transitional Local Zones for Normalization (ZVTN); socio-economic and political reincorporation of ex-combatants and minors who were part of FARC-EP; and security guarantees and fight against criminal organizations.

Concerning the laying down of weapons, the Ethnic Chapter requested prior consultation as well as free and informed consent for the creation of ZVTNs in collective territories of Black communities and indigenous *resguardos*. Concerning reincorporation, it demanded an agreement on a harmonization program for social and economic reincorporation with a differential ethnic and gender focus. Concerning security guarantees, it called for strengthening the security systems of ethnic peoples –Indigenous and *cimarrona* guards– and the creation of the Comprehensive Security and Protection Program for communities and organizations in the territories, with an ethnic and cultural perspective.

By 2019, there was headway in some of the initial components of point 3, such as the laying down arms and the constitution of ZVTNs. The United Nations certified that the number of weapons turned in by FARC-EP surpassed the number of demobilized combatants, which constitutes a national and international milestone. However, in several publications, the Peace and Reconciliation Foundation identified hurdles in the process. They include deficiencies in infrastructure; access to basic services, such as drinking water and health; and the poor state of food arriving at the ZVTNs, which deteriorated the health of those in the process of reincorporation, especially pregnant and lactating women and children of the so-called *baby boom* brought about by the signing of the Peace Agreement.

It must be noted that in the process of constitution of several ZVTNs in ethnic territories and the subsequent transition to Territorial Training and Reincorporation Spaces (ETCR) some communities were not consulted as to whether or not they agreed with their installation and continuity. Neither did national, regional, or local governments take effective measures to mitigate the potential social, political, and economic effects of these areas. For example, there were multiple tensions between ethnic peoples, FARC-EP ex-combatants, and the Army in charge of guaranteeing security in these spaces. As is well known, the Indigenous Guard or traditional authorities of the NASA people assume the protection of the territory without the use of weapons beyond the baton that endows them with power. In the context of the armed conflict, they have acted under principles of neutrality and impartiality, that is, they do not allow the entry of legal or illegal armed groups to

the *resguardos*. Consequently, the presence of the Army guarding the ZVTNs meant, in some cases, an affront to the Indigenous jurisdiction.

On the other hand, the agreement on dismantling criminal structures and strengthening collective protection processes has been a failure. The objective of the National Commission for Security Guarantees, created as an inter-sectoral instance with the participation of ethnic peoples, was to design alternatives to dismantle criminal structures and monitor the security dynamics of the territories from the perspective of human security. However, the current government rejected this commission, establishing a Timely Action Plan for Prevention and Protection (PAO) that duplicates the instance of the Peace Agreement but excludes the participation of civil society. In other words, the militaristic and repressive approach to security has prevailed and has led to renewed human rights violations and the reproduction of spirals of violence in the territories most affected by the war.

The main challenges in the implementation of this point in ethnic territories are:

- Respect the ethnic peoples' rights of prior consultation as well as free and informed consent when formulating and carrying out activities in their territories that may affect them directly or indirectly.
- Improve coordination in political, economic, and social matters and communication channels to mitigate tensions with communities.
- Take effective protection and security measures in the territories against the onslaught of organized armed groups vying for territorial control through the imposition of illegal economies and lurid killings to generate fear.

4. Community protection and self-protection mechanisms: A project for territorial peace

Although the Peace Agreement recognizes the relevance of the security systems of ethnic peoples, and the Framework Implementation Plan includes them, they are excluded from Decree 660 of 2018, which creates and regulates the Comprehensive Security and Protection Program for Communities and Organizations. However, the main protection measures for communities outlined in article 2.4.1.7.4.7 of said decree provide an opportunity for ethnic peoples, as it states that strengthening the capacities of communities and organizations in the territories will be considered a priority measure.

Nevertheless, the Indigenous communities fear that “the lack of resources, political will, and coordination will stifle the Comprehensive Plan in practice, and that its development will not live up to the commitments assumed by the parties in the final peace agreement” (CRIC, 2019, paragraph 36).

Concerning the role of community self-protection mechanisms in the context of the intensification of violence in Northern Cauca after the signing of the Peace Agreement, it is important to highlight that the Guard is the main instrument of territorial control in the Indigenous peoples’ *resguardos* (Toribío, Jambaló, Caldono, Suárez, and Buenos Aires). This mechanism was successfully reproduced by the peasant movement in their territories, including Black peasants in the Association of Community Councils of Northern Cauca (ACONC), and has improved their capacity to impact positively the self-protection and security of rural communities in post-conflict areas.

In the last 15 years, a myriad of “peasant” and “*cimarrona*” guards have been created in Colombia; they legitimately exercise territorial control and allow the reproduction of peasant and community social orders in conditions of relative peace. In the rural area of Buenaventura, the communities and community councils of the Calima river basin are planning to create a guard following the model of the Kekelo Ri Tielo Prieto guard of ACONC.

As Rojas and Useche (2019) point out, Indigenous, peasant, and Black social movements are characterized by their capacity for resistance, having faced countless shared challenges with creative strategies in adverse circumstances, and by their ability to articulate elements of the past in their organizational traditions.

Some “interethnic and intercultural” encounters have taken place recently, with the participation of Indigenous, peasant, and Afro-descendant guards, to discuss forms of collaborative work and the possibility of creating permanent coordination mechanisms (Rojas and Useche, 2019).

One of the main challenges for territorial guards in Northern Cauca, with a regional and national projection, concerns the tensions and possibilities of coordination with state institutions, specifically with a public force responsible for acts of victimiz.

5. Fourth point: Solution to the Illicit Drugs Problem

Concerning this point –one of the least advanced–, the Ethnic Chapter focuses its demands on the Comprehensive National Program for the Substitution of Illicit Crops (PNIS) and humanitarian demining. It calls for the participation and consultation of ethnic peoples in designing and implementing the PNIS and the cleaning and demining program in their territories. Likewise, as a peace gesture and form of reparation, it demands that the National Government, the insurgents, and the ethnic peoples commit to developing a program for the settlement, return, devolution, and restitution of the territories of the Indigenous Nukak and Embera Katío from Alto San Jorge Resguardo Cañaveral and the Black communities of the Alto Mira, Frontera, Curvaradó, and Jiguamiandó Community Council (Acuerdo de Paz, 2016).

The main challenge concerning the Comprehensive National Program for the Substitution of Illicit Crops is that it is expected to be implemented through individual pacts between families abiding by the terms agreed to in Havana. However, the Ethnic Chapter indicates that

anything related to this Plan has to be consulted and constructed in conjunction with the Black and Indigenous authorities: Create a Comprehensive National Program for the Substitution of Crops for Illicit Use appropriate for ethnic territories. Consequently, despite collective agreements between ethnic communities, as in Chocó, it has not been possible to implement the Program because of the lack of a roadmap to advance in that direction.

Concerning demining, ethnic organizations point out that prioritizing territories and reaching agreements with ethnic peoples is not equivalent to demining. According to the report on the results of humanitarian demining operations per square meters cleared between 2004 and 2019 (consulted on the OACP website as of December 2019), there is no significant headway concerning the territories cleared of anti-personnel mines and unexploded ordnance (MAP/Muse) contemplated in the Ethnic Chapter. The main reason for the paralysis of the work is the security risks for the operators, as they have been the subject of threats and attacks in several areas (Misión de Verificación de la ONU, 2019).

6. Fifth point: Victims of the Conflict: Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparations, and Non-Recurrence

Point 5 of the Agreement puts forward the creation of a “Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparations, and Non-Recurrence” (SI-VJRNR), composed of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, the Commission for the Clarification of the Truth, and the Unit for the Search of Persons Presumed Missing. It also incorporates measures of integral reparation for victims in terms of psychosocial rehabilitation, processes of collective return of displaced persons, land restitution, and strengthening the policy of comprehensive attention and reparation of victims.

Overall, there is significant progress in the implementation of point 5:

- Input collection for the institutional design of the CEV, the UBPD, and the Unit for Investigation and Accusation (UIA) was comple-

ted. The sessions included a joint process of prior, free, and informed consultation with ethnic peoples.

- There is progress in the territorial presence of the CEV, the UBPD, and JEP teams in Indigenous, Black, Afro-descendant, Raizal, and Palenquero territories. Thus, for example, the CEV has opened Houses of Truth in Buenaventura, Cali, Popayán, and Pasto; and the JEP has territorial links in Apartadó, Quibdó, and Buenaventura.

The JEP's Chamber for Acknowledgment of Truth, Responsibility, and Determination of Facts and Conduct defined seven priority cases according to the vulnerability of the victims, the victimization of collective subjects, the representativeness of perpetrators, the gravity of events, the magnitude of the victimization, and the availability of information, *inter alia*. The cases are Case 001, illegal detention of individuals by the insurgents; Case 002, the humanitarian situation of the Tumaco, Ricaurte, and Barbacoas Municipalities (Nariño); Case 003, extrajudicial executions or "Illegitimate deaths presented as combat casualties by State agents"; Case 004, the humanitarian situation in Urabá; Case 005, victimizations in the context of the conflict in Northern Cauca and Valle del Cauca; Case 006, victimization of members of the Patriotic Union; and Case 007, recruitment of minors in the armed conflict (Instituto Kroc, 2019). The Acknowledgement Chamber extended the deadline for civil society organizations and victims to submit reports on these cases until March 15, 2021, one year longer than initially proposed.

The Ethnic Chapter indicates that the Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparations, and Non-Recurrence must guarantee effective participation, prior consultation, and free and informed consent to communities and organizations in ethnic territories. It must also consult with the justice systems of Indigenous, Black, Afro-descendant, Raizal, and Palenquero communities the judicial cases presented to the JEP that fall within their territorial domain, following current national and international standards, and include the ethnic and cultural approach (Comisión Étnica para la Paz, 2019).

Concerning the right to participation in the Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparations, and Non-Recurrence, the main challenge is

to take international standards into account in the matter of prior consultation for future agreements and to avoid backtracking of the fundamental rights of ethnic peoples.⁷.

7. Conclusion

The implementation of the Final Peace Agreement has made little headway, especially concerning the Ethnic Chapter, which has been limited to regulatory issues and the participation of Indigenous, Roma, Black, Afro-descendant, Raizal, and Palenquero communities in planning activities, such as those related to the Development Programs with a Territorial Approach. Despite being recognized as the main victims of the armed conflict, they were prevented from having representation in Congress when the reforms introduced by the government of President Duque denied the transitory seats contemplated in the Agreement.

Concerning the Development Plans with a Territorial Approach of point 1, most progress has been made in the design of the Action Plans for Regional Transformation, that is, the planning phase of the PDETs, a series of plans and programs to be developed over 10 years in the 170 municipalities of the 16 sub-regions prioritized in the Agreement.

There is headway on some parts of Point 2, such as the opposition statute, the direct participation of FARC in Congress, and citizen participation mechanisms like the National and Territorial Councils for Peace, Reconciliation, and Coexistence. As noted earlier, alternative parties have been working on initiatives to relaunch the idea of Special Transitory Peace Constituencies.

The setbacks in most measures to guarantee mobilization and social protest, especially processes of liberation of Mother Earth in Cauca, are alarming. The issue of social protest is of special importance for ethnic peoples, as their mobilizations are often stigmatized and accused of being infiltrated by illegal armed groups.

In point 3, the disarmament and demobilization process was successful, although no significant progress was made in dismantling criminal structures and strengthening processes of collective protection.

In point 4, on the implementation of the Comprehensive National Program for the Substitution of Illicit Crops, voluntary substitution is above 90% of the goal in most territories. However, the current government is reducing financial support for this strategy while reactivating the repression against small producers through forced eradication and fumigation of crops for illicit use, and it intends to resume aerial spraying with glyphosate.

Finally, in point 5 concerning victims, the National Government must implement a comprehensive strategy to deal with the main factors of victimization in the sub-regions, such as organized armed groups (GAO) and post-FARC armed groups (GAPF); illegal economies, particularly drug trafficking and illegal mining; inequity and extreme poverty; and corruption.

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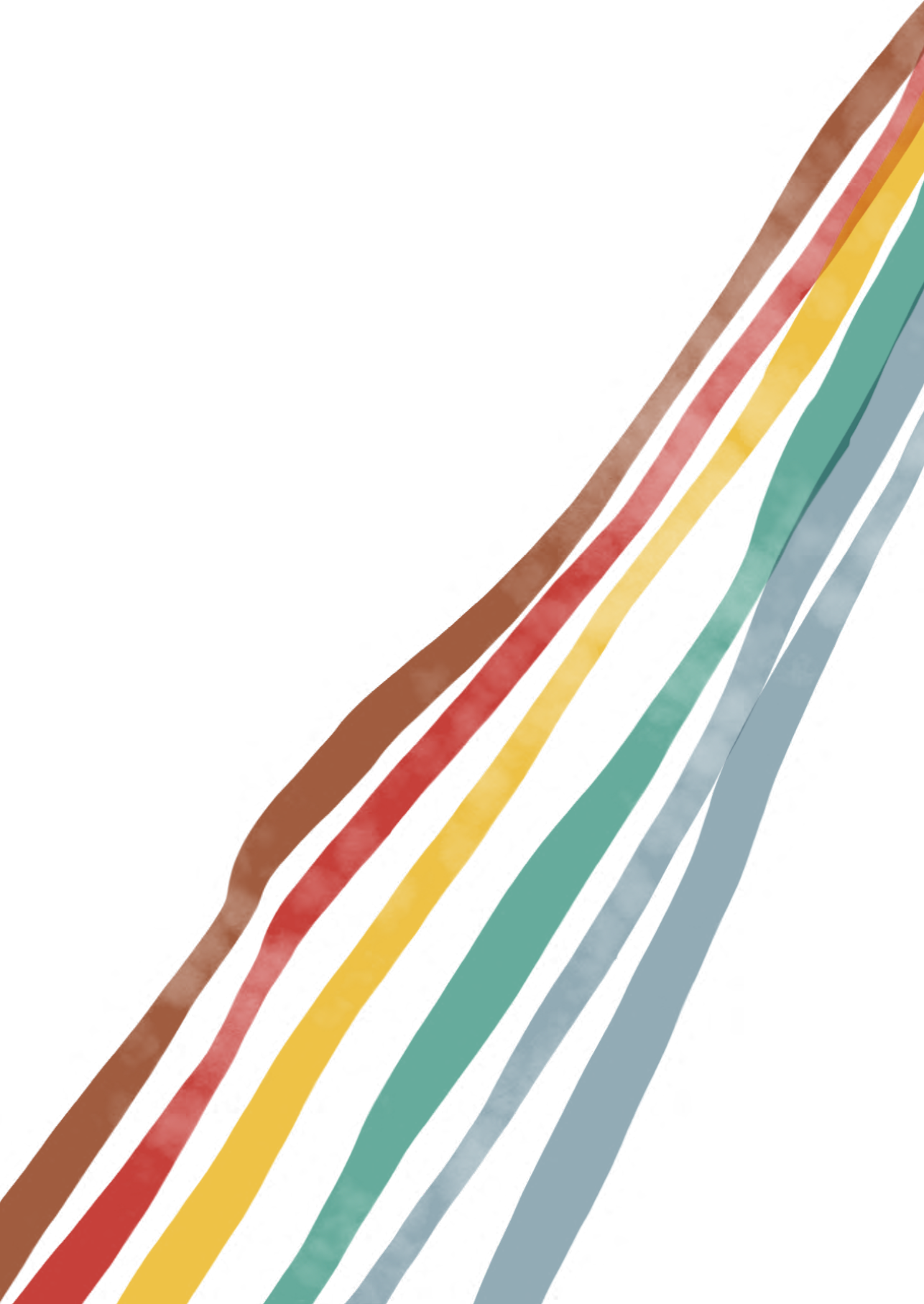
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Berenice, displaced by violence, drying clothes in the sun and wind. San Andrés Islands, 2014.
Photo: Natalia Botero.





Peace from the perspective of sexual and gender dissidents. A project of inclusive Peace

Caribe Afirmativo

LGBT¹ people have been historically excluded and discriminated against. The discourse of recognition of sexual and gender differences has not been and is not generally accepted in different American countries.² This is reflected in everyday experiences of systematic violence in different settings of life, including family and educational contexts (Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, 2015: 82) and hostile scenarios like national and international wars and armed conflicts (Serrano, 2013: 56). In the context of violent conflicts, LGBT people have experienced a continuum of violence because of their sexual orientations, identities, or diverse gender expressions.³ This much has been

¹ Throughout the text we will use the acronym LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans) to refer to people who, from a sexual and gender dissidents' perspective, subvert the binary systems of sexuality and gender and break with the heteronorm. We will also refer to sexual and gender differences. On the other hand, in some sections of the text we will refer to LGBTI people, LGBTI social sectors, sexual and gender diversity, among others, because these expressions were used in a specific historical moment or are used by the people cited in the document. The use of the acronym does not reduce the political project of those who refer to themselves based on other identities and places.

² As reported by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on page 81 of its 2015 report "Violencia contra personas LGBTI."

³ Heretofore SOGIE.

recognized by truth commissions in some post-conflict settings in the world, such as Brazil, Ecuador, Honduras, Northern Ireland, Nigeria, Paraguay, Peru, and South Africa.⁴

Colombia is not an exception. In the framework of its internal armed conflict, LGBT persons were victims of different forms of violence (Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica, 2015;⁵ Caribe Afirmativo, 2019a: 31). As in other cases of negotiated solutions to armed conflicts,⁶ LGBT people participated in the last negotiations between the Colombian state and FARC-EP (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army). However, they have also faced obstacles to effective participation in order to position their conceptions of peace, not only from armed actors but also from the civilian population and governments who have tried to prevent or limit possibilities for social and political advocacy.⁷

⁴ Based on the article "Comisiones de la Verdad" (2006) by Priscilla Hayner, Director of the Unit of Policy Development, International Center for Transitional Justice, New York.

⁵ The International Center for Transitional Justice published two more texts on LGBT experiences in the armed conflict in 2018 and 2019.

⁶ At the end of the 1990s and the beginning of the 21st century, LGBTI people from all over the country joined the Planeta Paz platform to contribute to peacebuilding; at this time, a broad characterization called *LGBT Sectoral Characterization Documents - Planet Peace* (2002) was made. Throughout this process, many elements of peacebuilding for LGBTI people were discussed, including the differential effects experienced by them in the territories where the armed conflict was being waged. They were later incorporated into the negotiation process that ended with the 2016 Peace Agreement (Giraldo-Aguirre, 2018: 118).

⁷ According to the Instancia Especial de Mujeres para el Enfoque de Género en la Paz (2019), the peace agreement signed between the state and FARC-EP in November 2016 adopted a gender approach that recognized LGBT victims, although not to the extent expected. However, its implementation has encountered multiple challenges (p. 9), even more pronounced in LGBT matters, due to the lack of political will by the national and local governments (p. 21).

To confront this situation, the LGBT movement has sought and found support in other social movements, such as women's movements, and international organizations, *inter alia*.

The purpose of this chapter is to make visible an understanding of global peace from sexual and gender dissidents in the municipality of Maicao, in La Guajira department. It will succinctly present how the armed conflict affected the LGBT community of this municipality and their conceptions of peace from the perspective of physical integrity, individual and collective human rights, and conflict transformation as essential pillars of global peace. It will explain past and present challenges for positioning LGBT people's conception of peace in a global scenario, the opportunities the movement has found in order not to give up on peace, and, finally, the conclusions.

1. Peace in Colombia will be diverse or it will not be: a peace agreement with or without LGBTI people?

As mentioned earlier, LGBT people from all over the country, including the Caribbean region, where the municipality of Maicao is located, were victims of differential violence in the context of the armed conflict. Armed actors in Maicao developed criminal plans against LGBT people, configuring macro-criminal patterns that fit the crime of persecution due to prejudice against the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression (SOGIE) of the victims. Through the use of violence, armed actors sought to consolidate territorial control and gain social legitimacy in order to obtain military advantages in the war. Threats, forced displacement, sexual violence, torture, slavery, homicides, femicide, kidnapping, and forced disappearance, among others, are some of the behaviors that make up this macro-criminal pattern of violation of the rights of LGBT people (Caribe Afirmativo, 2019a: 72).

This has led LGBT people from Maicao and the country, in general, to become involved in different initiatives of peace dialogues in recent years, from Planeta Paz to the final peace agreement between the

Colombian State and FARC-EP in 2016. In these spaces, particularly the latter, LGBT people have tried to position a concept of positive peace inclusive of their voices; a peace that, as stated in the framework of a participatory exercise in Maicao in 2019 with 20 LGBT persons, “is respectful of diversity because without diversity there is no peace.” This feeds theories that assert that for civil society groups an essential manifestation of peace is stopping the causes and dynamics of violence against them, in this case, due to prejudices against diverse SOGIE.

Specifically, an analysis of the conceptions of peace of LGBT people in this participatory exercise in Maicao identifies respect for diversity, “difference”, tolerance, and recognition as fundamental elements and common denominators of these notions. Likewise, a shared element was the idea of peace as a process that generates “tranquility” in LGBT people: “tranquility of being”, “tranquility with myself”, “tranquility with my family”, “tranquility with others”, etc. This can be explained by the fact that, as a result of the conflict, LGBT people in Maicao have suffered for decades of anxiety, restlessness, anguish, and fear at/for being LGBT and expressing themselves and loving freely.

Concerning the three elements proposed in this research project as essential for peace –physical integrity, individual and collective human rights, and conflict transformation–, the LGBT people of Maicao have been emphatic that the last two are more important. Among the findings, it is observed that in their understanding of peace they mention aspects related to human rights and conflict transformation. Out of 18 people interviewed, 11 included conflict transformation as an element of peace, five included human rights, and only two included physical integrity.

Concerning conflict transformation as an indispensable element of peace, the LGBT people of Maicao frequently mentioned the words “reconciliation”, “forgiveness”, “coexistence”, and “harmony”. As remarked by some of them:

It is to reconcile ourselves with everything that hurt us when we learn to forgive...

It is forgiveness and inner reconciliation, respecting others, their different points of view and thoughts...

It is tranquility and happiness, being well with others, not being in constant disagreement, in conflict ... tranquility...

It is to be calm with myself, with my family, and with society in general. Accepting myself as I am and others, respecting the opinions and feelings of others openly...

It is to live in harmony, in love, to be united so that there is good dialogue and there is no more war...

It is that they learn to love and accept us as we are, regardless of our mistakes, defects, and virtues; when they manage to accept us as we are, we can accept all the people who live in our environment and learn to accept society as it is. So, peace is a state of life where we can be happy accepting all of our surroundings...

It is serenity and tranquility with oneself (focus group discussion with LGBTI people in Maicao, La Guajira, 2019).

Concerning individual and collective human rights, they especially identified the rights to equality, equity, and justice as a central element of peace. As pointed out by a lesbian leader of the municipality: “it is to leave our children and grandchildren a country free from inequity, inequality, and violence” (focus group discussion with LGBTI people in Maicao). Finally, the two people who mentioned physical integrity as essential for peace alluded to respect for traffic on the public roads of the municipality, which could refer to the historic physical violence experienced by LGBT people in the public space, especially trans people and those with diverse gender expressions or same-sex/gender partners.

Another finding was that, when asked about what they did not understand by peace, they first highlighted that, contrary to previous answers, physical violence is not synonymous with peace. Seven out of 18 respondents affirmed that physical integrity is a central element of a society in conflict, highlighting the lack of guarantees for the physical integrity of leaders and participants in social mobilization:

To silence, to kill people who are fighting for a better world, or people who want to struggle for a better quality of life. Colombia is a country where fear and fright are constant when you give a voice of protest, and even so a Colombian fights for his people knowing that his life is in danger (focus group discussion with LGBTI people in Maicao).

Seven people asserted that a society that lacks mechanisms for conflict transformation is not at peace, and used expressions like “resentment,” “envy,” “disputes,” “intolerance,” “discrimination,” “stigmatization,” “lack of dialogue,” etc.: “Resentment, the monosyllable no. I do not forgive, I do not want to reconsider, I do not want to forgive, hatred, recognition, harm to our neighbor without any consideration.” Finally, three people pointed out that the failure to guarantee human rights like equality, justice, and equity is a characteristic of a society without peace, particularly if those rights are violated by the state.

The conceptions of peace of LGBT people of Maicao coincide with those presented by the Colombian LGBT movement to national and international bodies when positioning this discussion from the perspective of sexual and gender dissidents. These notions have been reflected in scenarios like the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation, and Non-Recurrence (SIVJRNR). In dialogues on peace with and from the regions with LGBT victims, LGBT organizations and coalitions have presented strategic reports before the instances of the system and participated in spaces of consultation and planning.⁸

⁸ Caribe Afirmativo presented four reports before the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP): “Que nunca más se repita: Informe sobre violencias contra personas LGBTI en el marco del conflicto armado en Antioquia” (2019b), in March 2019; “Nos mantenemos de pie: Informe sobre violencias contra personas LGBTI en el marco del conflicto armado en los Montes de María” (2019c), in July 2019; an extension of “Que nunca más se repita: Informe sobre violencias contra personas LGBTI en el marco del conflicto armado en Antioquia” (2019b) in December 2019; and “Lo que perdimos. Informe sobre violencias en el marco del conflicto armado sobre sujetos colectivos LGBT en Antioquia: casos de La Mesa LGBT de la Comuna 8 de Medellín y el Colectivo LGBT de San Rafael”,

This is part of the road covered by the LGBT movement in the country in the current peacebuilding scenario, where territorial organizations and collectives have sought to position a vision of peace from the perspective of sexual and gender dissidents; a diverse peace, as we have called it.

2. Obstacles and challenges for LGBT people in positioning an inclusive peace in Colombia

Positioning the concept of inclusive peace of sexual and gender dissidents in Colombia has not been easy. Obstacles include widespread and systematic attacks against the LGBT movement by anti-rights groups and exclusion by the National Government in the implementation of the final peace agreement.

Concerning the former, in 2016, conservative sectors of the country argued that the Havana Peace Agreement's recognition of the need for a transversal and inclusive gender approach to sexual and gender dissidents was one of the reasons they would vote "no" in the plebiscite for peace. They stigmatized this approach as weakening family and social life in Colombia, presented it as an enemy of the family and traditional roles, and even called it a "gender ideology" to indoctrinate the youth. Although the Colón Theater Peace Agreement modified some aspects of the gender approach, it maintained the essence of recognition of di-

in September 2020. It also presented a report before the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Co-existence, and Non-Recurrence (CEV) entitled "¡Nosotras Resistimos! Informe sobre violencias contra personas LGBT en el marco del conflicto armado" (2019a), where the voices of 56 victims raise discussions about sexual and gender dissidence, the armed conflict, conceptions and construction of peace, factors of persistence, resistance, and impacts. Caribe Afirmativo also signed an agreement with the Commission to document more cases of violence against LGBT people, and has accompanied the work of its Gender Group. Finally, it participated in the construction of the National Plan of the Unit for the Search of Persons Presumed Missing (UBPD).

fferent ways in which the armed conflict has affected LGBT people and the affirmative actions necessary to respond to this situation, such as the principles of equality and non-discrimination.⁹

Noncompliance on the part of the Colombian Government with the implementation of the Peace Agreement has affected and generated mistrust among LGBT people. In the participatory exercise carried out in 2019 with LGBT people in Maicao, only four of 18 persons recognized some progress in the implementation; of these, only one acknowledged progress in the recognition and respect of LGBT people, while one more indicated as progress for LGBT people the findings of mass graves of persons reported missing by the JEP and the UBPB. Also, of the 18 participants, only three identified government institutions as key actors in the implementation of the Peace Agreement, and most identified civil society organizations as the main promoters.

This has generated skepticism among LGBT people concerning positive and inclusive peace in the country. In terms of conflict transformation mechanisms, the participants in the exercise agree that no scenarios or types have been socialized. Concerning human rights, they continue to witness violations daily in a corrupt, precarious, sexist, and structurally discriminating system. And in terms of physical integrity, they believe that state neglect and the capture of public institutions by illegal structures in municipalities like Maicao have prevented guarantees for LGBT people and leaders, and even point out the existence of constant threats.

Consequently, positioning the conceptions of peace from the perspective of sexual and gender dissidents faces several challenges. Six will be discussed here.

⁹ On November 24, 2016, at Teatro Colón in Bogotá, then-President Juan Manuel Santos and the top commander of the demobilized FARC-EP, Rodrigo Londoño, signed the Final Agreement for the Termination of the Conflict and the Construction of a Stable and Lasting Peace. This was the final signing act, following new negotiations between the Government and the guerrillas after voters rejected the Peace Agreement by a small margin in the “Plebiscite for Peace.” The Government held several forums and meetings to find solutions and draft a revised agreement incorporating requests and claims of the NO campaign (Translator’s note).

The first is to achieve the effective participation of LGBT people in the entire implementation of the Peace Agreement to reach social consensus to eliminate violence, strengthen democracy, and guarantee gender equality and diversity in the project of the country to build (Serrano and Caribe Afirmativo, 2016: 10); claiming this space is a permanent effort, without sacrificing some spaces for others. This also involves accepting that the post-conflict situation is only partial, with a single armed actor, and that despite the reduction in violence, the conflict has not ended. The lack of a timely response from the state constitutes a breeding ground for renewed violence, and the absence of scenarios to promote conflict transformation mechanisms and guarantees for human rights and physical integrity continues to be a cause of concern for LGBT people (Mazzoldi, Huertas, Cuesta and Tobo, 2019). Dialogue with local actors is once again called for, without the imposition of external agendas that prevent effective responses to these problems.

The second challenge for LGBT people is to promote spaces for dialogue between the parties in conflict to continue the process of laying down arms and consolidate scenarios to create inclusive peace. Promoting the resumption of peace talks between the Colombian state and the ELN is essential for a true territorial peace that recognizes sexual and gender dissidents.¹⁰

The third challenge concerns discussions on representativeness and the representative for participation in spaces to position an inclusive peace. This is imperative in order to continue having an impact as a movement while maintaining legitimacy and approval for advocacy work.

The fourth challenge is the need for LGBT people to take the agenda of sexual and gender dissidents to other spaces of social and political mobilization and to discuss structural problems that prevent a peace that recognizes LGBT people. This involves addressing, from an intersectional, territorial, and human rights perspective all types of discrimination, prejudice, economic systems, poverty, and inequality, among others. In turn, this compels us to “question the corrupt and centralist political systems that make territorial LGBT agendas invisible” (focus

¹⁰ Press reports on this matter can be found on Caribe Afirmativo’s web page, dated March 30, 2016, and February 6, 2017.

group discussion with LGBTI people in Maicao), making sure that sexual and gender diversity is not addressed essentially from the acronym LGBT and some global and national human rights agendas devoid of processes of dialogue to take into account local needs.

The fifth challenge in building inclusive peace is to overcome gender inequality from within, making visible and recognizing the place of LBT women in LGBT agendas. In the acronym LGBT, women continue to be made invisible, and peace involves reclaiming their role, rights, and particular causes. On the other hand, the recognition and visibility of LBT women can also take place in the organizational spaces of women for the implementation of the Peace Agreement. As a leader from Guajira points out, “LBT women must have influence from LGBTI and women’s perspectives to ensure that what we have endured because we are women or because of our sexual orientation or gender identity will not happen again” (focus group discussion with LGBTI people in Maicao).

The sixth challenge is for the SIVJNR to recognize the differential effects experienced by LGBT people, which is essential for an inclusive notion of peace. This means the JEP’s recognition, in a specific and differentiated way, that armed actors violated the rights of LGBT people due to prejudices associated with their SOGIE, not only in the territories but also nationally, especially if cases of gender violence or prejudice are defined as priority cases. Also, in a chapter of its final report, the CEV should explain what it meant to be a sexual and gender dissident in the context of the armed conflict and present specific recommendations to prevent this type of violence from taking place again. Finally, the UBPD should find disappeared LGBT people, as requested by their nuclear and social families, “making dignified deliveries of bodies, respecting the gender identity of people and how they recognized themselves in life” (discussion in focus group with LGBTI people in Maicao).

The SIVJNR has to live up to its name, guaranteeing truth, justice, reparation, and non-recurrence for LGBT people. This implies ensuring a transformative and not only restorative process, helping to consolidate a vision of society and country that breaks with the patriarchal logic

and vindicates LGBT people and their role in society.¹¹ This exercise recognizes the global restorative justice paradigms in transitional justice processes, as well as the realities of LGBT people who were not only affected by the armed conflict but did not fully enjoy their rights before the war. Therefore, a positive, inclusive peace must guarantee conflict transformation mechanisms, human rights, and physical integrity to be an effective transformative exercise articulated globally with the restorative process.

More challenges may arise to consolidate the role of LGBT people in positioning their conceptions of peace. For example, achieving the recognition of more groups of sexual and gender dissidents as subjects of collective reparation, extending the peacebuilding agenda to more settings in people's lives, and broadening discussions on peace for sexual and gender dissidents in the periphery, among others. Addressing these challenges may make the implementation of the Peace Agreement one path for the Colombian state and society to embrace LGBT people in an egalitarian and inclusive way, free of prejudice or discrimination.

3. Opportunities to promote an inclusive peace by LGBT people in coalition with other actors

In the current context, including the aforementioned challenges, specific scenarios provide opportunities to promote the implementation of the Peace Agreement, especially concerning LGBT people. On one hand, the promotion of inclusive peace implies making visible LGBT-led peacebuilding as well as education and training experiences currently taking place in the country's territories. Giving them visibility and spreading their voices is necessary to make more people join them. It is essential to position these processes locally and to dialogue with other national and global peacebuilding mechanisms while recognizing their own spaces.

¹¹ On the paradigm of transformative justice, see Uprimny and Saffon (2009).

Running for popularly elected positions presents another opportunity for LGBT people to promote the Peace Agreement through inclusion. From these posts, they can promote debates and discussions on the importance of materializing the Agreement and make political and budgetary decisions to include LGBT people. Part of the implementation of the Agreement and the gender approach is in the hands of local authorities, as in the execution of Development Programs with a territorial approach (PDET) and the creation and operation of Territorial Councils for Peace, Reconciliation, and Coexistence (CTPRC).¹²

Another opportunity is the participation of LGBT people in the National and Territorial Councils for Peace, Reconciliation, and Coexistence. Despite difficulties, LGBT people took part in the construction phase of the PDETs, and they are currently participating in its implementation and monitoring and oversight phases. Promoting the implementation and effective monitoring of the projects of the PDETs in the prioritized territories requires training LGBT people for this task and recognizing local peace initiatives that must be guaranteed by their governments because they are part of the articles of the Program.¹³ Likewise, according to Decree-Law 885 of 2017, LGBT people must have at least two representatives before the National and Territorial Councils for Peace, Reconciliation, and Coexistence; they are expected to advise the National Government in matters of peace, human rights, reconciliation, and coexistence.¹⁴

¹² The Territorial Councils for Peace, Reconciliation, and Coexistence (CTPRC) are created at the initiative of the respective governors or mayors. Their functions are similar to those of the National Council for Reconciliation and Coexistence (Translator's note).

¹³ For further information, see *Cuadernillo afirmativo* Núm. 9: "Reflexiones sobre los Programas de desarrollo con enfoque territorial en el marco del postconflicto desde una perspectiva de género".

¹⁴ For information on these topics, see *Cuadernillo afirmativo* Núm. 6: "Consejos de Paz, Reconciliación y Convivencia: a 20 años de incertidumbre".

Finally, advocacy before the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation, and Non-Recurrence is a historic opportunity for LGBT people to make visible the violence they experienced in the context of the armed conflict due to their diverse SOGIE. Consequently, it is necessary to plan scenarios of truth and justice with glocal perspectives understood from local narratives as well as global and local needs of restoration and transformation. As noted, LGBT organizations and coalitions have submitted reports to the JEP and the CEV that reflect the macro-criminal patterns of the violence of armed actors against LGBT people in the country. These reports are pioneering, being the first to be presented by LGBT organizations before a transitional court of justice in the world. It is expected that this will allow the JEP magistracy, the CEV commissioners, and the directors of the UBPD to make visible the gender perspective in their work, findings, reflections, and recommendations.

To consolidate their advocacy work, in each of these scenarios LGBT people and the LGBT movement have managed to articulate themselves with other civil society actors, especially social movements working for peacebuilding and the Peace Agreement, such as women's movements and organizations, Indigenous people, Afro-descendants, youth, and peasants, among others. Specifically, it has been possible to work hand in hand for the construction, implementation, and monitoring of the PDETs with the women's movement, youth, and academia. Partnerships have been established to achieve and improve the participation of LGBT people in the CTPRCs and the Victims' Tables. Alliances have been established with organizations of women, Afro-descendants, and Indigenous people to jointly influence the SIVJNR. Finally, articulations with other movements constitute scenarios of opportunities and reflection to understand peace and peacebuilding as a struggle that concerns everyone in different ways and to recognize that the causes of others make possible the existence of ours.

Despite these opportunities to continue advocacy work, there are difficulties along the way. Especially, the lack of security guarantees by the state in the face of the continued presence of armed actors in the territories. The peace agreement with the FARC did not silence the weapons of other actors or FARC dissidents. LGBT people working on peacebuilding and the implementation of the Agreement have been

threatened by these actors and some have even been re-victimized, to the point of being forcibly displaced.¹⁵

4. Conclusions

The LGBT population has historically been discriminated against and excluded by state policies and the dynamics of Colombian society. Armed actors in the context of the conflict also perpetrated and exacerbated differential violence motivated by diverse SOGIE. These actions by armed actors against sexual and gender dissidents were part of an exercise of social, political, and economic control to consolidate themselves in the territories and obtain military advantages in the war. They constitute a pattern of macro-criminality that reveals a criminal plan and fits the crime of persecution due to prejudice against LGBT people, which is considered a crime against humanity.

Faced with these realities, LGBT people and organizations have developed strategies to position conceptions of peace that seek to eliminate violence against them and include diversity. In order of priority, they have identified as central elements of a positive and inclusive peace the existence of conflict transformation mechanisms, the guarantee of individual and collective human rights, and physical integrity. Each of these elements has been analyzed from the perspective of their experience.

Positioning a positive and inclusive peace from the perspective of sexual and gender dissidents has been a wide journey, accompanied by the diversification of their agendas in dialogue with global LGBT agendas of mobilization for the recognition of rights and national and local needs to promote changes through peacebuilding advocacy. Local LGBT work not only permeates the global LGBT discourse to mutate to the glocal when it comes to being implemented in Colombia. It has also managed to enter the peacebuilding agenda to make institutions and

¹⁵ See Caribe Afirmativo. 2020. March 25. Atentado líder del proceso de Casa Diversa de Comuna 8, Jhon Restrepo: <https://caribeafirmativo.lgbt/atentado-jhon-restrepo-lider-social-lgbti-la-comuna-8-medellin-fundador-la-casa-diversa-la-misma-comuna/>

society accept that overcoming the conflict, even when complying with the global standards of transitional justice, involves recognizing the experiences and suffering of sexual and gender dissidents in the conflict, and transforming social systems to prevent this from happening again.

However, this work has also faced great obstacles, including the debates about the gender approach of the Peace Agreement and its implementation. Some of the obstacles and challenges to overcome are, among others: 1) achieving the effective participation of LGBT people in the entire implementation of the Peace Agreement; 2) promoting spaces for dialogue between the parties in conflict, to lay down the weapons; 3) deepening discussions on representativeness and the representative for participation in spaces for deliberation; 4) taking the agenda of sexual and gender dissidents to other spaces of social mobilization; 5) continue to build peace by making the place of LBT women visible and recognized in LGBT agendas; and 6) getting the SIVJRNR to recognize that LGBT people were differentially affected. As has been pointed out, all this must be done through dialogues relating global, national, and local discourses for transformation and change.

Finally, it is important to continue planning and developing effective advocacy actions to position a positive and inclusive conception of peace by sexual and gender dissidents. However, guarantees of security, sustainability, the materialization of human rights, and conflict transformation mechanisms by the state are urgently needed; otherwise, endless re-victimization and violence will reappear, as has already occurred in different parts of the country with LGBT leaders engaged in the defense of the cause of peace.

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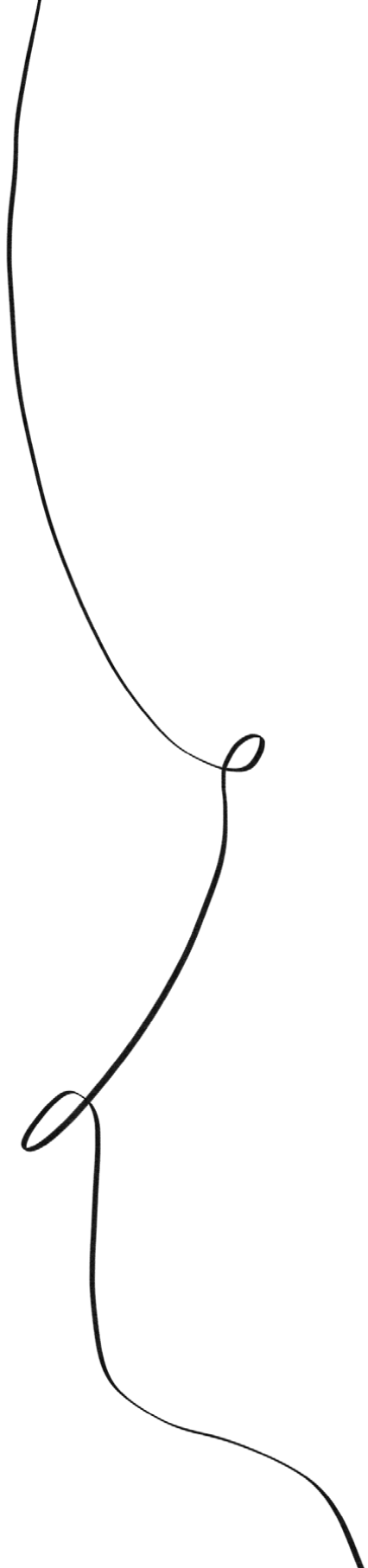
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External actors and peace in Colombia

Kristina Birke Daniels y Sabine Kurtenbach



The debate around the participation of external actors in furthering peacebuilding is broad and complex. At the end of the 20th century, there was a brief period of international optimism motivated by the perception that the promotion of peace accords, democratization, and market economies –the central components of liberal peace (Paris 2004)– would be the key elements. Three decades later, it is known that external actors play a much more modest role in peacebuilding and that peace is built by internal actors at the national and local levels (Kurtenbach 2010). Some authors emphasize that, as of 2010, there was a growing trend in favor of ending armed conflicts by force (military victory) or authoritarian methods (Lewis, Heathershaw, and Megoran 2018).

Colombia was left out of this debate for two reasons. First, as a middle-income country, Colombia is not part of the target group for these activities, which includes countries characterized by poverty, fragility or failure of the central State, low levels of economic development, and lack of democratic trajectory. Second, from the beginning of the current peace process, Colombians emphasized that they would be the central actors. Nevertheless, important contributions from abroad helped to keep the debate around peace on the public agenda. The UNDP's National Human Development Report with the programmatic title "El conflicto. Callejón con salida" (UNDP 2003) was important in this regard. Actors like the World Bank and the European Union contributed

by supporting the first peace laboratories and preparing the ground for negotiations between the government and FARC-EP (Bouvier 2014; Helfrich y Kurtenbach 2006).

In the preparation and monitoring of the dialogues between the Colombian government and FARC-EP, the governments of Norway, Cuba, Chile, and Venezuela played an important role as guarantors of the process. The signing of the Peace Agreement was praised in the international arena. At a meeting of the United Nations Security Council in Bogotá on May 3, 2017 (El Tiempo, May 4, 2017), the Uruguayan ambassador presiding over the meeting stated that after the signing of the Peace Agreement in Colombia, Latin America was “free of active conflicts.” Despite the narrow nature of this vision of peace as the absence of war, the international community is interested in the success of a process that can serve as a paradigmatic example of the possibility of ending wars and building peace in very complex contexts. In this vein, the United Nations mission for the verification of the implementation of the Peace Agreement and the UN Secretary-General play key roles with reports on compliance with the Agreement and implementation problems (<https://colombia.unmissions.org/documents>). Other external actors are explicitly mentioned in the Peace Agreement (see Table 2). Additionally, German cooperation is mentioned for support on the issue of victims and the Special Jurisdiction for Peace.¹

¹ The bilateral cooperation project “Support for the construction of peace in Colombia (ProPaz)” (<https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/34735.html>) is the largest project for German peacebuilding cooperation globally. Currently, Germany is concentrating on its role in defense of transitional justice in the Accord. This is fundamental; even if the direct impacts in the short term are not clearly seen, it has stopped the Duque government from cornering it. Besides the cooperation directly mentioned in the Agreement, a multitude of German and foreign organizations also work on issues related to peacebuilding.

Table 2. International Accompaniment Agreement

1. Towards a New Colombian Countryside: Comprehensive Rural Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - European Union - FAO - Via Campesina - UNDP
2. Political participation: a democratic opening to build peace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unasur - Switzerland - Netherlands Institute for Multi-Party Democracy - NIMD - Carter Center
3.2 Reincorporation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - European Union - UNESCO - UNDP - OCLAE (Continental Latin American and Caribbean Organization of Students) - OEI
The National Government shall coordinate the review of the situation of persons deprived of their liberty, prosecuted, or sentenced for belonging to or collaborating with FARC-EP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
3.4 Combatting and dismantling criminal organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UNODC - U.S.

3.4 Special investigation unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - U.S - European Union
3.2 Security and personnel guarantees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - U.S. - Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
4. Solution to the illicit drug problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UNODC - Global Commission on Drug Policy
5. Victims Human rights of victims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights - ICRC - ICTJ - UNHCR - Sweden
Unit for the Search for Persons deemed Missing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sweden - ICRC - ICMP
Gender-based approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UN Women - Representative of the Secretary General for sexual violence in the conflict - International Democratic Federation of Women - Sweden

Source: Peace Agreement 11/12/2016, p. 215-216.

As emphasized in this research, peacebuilding transcends the termination of the war and must enable the reduction of direct violence, the guarantee of human rights, and the constructive transformation of existing and emerging conflicts (see the three pillars of peace, Chapter 2). Under this perspective, many external actors at the state and multilateral levels, as well as international NGOs and neighboring countries, directly or indirectly influence the construction of peace. While some work with entities of the Colombian government, others cooperate with civil society organizations or try to build joint agendas. The important point is that their perspectives about peace are as diverse as those of Colombian actors, ranging from reductionist concepts to broad perceptions of the transformation of structural causes.

In the following pages, we focus first on external actors who have a broader vision of peacebuilding, such as different organizations of the United Nations system and the European Union. In the second part, we discuss actors with more narrow visions, such as different US governments, which have enjoyed bipartisan consensus on cooperation strategies with Colombia, and regional organizations such as the OAS. We conclude with some considerations about the Colombian peace in the regional geopolitics of Latin America, especially its relation to the Venezuelan crisis.

1. Transformative peace: The United Nations and the European Union

The peace perspective of the United Nations has developed considerably since the mid-twentieth century. Founded to maintain world peace, the central role of UN peacekeeping missions was to monitor ceasefires and position themselves between the troops of clashing countries, as in the Middle East or –even today– Cyprus (peace-keeping). From the 1992 Peace Agenda of then Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali (Boutros-Ghali 1992), a much more engaged agenda emerged, including mediation to end interstate and internal wars (peace-making). The United Nations involvement in the peace processes in El Salvador, Guatemala, Mozambique, and Cambodia in the early 1990s characteri-

zes this phase. Peacebuilding is an even broader concept because it includes support for profound transformations in societies emerging from war or armed conflict. More recently, the concept of sustaining peace (United Nations 2015a) and the sustainable development goals (especially number 16 - Peace, Justice and Solid Institutions [United Nations 2015b]) go further and include the prevention of armed violence.

With this perspective, the United Nations organization hypothetically has one of the most comprehensive visions of peace. On the ground, as always, things are much more complicated. On the one hand, these organizations –such as UNDP, OHCHR, WHO, UNODC, IOM, etc.– have specific mandates and need agreements with the governments of the countries in which they operate. Colombia is a paradigmatic case of the difficulties and commitments involved. In February and March 2020, the Colombian government strongly objected to the OHCHR's report on the human rights situation in the country and the report of the special rapporteur for human rights defenders. The first recommended reform of the national police (its transference to the Interior Ministry) and the second emphasized the serious deficits of a security policy that fails to protect human rights defenders. The government characterized this as undue interference in internal affairs, evidencing its unwillingness to carry out reforms. On the ground, UN agencies play important roles in the monitoring of the implementation of the Peace Agreement and on issues related to human rights and violence against human rights defenders. Given that during the first decade of the 2000s the government of Álvaro Uribe changed the narrative of armed conflict for a discourse of terrorism and criminality, the United Nations agencies have today a key role insisting on the implementation of the Agreement and its structural reforms and supporting actors in favor of maintaining the spirit of transformative peace.

Although the European Union has a shared vision, notable national differences have become apparent in recent years due to divergent views and interpretations of events in Colombia. These differences became more evident in the early 2000s and were significantly reduced by the peace process of the Santos Administration. Nevertheless, it is possible to highlight the work of countries that have consistently maintained their conceptions of peace, among them and especially Norway, whose support facilitating the Havana negotiations with the FARC and negotiations with the ELN has been crucial.

From the EU perspective, the issues at stake in Colombia are mainly related to long-term problems of uneven development and the frailty of democratic institutions. The perception is that violence and armed conflict are rooted in the history of the country. And although influenced by contemporary political events and economic incentives, they will not be solved with short-term solutions. The EU strategy document for cooperation with Colombia (2007-2013) states that “there is no single solution to promote peace in Colombia. The different components of the conflict must be addressed simultaneously, while the results of these measures will become apparent only after different periods of time.”²

EU policy is mainly aimed at protecting and increasing civic spaces and possibilities for civil-society activities with an emphasis on supporting and strengthening local capacities for conflict transformation. This was done between 2002 and 2012 through the “peace laboratories”, between 2012 and 2017 in the “territories of peace”, and as of the signing of the peace agreement with the “European Fund for Peace.”³ The pillars of the fund include support for reconciliation, the reincorporation of former FARC-EP combatants, inclusion of youth, women, and ethnic groups, inclusive and sustainable productivity projects, institutionality, and legitimizing state presence. These pillars reflect the comprehensive and broad vision of peacebuilding.

Although this vision is in line with the Peace Agreement, an evaluation by the European Parliament concludes that the impact of cooperation was limited because “the majority of the Colombian political elites were not persuaded by this perspective. On the contrary, the Colombian political class has long considered violence in Colombia as a problem

² European Commission, *Colombia Country Strategy Paper 2007–2013*, 6, http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/colombia/csp/07_13_en.pdf

³ <https://eulacfoundation.org/en/system/files/Colombia%20Country%20Strategy%20Paper%202007-2013.pdf>; https://www.fondoeuropeoparalapaz.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/2.-Infografia-pilares-estrategicos-actualizado_compressed.pdf

of internal security and territorial control” (European Parliament. Directorate General for Parliamentary Research Services. 2019, I). This perspective has once again become dominant in the Iván Duque Administration.

2. Peace as a function of the war on drugs: The United States of America

Contrary to the broad perspectives of the United Nations and the European Union, the issue of security and the “war on drugs” has dominated the cooperation of several US governments with Colombia. Plan Colombia has been a crucial instrument for financing and strengthening the Colombian Armed Forces since 2000. Designed to support the fight against drug production and trafficking, it played an important role in the war against the FARC-EP, which generated much criticism from human rights NGOs and for its ineffectiveness in reducing drug production (GAO 2008; Isacson and Poe 2009; Tickner 2014; Mejía 2016). In 2016, after approaching President Juan Manuel Santos, the Obama Administration developed the Colombia Paz program to support peacebuilding after the signing of the agreement, with three strategies: (1) consolidation and expansion of security and anti-drug policies, while the FARC reintegrated; (2) expansion of the presence of the state and institutions to strengthen law enforcement in rural areas and (3) furthering justice and essential services for the victims of the conflict.⁴

Although inconsistent, the Trump administration’s policy toward Latin America has been characterized as an electoral strategy more than a policy of hemispheric cooperation. And the issue of drug trafficking has once again dominated the focus of the policy towards Colombia. The central emphasis of a 2019 Atlantic Council report on bilateral relations between Colombia and the United States (Marczak 2019) is on issues like economic development (infrastructure in rural areas, formalization of work, modernization of the tax system), the strengthening of institu-

⁴ <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/02/04/fact-sheet-peace-colombia-new-era-partnership-between-united-states-and%20>

tions, the rule of law, the fight against illicit economies, and Colombia's role in the Venezuelan crisis. There is a brief section on the protection of social leaders and peacebuilding is mentioned several times, although it is mostly perceived as a result of economic development.

The latter could be expected to be the central axis of the new Biden administration, elected in 2020. It is assumed that Biden would seek a peaceful transformation of the country through economic development. Although he was one of the first promoters of Plan Colombia, in 2018 he asked President Duque not to forsake the peace process. For the first time, a US administration will have a Colombian as an advisor for Latin America, which fuels speculation about a prominent role for the country in hemispheric relations.

3. The OAS: peace and non-intervention

In January 2014, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) declared Latin America and the Caribbean as a “zone of peace” (CELAC 2014). The heads of government emphasized that this implies respect for international law, the peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in internal affairs, nuclear non-proliferation, and the promotion of a culture of peace. Multilateral cooperation in the region has a long tradition based on the inter-American conflict resolution system institutionalized in the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Bogotá Pact signed in 1948. Despite success in curbing and regulating some interstate conflicts, cooperation with regard to internal armed conflicts and everyday violence, dominant since the mid-twentieth century, has been much more limited (Kurtenbach 2018).

Colombia is an interesting case because the first agreement between the Colombian government and the OAS was signed in 2004 with the establishment of the Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia (MAPP-OEA). The Mission's mandate is to support the government's peace policies and to verify the “ceasefire and end of hostilities, the demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration of members of illegal

armed groups.”⁵ It is also established that the Mission will not intervene in internal affairs. This is a limited mandate that reflects the traditional peace-keeping policies of the United Nations and the OAS emphasis on peace as the termination of war. The MAPP-OEA’s first important task was to monitor the demobilization of paramilitary groups as of 2006 (Inksater and Jiménez 2016).

The extension of the contract in 2010 included the monitoring of the Justice and Peace process, and in 2011 the mandate was significantly expanded to include the accompaniment and monitoring of land restitution of the government of Juan Manuel Santos within the framework of the Victims Law (1448). This enabled the Mission to travel to the territories, especially to the most remote areas of the country, to monitor local dynamics. Under this mandate and with the financial support of European and US donors, the Mission developed an early warning methodology, reporting and documenting regularly. Direct contact and work with local actors, as in Perijá, Arauca, Chocó, and elsewhere, helps to amplify the voice of actors barely present in the national debate. The last extension of the contract was signed in 2017, for the Mission to stay until the end of 2021. Although the MAPP-OEA mandate includes compensation for the victims of forced displacement, it also reflects a limited vision of peace as the absence of war. Ultimately, it depends on the consent of governments, which reflects a rather minimal consensus.

4. Venezuela as an external actor in peace and South American geopolitics

Venezuela shares a border of more than 2,000 kilometers with Colombia, most of it hardly accessible. Deep ideological and political differences between the governments have complicated bilateral relations in recent decades. Accusations of interference in internal affairs and support for armed groups against the respective governments were made on both sides of the border. At the same time, the support of the Venezuelan and Cuban governments has been fundamental for the initiation and ac-

⁵ <https://www.mapp-oea.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/CONVENIO-INICIAL.pdf>

companiment of peace negotiations in Havana between the Colombian government and the FARC-EP and the dialogues with the ELN. The always complicated relationship between Colombia and Venezuela became more difficult with the inauguration of the Duque administration in 2018, the problems of the implementation of the Peace Agreement in Colombia, and the worsening of the Venezuelan crisis. Above all, both conflicts are entangled in border areas, reinforcing criminal economies and the cooperation of armed actors, which complicates the search for peaceful and democratic solutions on both sides (International Crisis Group 2020, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung 2020).

The increasing interference of actors from outside the region, such as Russia, Iran, China, or Turkey, does not facilitate conflict transformation and peacebuilding for three reasons: first, it reproduces the ideological conflicts of the Cold War; second, it consolidates the extractive development model, which is part of the structural problem in Colombia and Venezuela; and third, it allows governments to resort to a polarizing discourse, placing the “blame” on the undue interference of external actors. Peacebuilding in Colombia and Venezuela must be based on a dialogue about the future of bilateral relations and the region outside the old schemes and including their respective societies.



As we have seen, external actors contribute in different ways to peacebuilding in Colombia. Most of them undoubtedly emphasize the implementation of the Peace Agreement, and the international community is exerting increasing pressure on the Duque government to comply with the Agreement with the FARC. In 2020, the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights reiterated the urgency of stopping the massacres and murder of former combatants. In December 2020, the United Kingdom announced that it would ask the United Nations Security Council to urge the Colombian government to accelerate the implementation of the peace process.

The efforts of the international community are extremely important, especially with regard to the agreement on key issues for the constructive transformation of underlying conflicts such as the rural economy, the

Land Fund, and the full enforcement of human rights. At the same time, the support of external actors reflects the variety of conceptions of peace and related priorities. Limited perspectives focus on the process of demobilization and disarmament of the FARC-EP, while broader perspectives go further. This translates into alliances between actors with similar conceptions of peace, such as the Duque government and the Trump administration, and between international and Colombian human rights NGOs. The unstable and changing nature of these alliances is troublesome.

As in other international contexts, there seems to be a minimum of consensus around the termination of the war, while the Peace Agreement and its transformative articles are already part of the dispute between national and international actors and their alliances. Therefore, a key question for the immediate future will be whether the Duque government can change substantial issues of the Agreement like the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. And if this is the case, who could sanction it? Furthermore, the central problem is that, over time, the focus on peace as a process that transcends the Agreement with the FARC and its implementation will be lost.

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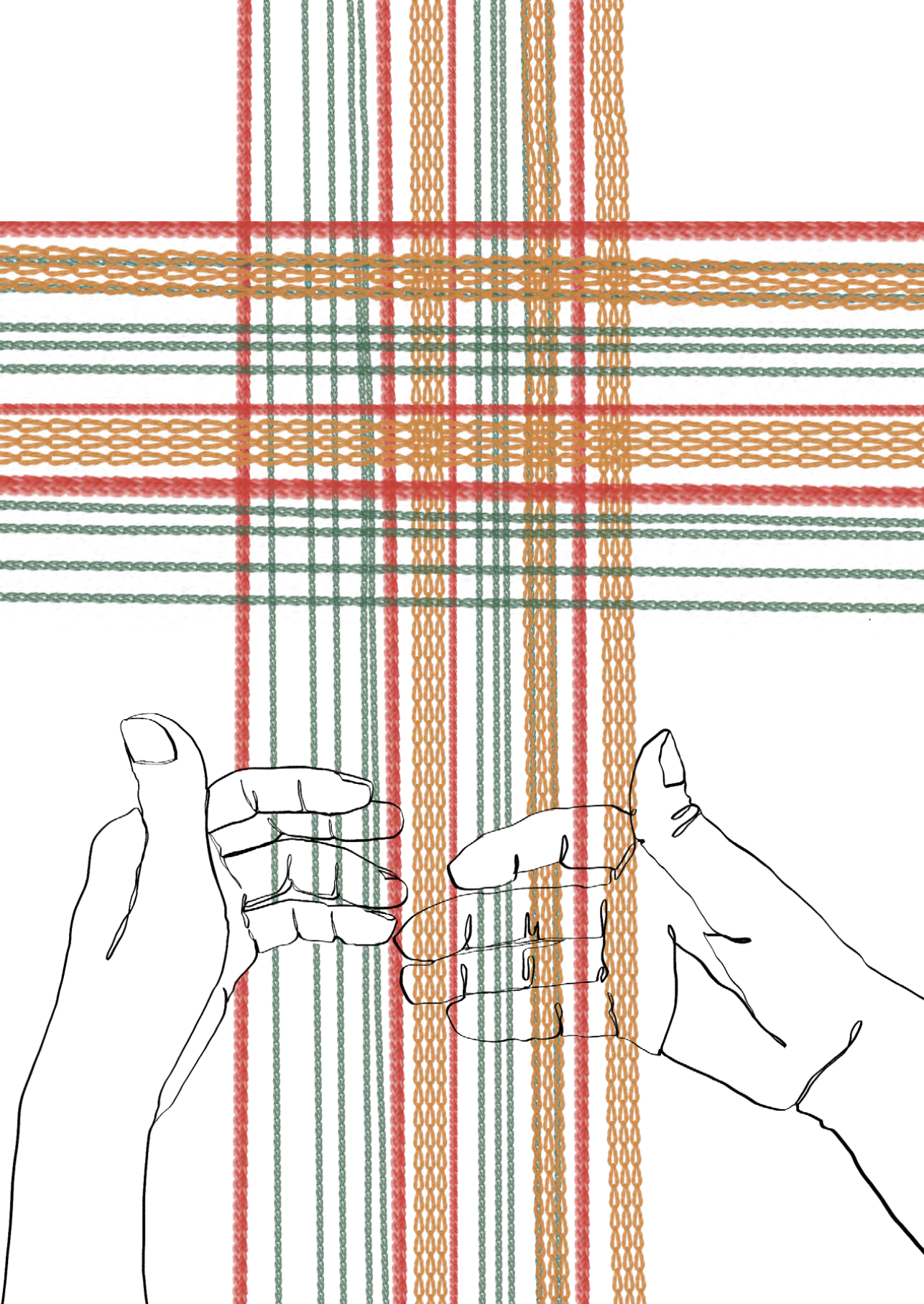
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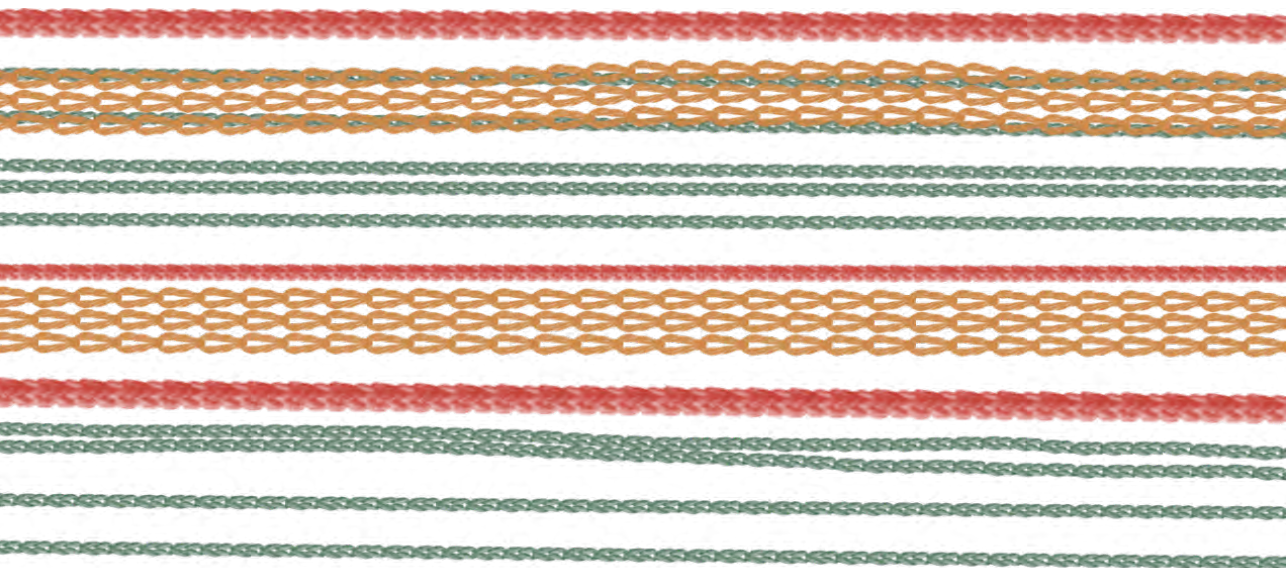






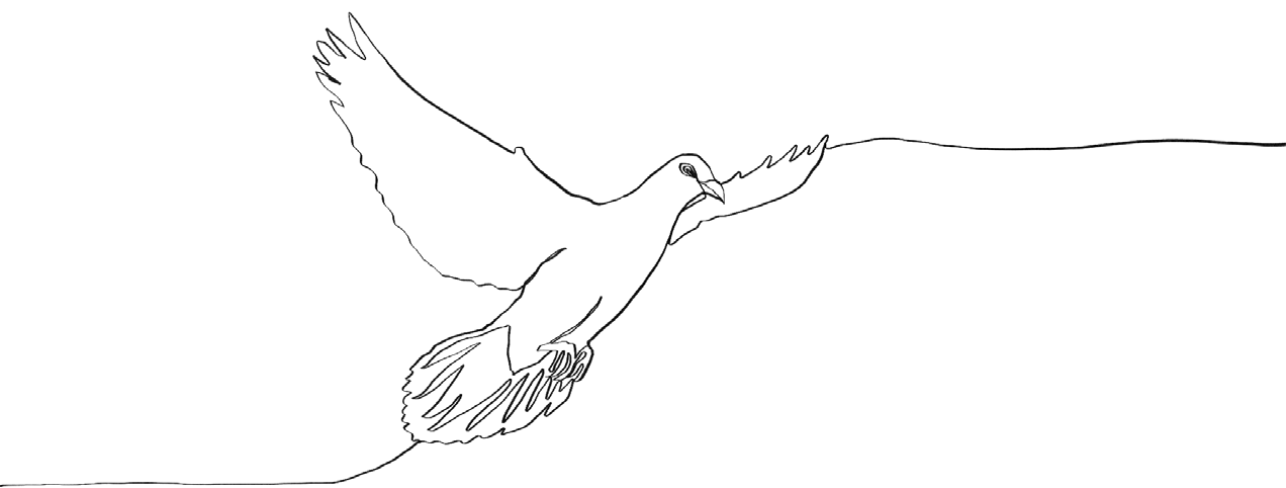
Boots and shoes after being cleaned after a day of work and school. Urabá, 1994.
Photo: Natalia Botero.





PART IV

Lessons Learnt



The Entanglements of Peace

Sabine Kurtenbach



The question that arises at the end of this complex research is how different elements interact (in the realms of structure and actors) and how to assess the Colombian experience from a comparative perspective. Many postwar societies find themselves in a situation described as “neither war nor peace”, “hybrid peace”, or “intermediate peace” (Suhrke and Berdal, 2012; Richards, 2005; Richmond and Mitchell, 2011). Although these authors emphasize the complexity of peace processes, these denominations tend to resonate widely as binary conceptions in the sphere of international peacebuilding policies. The complexity of the process is not denied here, but the need to define sequences and priorities, such as stabilizing or demobilizing before reforming and attacking structural causes, is often emphasized. On the ground, this usually does not work so well because international actors tend to leave for other theaters of war before structural changes are reached. Another element is the persistence and power of actors who resist these changes and only favor superficial and cosmetic reforms. The Count of Lampedusa referred to this as *Gattopardo* change, meaning that everything needs to change, so everything can stay the same.

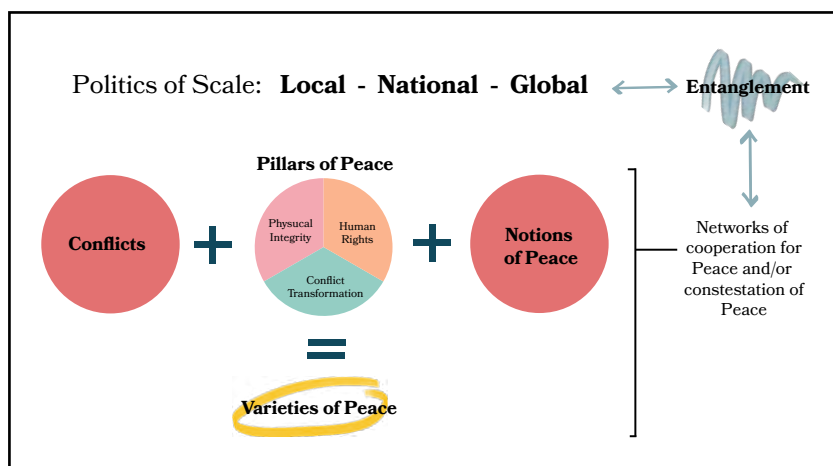
The study of Colombia and the comprehensive analysis of peace as process enables us to identify this conflictivity and the entanglements in peacebuilding. It is necessary to analyze these interweaving layers in space (local, national, global) and between actors who favor a broader peace and those who wish to maintain the status quo or reach a minimalist peace. In Colombia they are known as the big peace and the small peace.

At the beginning of this study we expected to find the greatest differences between the notions of peace of various sectors of the population. What we observe is different, and based on the analysis of several conflicts at the national and local levels, we identify the most significant entanglements of peace. Such entanglements have two dimensions: 1) they originate in the interaction between different territorial scales: local, national, global; and 2) by the existence of networks of actors with differing notions of the meaning of peace. This corresponds with very different views on the scope of the Peace Agreement and the need for change.

In the next few pages we will analyze these entanglements with regard to three central issues, although there could be more: access and use of land, political and social participation, and dealing with the atrocities of the past. While these issues are central to the Peace Agreement, they are at the same time much broader in scope. These conflicts are rooted in the Colombia's historical experience, thus adding a temporal dimension to their management and transformation. With this perspective, the Peace Agreement may be or could have been a critical juncture (Capoccia, 2016) for the transformation of these conflicts. At the same time, it must be borne in mind that peacebuilding and the reforms and changes it requires do not occur in a vacuum, but are shaped by previous historical experiences and depend on specific trajectories and contexts that define power relations locally, internationally, and regionally (Almohamad, Kirchschrager and Kurtenbach, 2020). This path dependence (Mahoney, 2000; Ansorg & Kurtenbach, 2017) tends to limit the possibilities for change despite existing windows of opportunity.

As we are interested in the variety of experiences and possibilities of peace as process, we will analyze these conflicts in their historical trajectory, their relation to the pillars of peace –physical integrity, human rights, institutions for their transformation– and the perceptions of peace. Figure 17 illustrates the factors analyzed in this research.

Figure 17. Factors analyzed in this research



Source: Author's elaboration.

1. Land access and use

The conflict over land access and use constitutes one of the great lines of Colombian history relevant for economic development, the political system, and society. The Colombian economy has been and is dominated by the extractivist model, according to which raw materials (from gold in colonial times to oil and mining today) are critical elements of this conflict between rural elites, on one hand, and peasant, Indigenous, and Afro-Colombian communities on the other (Palacios, 1979; González González, 2014). The main actors in these conflicts have been different non-state armed groups (among them various historical guerrilla groups and currently the National Liberation Army (ELN), the dissidents of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (Farc-EP), and criminal gangs, Bacrim). At the same time, these groups



have formed and continue forming networks with local and national political elites. A much-debated example is the so-called parapolitics in the first decade of the millennium (Duncan, 2005).¹

From the perspective of the pillars of peace, different violations of the right to physical integrity of various sectors of the population can be verified in this conflict. More than nine million Colombians were registered in the Single Registry of Victims. In the years after the Agreement was signed the number of victims decreased, but the figure of victimized people remained high. Between 2017 and 2019, 354,316 people were affected². Some have been victims of different forms of violence, among which homicides and forced displacement stand out. Above all, displacement is clearly related to land access and use. The same is true for a good part of the murder of leaders and human rights defenders, many of whom struggle for individual or collective rights to land. Another form of physical violence for control of land can be observed in the armed struggle between non-state armed groups. In this case, the aim is to control production or strategic corridors for commercialization in the illegal economy: drugs, human trafficking, illegal mining, timber, among others.

In regions with disputes for control and use of land, the violation of individual and collective human rights is more serious than in other parts of the country. Civil rights such as free elections and the right to free expression are violated much more often in these contexts. Suffice it to look at the electoral risk maps (Misión de Observación Electoral, 2019) and maps of the murder of social leaders and human rights defenders, which affect, above all, people who struggle for the rights of peasants, Indigenous, and Afro-Colombian communities (Indepaz, 2020). The institutions designated for the constructive transformation of conflicts—be it the central State, Community Action Boards, or traditional authorities—are usually part of this conflictivity.

¹ In 2006, a scandal broke out as links between some politicians and the paramilitary groups were revealed. Several political leaders and state officials benefitted from this alliance. In turn, some of them diverted public funds to create or finance these organizations (Translator's note).

² <https://cifras.unidadvictimas.gov.co/Home/Vigencia>

Two examples illustrate the complexity and difficulties of the constructive transformation of the conflict over land. Back in 2011, the Colombian Congress approved the Victims and Land Restitution Law (Law 1448), which was designated as a mechanism to restitute land and/or compensate the displaced. The first problem is that this is and has been a very slow process, among other reasons because of the lack of a land registry and formal titles for many displaced persons. Second, violence has been exercised (or exercised once again) against those who claimed and received titles to the original or new land (Comisión Colombiana de Juristas et al., 2019). The second example refers to coca cultivation.

According to the Peace Agreement, eradication was to be manual, voluntary, and accompanied by financial and technical assistance, projects of social participation, and food support during a transitional period of two years. The mechanism of transformation was the Comprehensive National Program for the Substitution of Illicit Crops (PNIS), which was joined by 130,000 families in the first year (Vélez-Torres and Lugo-Vivas, 2021). According to UNODC monitoring reports (2019), initially this process was relatively successful, in terms of eradication and support to families. When the government of President Iván Duque took office (August 7, 2018), spraying became once again a priority of the drug policy, which threatened the production of legal crops and food. The families and communities that signed eradication agreements under the PNIS were abandoned on the grounds that no funds were available to finance the program and that the cultivated area had increased. But the truth is that underlying the conflict over drug policies of the governments of presidents Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018) and Iván Duque are the unresolved and very violent historic structural conflicts between large landowners who favor the extractive model (livestock, African palm, mining, oil, among others) and the small farmers who try to survive on subsistence products. The changes envisaged with the so-called agrarian reform in the Peace Agreement could have possibly improved the life prospects of some former combatants and victims, but they did not have a general transformative scope (Gutiérrez Sanín and Marín Jaramillo, 2018).

Although figures concerning the implementation of the Peace Agreement are part of the political conflict, there is no doubt that the pace of implementation of the land issue is and has been very slow. At the same

time, political violence and the violation of human rights of actors with a transformative agenda within and beyond the Peace Agreement have increased in recent years. So the question that must be asked is: at what point does the conflict over land become entangled? According to our analytical perspective, at least two relevant issues can be identified in which different interests, logics, and power resources become entangled and overlap:

- The economic interests of actors that benefit from the extractive model (oil and legal mining, among others) collide with legal standards (national and international) such as Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization (ILO) and Colombian standards for its implementation. This creates conflicts between different actors and their networks at and across different levels. At the local level, Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities struggle to preserve the use and control of their lands (especially communal); at the national level, the commercial elites and the Colombian state take control of the royalties (which are partly distributed to other regions). National and international NGOs support the rights of communities just as global companies cooperate with groups that support extractivism. The corresponding struggles take place in the courts and can generate corruption and selective violence and/or repression. According to the integral peace perspective, they should be transformed through the political system, by means of consensus between different actors, and through the judicial system and the rule of law.
- Conflicts related to the illegal economy (cultivation, production, and commercialization of drugs, illegal mining, human trafficking, timber, animals, among others) are more complicated for three reasons: First, the characteristic of illegality indicates that the law and the rule of law have failed to operate and have been replaced by corruption and violence. Second, the focus on the repression and criminalization of the lowest hierarchical level of organized and unorganized crime, and much less on the local as well as national and international powers that support them, which occurs in Colombia and other regions of the world. Third, there is a vast deficit in crime prevention, which would require a different approach in terms of social and employment policies in

rural and urban areas, aimed at facilitating viable and dignified prospects for marginalized sectors such as youth.

Supporters of the extractive model (at the local, national, and international levels) understand peace as the absence of war, which allows maintaining the social, political, and economic status quo under conditions of disarmament of the former FARC-EP guerrilla. At the same time, these sectors criminalize actors of change and opposition to this societal model and legitimize the use of repression against them, as evidenced by the government's reaction to the peaceful protests of the social Minga in 2019. There was first a process of verbal escalation claiming that the Minga was infiltrated by illegal armed groups, and later several deaths occurred in the confrontation with ESMAD (González Posso, 2019). This minimalist vision of peace collides with the more ambitious conceptions of peasant, Indigenous, and Afro-Colombian communities, who view peace as a process of guaranteeing their historical rights and increasing well-being. For them "peace is understood from a perspective that transcends the protection of physical integrity, rather it extends to achieving social well-being" (Buenaventura Report). A similar argument appears in the Santander de Quilichao study:

[There is] a persistent narrative among Afro and Indigenous leaders in the region with regard to the impact that peace can have at the regional level, expressed in "may peace not take away the little that the war left behind." In the case of Santander de Quilichao and Northern Cauca, this is related to how peace achieved at the local level can accentuate the continuity of extractive logics of legal actors (logging and mining companies) and illegal armed actors that seek to capture illegal income associated with illicit crops and gold mining (Santander de Quilichao Report).

The untangling and constructive transformation of conflicts over land access and use is essential to provide an economic base for peace. Although Colombia defines itself as an urban country and the government claims a will to close the gaps, the problem cannot be solved with neoliberal recipes or economic growth based on the current model and a tax system that generates few resources for the state and even less for active social policies. Breaking the dynamics of violence is no more and no less a question of respecting the rights of communities and providing

legal prospects and decent employment for the rural population. Without these structural transformations, progress in the legal recognition of collective rights and the reduction of violence in recent decades will not be sustainable.

2. Expanding social and political participation

The second historic conflict in Colombia concerns political and social participation and has generated several cycles of political violence and initiatives for greater inclusion. Although for decades, these initiatives were limited to the intra-elite level, the 1991 Constitution opened significant spaces for citizen participation, and the 2016 Agreement further expanded the citizenship of marginalized sectors. At the end of La Violencia in 1958, the National Front formalized a bipartisan elite agreement that divided all political posts between the traditional parties, the Liberal and the Conservative. Elections in this context were only useful in terms of the distribution of influence of different tendencies within the parties. This power-sharing system plunged into a crisis as of 1970 (Dix, 1980). The Popular National Alliance (Anapo), a party founded by former General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, alleged that there was a fraud and claimed to have won the elections. Three years later, the guerrilla April 19 Movement (M-19) was formed, which operated initially in the cities and whose spectacular actions, like the theft of Simón Bolívar's sword, positioned the war in Colombia in the main pages of the national and international media.

In the following years, the violence of different guerrilla groups demanding greater political participation increased in the cities and the countryside. In the context of peace talks, there were at least two initiatives of political reform in this regard. It is important to remember them because they illustrate that the path of institutional reforms is never linear and less so in contexts of violence (Kurtenbach, 2017). The first important reform was the decentralization policy of the Belisario Betancur government (1982-1986), which introduced the direct election of mayors, governors, municipal councils, and departmental assemblies. This process of decentralization had ambivalent effects: on

the one hand, new parties such as the Patriotic Union (UP) –founded by a broad coalition of demobilized FARC ex-combatants, the Communist Party, and sectors of civil society–, broadened the political spectrum. In March 1986, a significant number of UP members were elected as senators, representatives, mayors, and councilors. In May of the same year, its presidential candidate, Jaime Pardo Leal, received 4.5% of the votes. But success also met violent resistance, with the murder and disappearance of more than 4000 activists, candidates, and members of the UP, among them the presidential candidates Jaime Pardo Leal in 1987 and Bernardo Jaramillo in 1990. The Center of Historical Memory (Melo Moreno and Centro de Memoria Histórica (Colombia), 2018) refers to these crimes as genocide. To this day, they remain unpunished.

The second main mechanism to expand political and social participation was the elaboration and promulgation of a new political Constitution in 1991. The National Constituent Assembly was the result of the mobilization of civil society (the Seventh Ballot)³ and a miscalculation of the traditional elites, which did not mobilize their bases. As a result, a third of the members of the Assembly belonged to the party that emerged from the demobilization of M-19 and many others to reformist sectors of the traditional parties. Upon promulgation, the Constitution was described as one of the most progressive in the world, and despite much criticism, it undoubtedly opened significant spaces for political participation and the formal guarantee of individual and collective human rights. Furthermore, the Constitution can also be understood as the

³ On 11 March 1990, Colombians went to the polls to elect senators, representatives, Departmental Assemblies, City Councils, Local Administrative Boards, and mayors. Taking advantage of these elections, a group of students proposed to add an extra ballot (the Seventh Ballot) to seek a new social contract, look for alternatives to solve the crisis of violence in the country, and promote the creation of a Constituent Assembly in charge of drafting a new Constitution (Translator's note).

design of a conflict transformation mechanism: “With the approval of the new Constitution, a partnership agreement was formalized to build a social state under the rule of law that would enable the peaceful processing of social and political conflicts” (González Posso, 2012: 13).

But, once again, history did not develop in linear fashion, and even today the Constitution and its formalized guarantees of human rights face resistance and efforts to reduce them. From the perspective of the three pillars of peace, the indicators of this resistance are related to the high levels of direct violence in the context of local elections (Misión de Observación Electoral, 2019) and against human rights defenders and leaders in general (Indepaz, 2020). Concerning the guarantee of collective human rights, an important example related to the conflict over land (see above) is the failure to apply the figure of prior consultation of Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization.

In the context of the Peace Agreement, three conflicts stand out regarding the political and social participation of previously marginalized actors:

- The political participation of FARC-EP ex-combatants, who in 2017 founded a political party with the same acronym FARC as Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común (Alternative Revolutionary Force of the Commons), renamed Comunes in January 2021.
- The Agreement proposed the creation of “special constituencies for peace” to increase the possibilities of articulation and representation of social organizations (including victims) with sixteen seats in the House of Representatives for areas most affected by the conflict.
- The fierce resistance of traditional, religious, and right-wing sectors to social liberalization and the recognition of the same rights for women and other stigmatized groups such as LGBT sectors.

Point 2 of the Peace Agreement contains a series of proposals for comprehensive political reform, including measures to guarantee the political participation of political parties and social organizations. The political representation of demobilized ex-combatants is guaranteed with

a minimum of five senators and five representatives during two constitutional periods (2018-2026), without the need for the party to, among other requirements, reach the threshold of votes determined by electoral legislation. This regulation is similar to the rules for the inclusion of the Indigenous population formulated in the Constitution. The idea of special seats for peace had the same time frame.

FARC's privileged participation generated and continues to generate much resistance from right-wing sectors in Colombia, who argue that the government of Juan Manuel Santos "handed over" the country to FARC and that the Agreement benefits violent actors (González, 2017). Surveys show that the majority of the population does not trust FARC or opposes its political participation (García-Sánchez and Carlin, 2020; UNDP and PRIO, 2020). With the exception of isolated cases, the results in the 2018 national elections and the 2019 municipal elections reflect this lack of support. FARC's participation in Congress continues to be troublesome, despite the fact that its senators and representatives do a serious job. University of Los Andes Political scientist Angélica Rettberg argues that the party "seeks allies, avoids confrontation in the debates, and seems to have understood that what is at stake in the two legislative periods is the possibility of alliances for the future, more than concrete achievements in the present."⁴ Demobilized ex-combatants have quite a different view. They feel stigmatized and claim that the Colombian government has not complied with the Agreement while FARC has done so (Chapter 5).

The project of special constituencies for peace was never approved, first due to the lack of quorum in the Senate and up to the present because of the unwillingness of the ruling elites to include the marginalized population of the country. Again, it was the courts that intervened. At the end of May 2021, the constitutional court agreed to the creation of eight special constituencies starting with the election in 2022 in the zones most affected by the violence. A key issue concerning the extension of political participation is related to the physical safety of ex-combatants and social leaders. The United Nations report of December 29, 2020, documents 248 murders of ex-combatants since the signing of

⁴ *El Tiempo*. 4 de octubre de 2019. <https://www.eltiempo.com/politica/congreso/balance-del-partido-farc-en-el-congreso-de-la-republica-419740>

the Agreement (73 of them in 2020), plus 55 attempted murders and 20 disappearances.⁵ This violence endangers the political and social participation as well as the human rights of ex-combatants and the communities where they live. At the same time, it can be interpreted as an attempt to destroy an important mechanism for transforming the conflict from bullets to ballots.

Another important conflict concerns the empowerment of marginalized groups such as women, Indigenous people, Afro-Colombians, and the LGTB community. The Peace Agreement is to date the most comprehensive regarding gender rights and the LGTB population. This significant progress can be understood as a process of co-construction between social changes like urbanization and the growth of the middle classes and the organization of women and LGTB groups in the context of violence (Oettler, 2019). At the same time, the rejection of the Peace Agreement in the plebiscite was nurtured by conservative and religious values concerning these issues, criticizing, for example, the ill named “gender ideology”. The negative result of the plebiscite was also supported by rejection the same year of legislation in favor of the legality of same-sex marriage. This cultural and identity conflict did not end. While the participation of women has made some progress with the parity law (see Chapter 11), LGTB communities still have a long way to go (see Chapter 14).

The most important entanglements concerning citizenship issues occur at all levels, especially between actors with a traditional and hierarchical image of the world, and those in favor of cultural diversity and liberal values. Similar conflicts can be observed throughout the region and the world with networks that cut across territorial differentiation between the local, the national, and the global. The constructive transformation of these conflicts requires recognition of the citizenship of each and every one and the guarantee of human rights to enable the exercise of citizenship.

⁵ https://colombia.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/sp_n2037704.pdf

3. Confronting the atrocities of war

The third macro conflict concerns a very complex issue in societies that have experienced violence – be it after a war, genocidal violence, or authoritarian regimes–. The question is: how to confront the violent past? Addressing the atrocities of war and transitional justice enables us to illustrate the way interactions between the past and the present can restrict peacebuilding. Although the issue is usually limited to forms of violence considered “political”, the dividing line between political and “criminal” forms of violence is not clear (Barnes, 2017) and emphasizing one or the other has political implications. Negotiations with criminals usually do not take place formally but behind the scenes.

Colombia is a paradigmatic case to observe the changing discourses of identification of different armed actors as criminal or political (Kurtenbach, 2015). This is relevant for the FARC-EP, which was characterized as a criminal actor (narco-terrorists) after the failed peace process of the Pastrana administration (1998-2002). But the issue can also be investigated with regard to paramilitary groups, which began as private armies of large landowners and developed a political agenda as they sought to negotiate with the Uribe government (2002-2010).

Despite progress in international law on crimes against humanity and the creation of the International Criminal Court (ICC) to punish them, dealing with the atrocities of the past remains one of the most contentious issues around the world. In recent decades we have witnessed the emergence of a number of national and local mechanisms, such as truth commissions or the traditional Gacaca courts of Rwanda, based on local community processes. Despite its importance, the accountability of violent actors in peace accord contexts has rarely occurred and remains highly contentious (Sriram, 2017). Even in cases of military victory, confronting violence is a long-running public debate, as illustrated by the examples of Spain or Germany. But transitional justice not only looks back in time, it also has an essential role for the future. Acknowledging the suffering of victims and holding the perpetrators accountable are important signals that violence is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in the future. With this perspective, transitional justice processes can be interpreted as a form of prevention of violence. At the same time,

the recognition of responsibilities is a necessary basis for reconciliation and the establishment of trust between former enemies.

Colombia is an interesting case. For much of its history, elites have put an end to violence and civil wars through “gentlemen’s agreements” and elite pacts that included amnesties and allowed the defeated faction to continue participating in national politics. With the signing of the ICC treaty, this was no longer possible, as crimes against humanity cannot be amnestied. Therefore, it was necessary to implement new solutions. In the process of demobilization of the paramilitary forces between 2003 and 2006 sentences were reduced in exchange for truth. A similar mechanism, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP), was developed in the 2016 Peace Agreement. Both processes were very controversial: while the first was criticized by local, national, and international human rights organizations backed by some European governments, the current mechanism is attacked by the right-wing government of Iván Duque and regional elites who have tried to dismantle it, so far unsuccessfully.

After all, at the heart of the conflict over past atrocities is the power to design the historical narrative. Who were the perpetrators and the victims? How can violence be legitimized or delegitimized? Is there a basis for reconciliation? History is often written by the winners on the battlefield or in politics. But in the political conditions of a democracy (even if flawed) and with modern and digital communication technologies, this is no longer possible.

The relation with the three pillars of peace is obvious: physical integrity is a right that must be guaranteed at all levels and its violation must be sanctioned. Transitional justice or, in the Colombian case, the JEP, does not promote impunity, but reduces sentences provided that (and only provided that) the perpetrators contribute to the search for the truth.

During 2021, the JEP will issue the first sentences in a series of macro cases and it is important that the parties accept and comply with them. Otherwise, they will have to confront the normal judicial system with probably much higher penalties. The JEP’s rulings will be painful for everyone but they can be a crucial element in making peace more than the absence of open warfare and helping to reduce and prevent other

forms of violence. If this is accomplished, Colombia would enter global history as an important example.

The issue of human rights is closely linked to physical integrity because the full exercise of these rights depends on it. The work of the JEP can have important preventive consequences in this regard. The murder of human rights defenders is an egregious example of the damage caused by violence, regardless of the identity of the perpetrators. The discourse of part of the public opinion, according to which the current violence is related to actors of the criminal economy, ignores that these actors have formal and informal allies in the political and legal economy of the country. Furthermore, it is no accident that the victims of this violence are people who work for reform as well as social and political change. The recognition of these civil and peaceful claims must be the basis for the protection of these defenders, to avoid a new cycle of violence, and to contribute to the constructive transformation of conflicts.

Independent formal and informal institutions with universal rules are the institutional basis for conflict transformation. Colombia made great strides in judicial independence with the 1991 Constitution, but there are efforts to politicize the justice system by placing political supporters and friends in top positions. The consequences of this can be seen throughout the region and hopefully Colombia will not go down this path.

The entanglements in dealing with past and current atrocities occur on different levels. At the local and national levels, there are victims and perpetrators (direct and indirect) from all political sides. Recognizing this is a difficult but necessary process to learn the lessons of the past and not make the same mistakes once again. In this sense, the emphasis of the government of Juan Manuel Santos on “non-repetition” and the victims has been farsighted. In order not to repeat history, the underlying conflicts must be transformed.

The entanglements of peace involve many issues and actors. From an integral peacebuilding perspective, the problem is not the existence of actors who oppose profound changes. The problem is that with their discourse some of them legitimize, generate, or use violence for their political, economic, and social ends. Identifying and finding possibili-

ties to untie these entanglements in a constructive (which is different from consensual) and non-violent way must be a fundamental milestone in the search for peace.

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Where are we now and where do we go from here in peacebuilding in Colombia?

Kristina Birke Daniels y Sabine Kurtenbach



This study offers relevant elements for peacebuilding in Colombia. It shows that variation in peacebuilding at the local level is contingent upon the presence and combinations of structural factors like illegal economies, armed actors, and Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities. The central argument—shared by Colombian colleagues like Fernán González (2020) and Francisco Gutiérrez Sanín (2020)—is that peacebuilding should not and cannot be reduced to the Peace Agreement between the government and the FARC and its implementation. The Agreement provides a significant window of opportunity to make meaningful changes that may prevent a relapse into war. However, the lack of implementation of the transformative parts of all points of the Agreement (rural, justice, political reform) is closing that window. Four hazardous trends for the Peace Agreement and the broader peacebuilding process can be observed:

1. The active presence of violent actors—such as the ELN, FARC dissidents, paramilitaries, national and international organized crime actors sometimes called BACRIM—that occupied regions abandoned by the former FARC guerrilla. Whatever the reason, the Colombian state has not been able to prevent this situation, and its only answer to deal with the problem has been repression.

2. The numerous murders of human rights defenders, social leaders, and FARC ex-combatants have serious consequences at different levels: i) this type of violence shatters the already low level of trust in the possibility of change; ii) the murders endanger and reduce the space for social and political action by actors of civil society and the political system to fulfill their role advocating reform and non-violent change; iii) renewed massacres and recruitment of young people reactivate the traumas of war in the most vulnerable sectors of the country.
3. The economic and social consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic increase structural inequality. At the same time, the pandemic serves as a pretext for the government to slow down even further the implementation of the peace agreement, restrict human rights, and criminalize and repress the constant wave of protests taking place since 2019 with an increase in police violence in urban settings in recent years.
4. The government's policy of neglecting or delaying the implementation of the Agreement, especially its most structural issues, and its repressive reaction to related protests delegitimize democracy as a political system. Early on, the government made it clear that peace was not a priority and that it would choose "legality" and the classic recipes for economic growth based on the extractivist model.

In this context, Colombia runs the risk of remaining in a situation that, although not a return to war, is far from transcending peace as the absence of war. This could lead to a "new cycle of war" (Gutiérrez Sanín 2020). The history of Colombia and Robert Karl's work on "forgotten peace" (2017) are reminders that historic peacebuilding opportunities can be lost. Karl emphasizes that although the search for peace has to be linked to a process of memory at different levels (local, regional, national) to open possibilities for transformation, it also creates limitations (Karl 2017, 2). The system of shared power between the Liberal and the Conservative parties curbed partisan violence but excluded the autonomous participation of marginalized rural sectors and new emerging urban forces. These limitations reproduced the violence and transferred it from the rural areas to the cities. He attributes the point of inflection to

a combination of factors: the loss of emphasis on reform in rural areas, the redefinition of violence as “criminal” and no longer political (bandits and brigands), and the “military pacification” between 1962 and 1964. Many of these processes resonate with today’s state of affairs.

But Colombia also has a significant historical experience of peacebuilding. The decentralization of the political system promoted by the Belisario Betancur government (1982-86) and the new Constitution of 1991 were significant steps in this direction. These reforms are essential for transformational processes, political change, and increased inclusion by expanding the social contract. But they are neither linear nor necessarily able to prevent resistance and unintended consequences. The wave of violence against human rights defenders, social leaders, and ex-combatants can also be viewed as a political attempt to intimidate and avoid profound changes in Colombia’s political system and society. Historical antecedents of the current violence are the mass murder of members of the Patriotic Union party in the 1980s and 1990s and the assassination of leaders of the former M-19 guerrilla.

As in other parts of the world, peacebuilding in Colombia implies much more than a Peace Agreement and its implementation –although these play a key role, especially if they design a pathway for a profound process of transformation, as in the Colombian case. Three tasks are central to the integral conception of peacebuilding:

- Reduce violence through the rule of law instead of militarization. It is necessary to maintain and expand the independence of the judicial system so that no one is above the law. The JEP also plays an important role because it sanctions the atrocities of the war, as evidenced by the first ruling against the FARC. Accepting these judgments is hard, and we are yet to see the reaction of different actors. The next macro case about “false positives” will evidence the government and the military’s position.
- Guarantee individual and collective human rights. It must be recognized that all human rights are essential and that freedom of expression and an independent media with a pluralistic background are as important as transparent, free, and general elections. The same is true for collective rights that from the perspective of

developed countries and the individualistic neoliberal approach are often underestimated. The guarantee of human rights is the foundation of modern democracy.

- Transform underlying conflicts. As explained at the beginning of this study, conflicts are not a problem because they exist at all levels in every society. Therefore, the term post-conflict is misleading because it suggests a societal harmony that does not exist and never was. What is important is the constructive and non-violent transformation of interpersonal and intergroup conflicts. Formal and informal institutions for this purpose exist at different levels. At the same time, it is necessary to acknowledge these conflicts and trust the respective institutions.

Good faith, patience, and, above all, a clear peacebuilding compass are needed to carry out these tasks. Experiences from other parts of the world evidence that hypothetically extensive and initially successful peace processes, such as the Salvadoran or Guatemalan, can fail without relapsing into war (Kurtenbach 2013; 2017). In these cases, compliance with the peace accords concerning the demobilization of guerrilla groups, the documentation of violent atrocities, and the introduction of elections was only partial. Nothing was accomplished concerning the structural conflicts of recognizing indigenous peoples in Guatemala and reducing inequality in Guatemala and El Salvador. Early on, the initial dynamics of peace were lost and other policies were emphasized. Today these countries are experiencing a decline in levels of democracy and guarantee of human rights and high levels of violence.

Colombia must learn from these experiences and address structural problems for peacebuilding beyond the implementation of the Agreement signed in 2016. Thematically (see chapters 5 to 9) these reforms should focus on changing socio-economic development and security policies and strengthening the rule of law and its social institutions.

The country faces the challenge of developing a new economic model to reduce inequalities and generate employment in urban and rural areas. This will not be possible with the mantra of economic growth under the current model based on the extraction of natural resources, sustained by economic sectors with little added value and a generally

small workforce, particularly as regards women. The new model must reduce poverty and inequality, be socially fair and environmentally sustainable. With these premises, the development model will cease to be a breeding ground for different kinds of violence.

Peace policies and the policies of socio-economic development in the territories must be systematically interconnected. For example, prioritizing land distribution and comprehensive rural reform for rural women could reinforce the progress made concerning decent work for this population. The same links exist between the policy of illicit crop substitution, combatting drug trafficking, and compensation for victims. Combining these policies could benefit women –especially mothers heads of household–, improve opportunities to develop their economic lives, and enhance their families’ well-being. This would, for example, provide educational options for children, who could then avoid recruitment into armed groups, often their only option, apart from marrying in some regions.

The development model will also have to be in line with an environmental policy focused on nature preservation and climate change mitigation. From this perspective, environmental problems demand comprehensive and complex solutions, not just security strategies designed from the government’s viewpoint concerning the national interest. At present, the “Future Zones” approach prioritizes stabilization over development and impairs a development policy based on plans elaborated with community participation in the PDETs. At the same time, prioritizing the stability of the status quo reproduces or extends the militarization of the territories most affected by the war.

The second important issue for peacebuilding, not explicitly included in the Agreement, is to accept that Colombia needs a comprehensive security sector reform. The first step of this reform must be the institutional separation of the police and the military forces and a clear redefinition of their mandates (public security for the police and border security for the military forces). From a peacebuilding perspective, the doctrine of the internal enemy, which still permeates the security sector, is not beneficial, and it is essential to redefine the role of the military in a democratic society. It is also necessary to strengthen political control and establish a system that allows transparent accountability of the security

sector, especially in Congress. Equally important is a serious public debate on military criminal justice and its relation to ordinary justice. For peacebuilding, security policies aimed at preventing violence must follow an inclusive and sustainable approach. Security is a public good that must be accessible to all citizens regardless of territory, income, class, ethnicity, sex, or political affiliation.

Another pending issue on the security agenda concerns armed actors such as the ELN and national and international criminal organizations. The ELN's intransigence and the lack of political will of the current government frustrated initiatives to reach an agreement with this organization. The struggle against other non-state armed actors should be based on (i) an emphasis on the rule of law instead of military repression; (ii) a preventative approach, the provision of legal life prospects, and decent work for the social inclusion of youth and other traditionally marginalized groups.

The third pillar of reforms needed for peacebuilding is strengthening institutions of the social state of law, which implies guaranteeing sufficient state financing through a progressive, equitable, and efficient tax system, as required by the 1991 Constitution. Strengthening the social state of law is also necessary to increase trust in the government and other state institutions. The Latinobarómetro reports (<https://www.latinobarometro.org/latOnline.jsp>) indicate that around 75% of the respondents have little or no trust in government, parliament, and the judiciary (year 2018). This could be changed through public policies to guarantee the collective protection of social leaders and reduce the repression of social protest.

These profound reforms require the efforts and support of several internal and external actors. First, a political coalition or, at a minimum, a political pact in favor of these changes from a perspective of peacebuilding in Congress and at the local level. The support and protection of civil society actors are equally important to strengthen the existing national consensus between sectors of Colombian civil society and political actors, presently in opposition. But this dynamic needs to be translated into a new "political pact for peace". There is a risk that the presumably most urgent needs of the pandemic will dominate the electoral agenda, bypassing the crucial connection between transforming the structural

causes of violence, among them, for example, inequality, and the path of economic and social reconstruction to overcome the devastating socio-economic effects of the pandemic.

These changes also need to include the youth. Despite United Nations resolution 2250 (Youth, Peace, and Security), unanimously adopted in 2015, in Colombia, there was no formal effort to include young people in the Havana dialogues or the implementation of the Agreement. The consequences of the pandemic make this inclusion even more urgent because the losses in education will translate into a decrease in the possibilities of finding decent work. Renewed forced recruitment of marginalized youth is a red flag. Peacebuilding is also based on the empowerment of women beyond the catalog of “gender measures” within the agreement, implementing feminist perspectives on peace. This empowerment is achieved with the support of transformative measures within society that question the traditional roles of men and women and try to develop notions of masculinity disconnected from militarization and war.

Even if these measures were taken seriously and implemented, peacebuilding in Colombia does not occur in a vacuum. At least one more dimension complicates the task. Within the Andean region, Colombia’s history, economy, and politics are closely tied to Venezuela, the neighboring country. This has implications for the stability and security of the region as a whole. Vicinity is important for peacebuilding (Almohamad, Kirchsclager, and Kurtenbach 2020). The two countries share multiple interconnected elements between criminal economies, armed actors like the ELN operating on both sides of the border becoming a binational actor, the millions of refugees and migrants, and the functionalization of conflicts by both governments at the bilateral and regional levels. Therefore, peacebuilding in Colombia and the peaceful transformation of the Venezuelan crisis are mutually dependent (Birke Daniels, Stollreiter, Wegner 2021). Colombian armed groups within Venezuela use the territory as a safe haven but respond to the demands and support from the Maduro regime as well. The ELN is one of the actors competing in the “Orinoco Mining Arc” for control of the gold mines and communities in the region. These criminal economies provide funds to the Nicolás Maduro regime. “Far from the centers of power in Venezuela, where the struggle to decide the country’s political future is taking

place, the vast tropical regions to the south are exposed to serious risks of escalation of the conflict” (International Crisis Group 2019).

The Venezuelan crisis also illustrates the geopolitical dimension of peacebuilding in the region. The direct and indirect interference of actors like the United States, Russia, Turkey, and China broke regional integration. In consequence, bilateral, regional, and international cooperation is essential for peacebuilding in Colombia and Venezuela. Interesting civil society initiatives in this direction already taking place on the border can serve as a basis for cooperation policies.

In a virtual talk organized by the Catalan Institute of Peace (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7cpMZTV80XU>; 4 March 2021), John Paul Lederach developed the image of the spider web for peacebuilding. The cobweb is a fragile, multidimensional structure with broad participation and the ability to reconstruct broken parts. The historical experiences of peacebuilding have always been fragile, conflictive, with progress, like the 1991 Constitution, and setbacks, like violence against ex-combatants (from the Patriotic Union to the M-19 and the FARC - today Communes Party), social leaders, and human rights defenders. The central challenge is to protect, expand, and connect progress while overcoming setbacks and marginalizing actors that resist peacebuilding. The entanglements of peace analyzed in this book must be transformed into consensus-building processes around peace, empowering civil actors.

At the beginning of 2021, the Observatory of Democracy of Universidad de los Andes published an opinion study entitled “Colombia 2020, un país en medio de la pandemia” (“Colombia 2020, a country amid the pandemic”). Probing the opinion of Colombians, it concluded that for the first time a majority of them support the Peace Agreement. According to the study, support has increased 10% since the referendum was lost. Is this a sign that some of the complex entanglements are unraveling? The question will probably be completely answered a few years from now, but the survey on conceptions of peace presented here is a sign of hope in this respect. Peacebuilding is a continuous process; what is important is to maintain momentum and not lose the north.

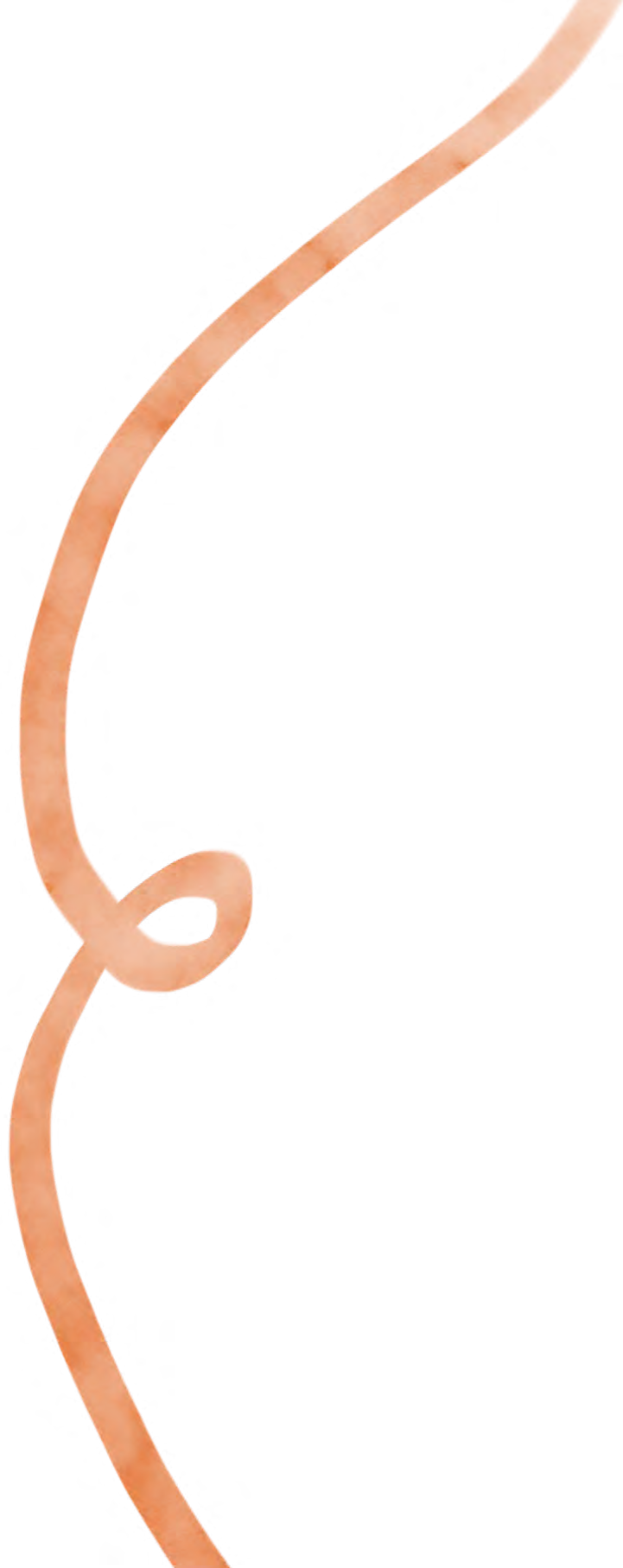
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Family in San Francisco, department of Antioquia, walks back to their home in the countryside, with white flags calling for their lives to be spared. San Francisco, 2000. Photo: Natalia Botero.



Profile of people and organizations

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Caribe Afirmativo is a civil organization working on joint agendas of research, training, counseling, defense, access to justice, mobilization, and promotion of human rights of the LGBTI community. Based on community work, it addresses in a transversal perspective post-conflict, peacebuilding, and human mobility for people with diverse sexual orientations, identities, and gender expressions in different sub-regions of the country. Its main focus of action is strengthening social integration and generating leadership capacity within the LGBTI community, with emphasis on lesbian, bisexual, and trans women, in the political agendas of the post-conflict environment, the investigation of the impact of armed actors, and affirmative actions to guarantee access to comprehensive reparations established by law. The principal researchers of the case study were:

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Cifras y Conceptos

One of the most prestigious firms in the collection, processing and analysis of information in Colombia. It focuses on issues that contribute to the construction and discussion of a better public agenda. Among its most emblematic products is the Opinion Panel, which annually consults about 2,000 national leaders and Polimetrica, that periodically investigates social, economic and political changes in the country. Within the framework of the Historical Memory Group, it carried out the study "Colombia: A kidnapped society", that established the largest database in the country on this subject. It was founded in 2007.

Fundación Paz y Reconciliación – PARES

A non-profit, non-governmental organization whose main purpose is to generate knowledge and social intervention through research and qualified analysis of reality in the areas of security, internal armed conflict, post-conflict and criminality, governance and democracy, human rights and conflicts associated with development, in order to influence public opinion and institutional and private decision makers, generating changes and transformations that contribute to the construction of peace, national reconciliation and strengthening of democracy.

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Judicial Reform - A Neglected Dimension of SSR in El Salvador (<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17502977.2018.1517112>)

Catalina Niño

Project Coordinator of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in Colombia - Fescol and FES' regional security project for Latin America since 2010. Her work has focused on the dynamics of organized crime and its effects on democratic governance as well as the rule of law in the region and the institutional reforms needed to deal more effectively with these problems. She also coordinated a project on drug policy between 2015 and 2016. Based on the poor results of strategies implemented so far, the project argued the need to reform traditional drug policies, especially those related to reducing supply. She has also done political analysis on the resolution of the conflict and peacebuilding in Colombia. She was a researcher for Fundación Ideas para la Paz (Ideas for Peace Foundation) and was part of the Permanent Mission of Colombia to the Organization of American States in Washington D.C. from 2005 to 2007. She has been the editor of several books published by the FES on regional security issues.

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Researcher at the Willy Brandt School of Public Policy at the University of Erfurt and an associate researcher at the German Institute for Global and Area Studies (GIGA). He is a Doctor in Political Science from the Free University of Berlin (2019). He is also a specialist in the study of migration policies and the political representation of migrant communities and has published extensively in scientific journals such as *Democratization*, *Citizenship Studies*, *Comparative Migration Studies*, and the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*.

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Anthropologist and peace and conflict researcher from Philipps-Universität Marburg with a particular interest in human rights, natural resource conflicts, and sustainable development. He has worked on research on peace in Colombia at the Institute for Latin American Studies of the German Institute for Global and Area Studies and social leadership in

Colombia as a pillar of peacebuilding at the local level. Besides conducting research, he has worked in German international cooperation organizations focusing on sustainable development and the coherent implementation of environmental and biodiversity policies.

Diana Rico Revelo

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Professor of the Department of Political Science and International Relations of Universidad del Norte. Researcher at UNCaribe-Universidad del Norte.

Coordinator of the Research Group on Conflicts and Post-Conflicts from the Caribbean of the Universidad del Norte. Member of the Scientific Council of the International Network of Studies in Territory and Culture-RETEC. Author of publications on social mobilization, social reconciliation in societies that have emerged from violent conflicts, cognitive and emotional processes linked to de-escalation of conflicts, territorial processes, and culture of peace.

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Advisor to the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence, and Non-Repetition. He has a Ph.D. in Political Science from the New School for Social Research in New York and a master's degree in Political Science and Historical Studies from the same university.

He is the author and editor of *La Economía de los Paramilitares. Redes de Corrupción, Negocios y Política; Para-Política; La Ruta de la Expansión Paramilitar y los Acuerdos Políticos; Paramilitares y Auto-*

defensas, 1982-2003, and has published numerous articles in national and international academic journals on the Colombian armed conflict, the illegality associated with war, and the possibilities and difficulties of peacebuilding.

He has been director of the research group State, Conflicts, and Peace at Universidad Javeriana; of the Observatory of the Armed Conflict of Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris; of the Memory and History program of the ICTJ in Colombia; of the DDR Area of the now-extinct National Commission for Reparation and Reconciliation, CNRR; and of the Center for Political and International Studies at Universidad del Rosario. He has worked at CINEP, the Middle Magdalena Valley Peace and Development Program, and the IEPRI of Universidad Nacional.

Luis Trejos Rosero

Researcher-professor. Doctor in American Studies with a major in International Studies (IDEA / USACH). Professor of the Department of Political Science and International Relations of Universidad del Norte. Director of UNCaribe think tank-Universidad del Norte. Member of the research groups on Conflicts and Post-Conflicts from the Caribbean, of the International Agenda research group of Universidad del Norte. Author of publications on armed clientelism, peacebuilding, armed Conflict, and organized Crime.

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Inge Helena Valencia

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REGIONAL RESEARCHERS

Solange Bonilla Valencia

Sociologist from Universidad del Valle, specialist in Culture of Peace and International Humanitarian Law from Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, and master in Peacebuilding from Universidad de los Andes. Her research areas include gender, race, and sociodemographic vulnerability; memory and territory; spirituality and peace building in the Colombian Pacific; illegal economies and armed conflict in the Pacific.

She has research experience on memory, Afro rituals, and peacebuilding in the rural area of the municipality of Buenaventura. She has also participated in research on the inclusion of ethnic-racial populations (Afro-descendants and Indigenous) into formal companies and other social sectors and in the analysis of epidemiological profiles of these populations in Cali and Valle del Cauca. She is skilled in the elaboration of thematic maps in Geographic Information Systems.

Jairo Alexánder Castaño López

Sociologist from Universidad del Valle with an M.A. in Social Sciences from the University of Brasilia, currently pursuing doctoral studies in sociology at the same university. He has extensive experience in qualitative and quantitative research with Indigenous, Afro-Colombian, and peasant populations, and in statistics and ethnic-racial, gender, social class, and generational inequalities, with several publications in national books and journals. He has researched labor conflicts and the progress of labor outsourcing in the sugarcane and ethanol mills in the municipalities of southern Valley and Northern Cauca. His work also

focuses on family agriculture (peasant economy), living conditions, conceptions of community “good living”, and conflicts over access to land for Indigenous, Afro-Colombian, and peasant populations in the Pacific region. Currently, his research interests revolve around gender violence and politics in urban / rural contexts, women’s participation in organizations and decision-making spaces, and the human rights situation of LGBTQI+ leaders.

Dennis Arley Huffington Arroy

He is a sociologist from Universidad del Pacífico, where he coordinated and participated in academic research groups. He has presented papers in the National Congress of Sociology and has been accepted as a presenter in the Congress of the Latin American Sociological Association (ALAS). He has experience in themes of violence, armed conflict, political history, conflicts associated with development, collective action and social conflicts, state reform and local crises in Buenaventura.

María Fernanda Ramírez Medina

B.A. in Government and International Relations from Universidad Externado de Colombia and a master’s degree in Peace and Security Studies from the Peace and Security Research Institute of the University of Hamburg. She has extensive experience in issues of organized crime in Latin America and conflict resolution. She is currently a project manager at the InSight Crime Research Center based in Colombia.

Daniel Alfonso Rodríguez

B.A. in Political Science from Universidad de los Andes and an M.A. in Peace and Security Studies from the University of Hamburg. He has experience in the security field in the public sector, and in consultancy in the private sector. He is interested in Peace, Conflict, and Human Rights studies.

TRANSLATOR

Pedro Valenzuela Gruesso

He has a B.A. in Political Science from Florida International University. He studied a Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of Pittsburgh (without dissertation), and has a Ph.D. in Peace and Conflict Research from Uppsala University (Sweden). He founded and directed the Graduate Program in Conflict Resolution at Universidad Javeriana and was also director of the Department of Political Science and the Human Rights and Peacebuilding Institute at the same university. He has been a guest teacher/researcher in several European and Latin American universities and is currently a full professor at Universidad Javeriana. His latest publications include: “The Values of Peace in the Colombian Peace Agreement: Discursive progress and Empirical Hurdles”; “Environmental Peacebuilding in Post-Conflict Colombia”; “The End of the Armed Conflict in Colombia: A Multiple Causal Factor Explanation”; and “The legacy of Guatemala’s Commission for Historical Clarification”. His current research interests include theories of violence, grass-roots peacebuilding, and non-violent resistance.

MAPS

Rutas del Conflicto

Independent, native digital media dedicated to collecting reliable information on the armed conflict in Colombia through the convergence of traditional and digital formats, including tools of data, investigative, and citizen journalism.

Santiago Luque Pérez

Journalist in the process of graduating from Universidad del Rosario. Two years of experience as a reporter for Rutas del Conflicto (Routes of Conflict) covering socio-environmental conflicts, violence against social leaders, and health care for victims of the armed conflict and people in the process of reincorporation. He works on data analysis and visualization with a journalistic approach.

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Natalia Botero

Master in Socio-spatial Studies of the Inner and photojournalist from the University of Antioquia, dedicated to documentary and photographic research, with an emphasis on social projects with the communities victims of the Colombian Armed Conflict. She specializes in Gender, Violence and Territory, with the research *I remember you*, I present you work with the title *Cum Lauden* of the UdeA. With experience in dealing with the issues of Historical Memory, Human Rights, Women and Conflicts. She is the winner of several awards in photography and Human Rights with the UN at the international level. Two of his most important projects are *I remember you*, *I feel you*, stories of the victims of the Forced Disappearance in the construction of the albums in memory of the absent and *Al sol Al viento*, a tour of the territories where through the clotheslines makes a tribute to the survivors of the conflict to narrate their stays in the place. Teacher and social activist, she works permanently with the photographic image for the reconstruction of the social fabric of the communities. She has worked for national journalistic media such as *Semana y el Tiempo Magazine* and international press such as *El País de España*. She is the creator of the Narrative Spotlights Project.

Diana Rey Melo

Colombian graphic and documentary reporter, with interest and emphasis on social issues and public order. Her work has been featured in national and international media. She currently works as a photography and video editor for *Forbes Colombia*. She worked as a staff photographer for *Semana* publications, freelance for the Ministry of Culture in Peru and other national entities. She has participated in different photographic projects and exhibited some of them in different spaces in Colombia, Peru and Brazil.

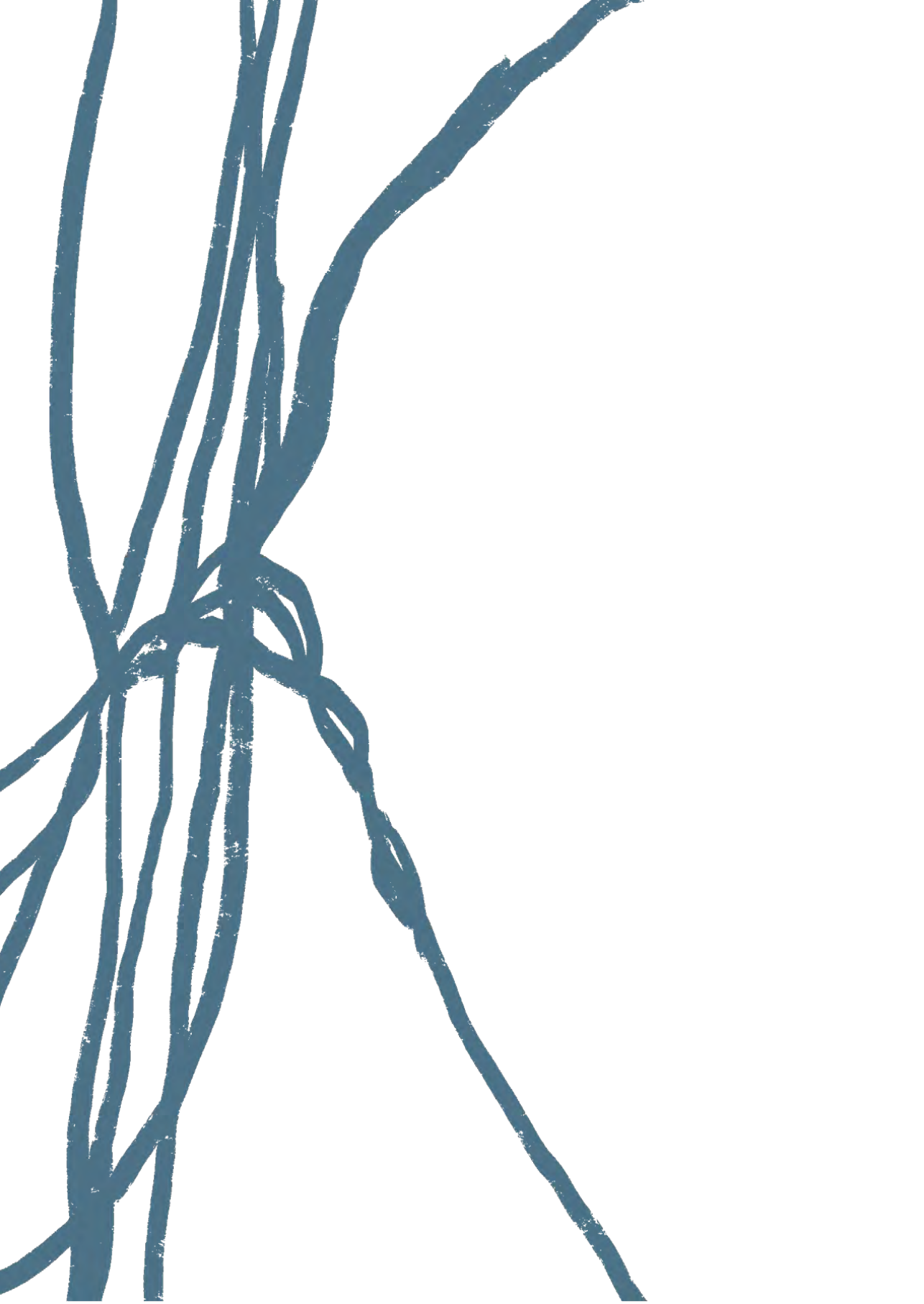


Federico Ríos

He began his career working as a photographer for the newspapers *El Espectador* and *El Tiempo*, also for the international press agency EFE and as an external collaborator for different national magazines. Later, the Colombian photographer's work has been published in international media such as *The New York Times*, *National Geographic*, *Stern*, *Geo*, *Times Magazine*, *Paris Match* and *Leica Magazine*, among others. His photographs have been recognized with the Hansel-Mieth Preiss Award in Germany (2019); POY Latam News Series First Prize (2017); Jury Prize in Days Japan, International Photojournalism Award (2017); Portfolio Review New York Times 2017; and Eddie Adams Workshop XXVII in New York (2014). Throughout his career, parallel to his photojournalism work, he has developed a process of artistic creation on recurring themes in his work: the armed conflict, the environment and its relationship with society. Topics that he has presented in different exhibitions.

Malcolm Linton

British-American photographer known for his images of conflict and humanitarian crises around the world. Since 1989, photographs of him have appeared in magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Der Stern*, *Paris Match*, and *National Geographic*. His 2019 book on FARC insurgents, *Metamorphosis: Guerrilleros en Busca de la Paz*, won first prize at the 2020 International Latino Book Awards in the bilingual politics / current affairs category. His previous book, *Tomorrow Is A Long Time*, with writer Jon Cohen, was published in 2015 and documented the HIV / AIDS epidemic in Tijuana, Mexico, and he is now working on a new book project about communities. indigenous people fighting for environmental and territorial rights in southern Colombia. He lives in the capital, Bogotá, with his Colombian wife and his Colombian stepson.



Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACIN	Asociación de Cabildos Indígenas del Norte del Cauca (Association of Indigenous Councils of Northern Cauca)
ACONC	Asociación de Consejos Comunitarios del Norte del Cauca (Association of Community Councils of Northern Cauca)
ADA	Alianza Democrática Afrocolombiana (Afro-Colombian Democratic Alliance)
ADR	Agencia de Desarrollo Rural (Rural Development Agency)
ANH	National Hydrocarbons Agency
ANM	National Mining Agency
ANT	National Land Agency
ANUC	Asociación Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos (National Association of Peasant Users)
ARN	Agencia para la Reincorporación y la Normalización (Reincorporation and Normalization Agency)
ART	Agencia de Renovación del Territorio (Territorial Renewal Agency)
ASOJUNTAS	Asociación de las Juntas de Acción Comunal (Association of Community Action Boards)

AUC	Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia)
BACRIM	Criminal Gangs
CELAC	Community of Latin American and Caribbean States
CEBAF	Centros binacionales de atención en frontera (Binational Border Care Centers)
CENAF	Centros nacionales de atención en frontera (National Border Care Centers)
CEV	Comisión para el Esclarecimiento de la Verdad, la Convivencia, y la No Repetición (Committee for Truth Clarification, Coexistence, and Non-Repetition)
CNMH	Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (National Center of Historical Memory)
CODHES	Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento (Consultancy for Human Rights and Displacement)
CRIC	Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca (Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca)
CTEP	Circunscripciones Especiales Transitorias de Paz (Transitory Special Peace Circumscriptions)
CTP	Consejos Territoriales de Planeación (Territorial Planning Councils)



“ *The entanglements of peace* presents the various perceptions of what it would be like to live in peace in Colombia. And the necessary measures for the country to advance towards social justice with guarantees of human rights, social inclusion and sustainability. An excellent diagnosis with relevant proposals.”

—*Mariano Aguirre*

“ *The entanglements of peace* (...) presents an accurate picture of the complex Colombian situation four years after the signing of the Peace Agreement. There, the voices of citizens appear, who, through a survey and focus groups, describe very similar visions of peace as a peaceful life in dignity. (...) It is a must read at this time of uncertainty, when only truthful and verifiable information can support the decisions that the country must make to avoid a new cycle of insecurity and violence.”

—*Julieta Lemaitre Ripoll*

“ Perhaps the most important sentence in this admirable book is its invitation to ‘conceive peace not as a state, but as a process.’ It is not only a realistic warning against unreasonable expectations, but above all a call to responsibility. Like a garden, peace must be watered every day to bear fruit.”

—*Sergio Jaramillo Caro*