

Juan Manuel Santos Calderón,
Presidente de la República de Colombia
Carrera 8 No. 7 – 26, Palacio de Nariño
Bogotá, Colombia

14 May 2018

Dear President Juan Manuel Santos Calderón,

We write to you in the name of the signed organisations. We welcomed the signing of the Peace Accords at the end of November 2016 which put an end to a war of over half a century that left over 9 million victims and brought forward the opportunity to achieve lasting and stable peace. We recognise that the peace process is a delicate issue that merits particular attention in order to achieve sustainable peace.

At this time, we write to you because we fear that the peace process in Colombia could be endangered if the high levels of violence against human rights defenders and social leaders continues.¹ Further, we emphasise that the respect for rule of law and access to justice is key to achieve stable and lasting peace. Within this context, we would like to note the importance of tackling impunity and protecting human rights defenders who support victims in their search for truth, justice, reparations, and non-repetition.

In order to achieve reconciliation and stable and lasting peace reconciliation after such a complex conflict as Colombia's, it is important that victims can exercise their rights to truth, justice, and reparations. We note that under the Peace Accords, all those implicated in crimes committed during the conflict between the Colombian state and the FARC must give full account before the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, even in those cases which may also be subject to prosecutions in other jurisdictions.

In this context, we would emphasise that, in order that the peace process achieve sustainable peace, it is crucial that all members of the FARC and its former leaders (including in cases where it may not be clear whether the crime was committed within the context of the armed conflict), are held accountable in Colombia through an open process, whether under the Special Jurisdiction for Peace or under ordinary justice. It is fundamental that justice is open to ensure the confidence of Colombian people in the peace process and to ensure good faith on all sides, thus no action should prejudice the primary role the Colombian judicial systems plays in relation to its citizens.

As members of the international community, we state our support for the Peace Accords and the demands of victims of the conflict for truth, justice, means of reparation, and guarantees of non-repetition. We reiterate our support for the respect rule of law and due process. We consider that these principles are aligned with the Peace Accords signed in Havana, as long as justice is open and that those responsible for crimes committed in the context of the armed conflict are held to account. We hope, in the months and

¹ <http://www.hchr.org.co/documentoseinformes/informes/altocomisionado/informe-anual-2017.pdf>

years to come, that the Colombian state and former FARC members continue on the road to peace and fulfil the momentous agreements made in 2016.

We look forward to your hearing from you by reply.

Yours sincerely,

Charlotte Gill, Colombian Caravana

Billy Kyte, Global Witness

Kirsty Brimelow QC, Bar Human Rights Committee

Heather Neun, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

Mikel Córdoba Gavín, Fundación de la Abogacía española

CC:

Néstor Humberto Martínez, Fiscal General de la Nación

Rodrigo Rivera, Alto Comisionado para la Paz en Colombia

Peter Tibber, Embajador Británico en Colombia