



TEXTS ADOPTED

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5th anniversary of the Peace Agreement in Colombia

European Parliament resolution of 29 April 2021 on the fifth anniversary of the Peace Agreement in Colombia (2021/2643(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions, in particular its resolution of 20 January 2016 in support of the peace process in Colombia¹,
- having regard to the Trade Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and Colombia and Peru, of the other part², signed in Brussels on 26 July 2012, and the Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Colombia on the short-stay visa waiver³, signed on 2 December 2015,
- having regard to the statement by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, of 1 October 2015 appointing Eamon Gilmore as EU Special Envoy for the Peace Process in Colombia,
- having regard to the Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace between the National Government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army (FARC-EP), signed on 24 November 2016,
- having regard to the UN Secretary-General’s reports on the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia and, in particular, the report of 26 March 2021,
- having regard to the annual report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights of 10 February 2021 on the situation of human rights in Colombia,
- having regard to the joint statement of 9 February 2021 by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR), Josep Borrell, and Commissioner Janez Lenarčič on Colombia’s decision to grant Temporary Protection Status to Venezuelan migrants, and the statement by the

¹ OJ C 11, 12.1.2018, p. 79.

² OJ L 354, 21.12.2012, p. 3.

³ OJ L 333, 19.12.2015, p. 3.

spokesperson for the VP/HR of 26 February 2021 on violence against human rights defenders in Colombia,

- having regard to Rule 132(2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas in November 2021 Colombia will mark the fifth anniversary of the signing of the Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace between the Government of Colombia led by President Juan Manuel Santos and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army (FARC-EP), which put an end to a conflict of more than 50 years and represents a significant step in the construction of a stable and lasting peace in the country; whereas Colombia has maintained its democratic integrity despite lengthy periods of exceptional violence;
- B. whereas the Constitutional Court of Colombia has estimated that it will take at least 15 years to comply with the Final Agreement, the 10-year planning of the Single Roadmap, and the current four-year Multi-Year Peace Investment Plan with resources of nearly USD 11,5 billion;
- C. whereas the President of Colombia, Iván Duque, and the President of the Comunes Party (formerly the FARC Party), Rodrigo Londoño, met on 10 March 2021 to discuss the status of the implementation of the Final Agreement; whereas at the dialogue facilitated by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Colombia and Head of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, both parties reiterated their commitment to the Final Agreement, and agreed to work jointly to design a road map for the remainder of the time frame envisioned for its comprehensive implementation, as well as to redouble their efforts to strengthen the reintegration of, and security guarantees for, former combatants;
- D. whereas former guerrilla fighters are also moving forward in their process to reintegrate into civilian life, and whereas the legal and constitutional system in Colombia is adopting precise reforms to ensure the agreement commitments are implemented and the future of the country can be built on them;
- E. whereas in the Final Agreement, the parties agreed to set up a Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP), including the implementation of a Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition, as well as agreements on reparations for victims, among others, as acknowledged by the report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, of 10 February 2021; whereas Colombia faces complex challenges in the comprehensive implementation of the Final Agreement, exacerbated by the COVID-19 situation and the arrival and reception of Venezuelan migrants;
- F. whereas on 26 January 2021, Colombia’s JEP announced its first major decision, accusing eight top leaders of the former FARC-EP of war crimes and crimes against humanity, in what has been the clearest result so far for transitional justice in the country; whereas it has also confirmed progress in the investigation of the so-called ‘false positives’; whereas the JEP has begun actions to make progress towards the establishment of a permanent and fluid dialogue with the indigenous authorities;
- G. whereas there continue to be important advances which provide an example as to the transformative potential of the Peace Agreement, which includes, for the first time ever,

a specific gender approach; whereas there should be more advances in the Comprehensive Programme for safeguards for women leaders, human rights defenders and programmes to support women and girls who are victims of violence including rape and kidnapping; whereas, given the interconnected nature of the different chapters of the agreement, it is of utmost importance to actively integrate the gender approach in all areas;

- H. whereas despite the fact that peace talks have led to a significant reduction in the number of deaths and in violence in Colombia, the breakdown in security across different regions of Colombia is widely considered to be an obstacle to the peace process, with a worrying rise in violence, enforced disappearances, kidnappings and killings of social and indigenous leaders, former FARC combatants and human rights defenders, as reported by the UN; whereas security forces are also subject to attacks and violence;
- I. whereas the UN Verification Mission verified the killing of 73 former combatants in 2020, bringing to 248 the number of ex-combatants killed since the signing of the peace agreement in 2016; whereas the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) received information about the killing of 120 human rights defenders in the past year, 53 cases of which had been verified; whereas, in addition, it recorded 69 incidents with large numbers of civilian casualties in 2020, accounting for the deaths of 269 civilians, including 24 children and 19 women; whereas the UN has reported that greater efforts are needed in order to implement the Peace Agreement;
- J. whereas addressing the persistent violence against former combatants, conflict-affected communities, social leaders, and human rights defenders, the need to enhance the sustainability of the reintegration process, the consolidation of an integrated state presence in conflict-affected areas, reinforcing constructive dialogue between the parties as a means of promoting the implementation of the peace agreement and the need to strengthen conditions for reconciliation between the parties have been set as priorities by the UN Secretary-General;
- K. whereas in 2017, the Colombian Government initiated formal peace talks with the National Liberation Army (ELN); whereas in January 2019, however shortly after the ELN exploded a car bomb at a police academy in Bogotá that killed 22 people, the Government of President Iván Duque ended the peace talks; whereas conflict dynamics involving the ELN, including clashes with other illegal armed actors and with the public security forces, continue in certain departments; whereas the government insists that the possibility of resuming talks is contingent on the ELN ceasing its violent actions, including kidnapping, the recruitment of children and the laying of mines, while the ELN maintains its position that any such request by the government must be addressed at the negotiating table;
- L. whereas the significant decision made by the President of Colombia, Iván Duque Márquez, to show solidarity by offering Temporary Protection Status to and regularising approximately 1 800 000 Venezuelan migrants resident in the country, through temporary migratory permits, will enable them to register and strengthen their access to state services, such as health and education, and their socio-economic integration, thereby reducing their vulnerability; whereas Colombia and Venezuela share more than 2 000 kilometres of porous border; whereas the border between

Colombia and Venezuela consists mainly of dense forest and difficult terrain, making it prone to illicit activities and organised crime;

- M. whereas the EU Trust Fund for Colombia has mobilised EUR 128 million from the EU budget, 21 Member States, Chile and the UK; whereas its fifth strategic committee defined its future strategic lines on 22 January 2021;
 - N. whereas civil society plays a key role in the peace process, bringing together human rights defence organisations, women's organisations, rural communities, Afro-Colombian communities and indigenous groups, which have developed a number of initiatives and proposals at local, regional and national levels;
 - O. whereas the EU and Colombia maintain a framework of close political, economic and trade cooperation established in the Memorandum of Understanding of November 2009 and the Trade Agreement between Colombia and Peru and the EU and its Member States, the ultimate aim of which is not only to promote economic relations between the parties, but also to consolidate peace, democracy and respect for human rights, sustainable development and the well-being of their citizens; whereas Colombia is a strategic partner and is key to regional stability; whereas the EU and the Republic of Colombia established a framework for the participation of the Republic of Colombia in European Union crisis management operations, which entered into force on 1 March 2020;
 - P. whereas this close relationship also extends to areas of international cooperation on multilateral issues of common interest, such as the struggle for peace and the fight against terrorism and drug trafficking;
1. Reiterates its support for the Peace Agreement in Colombia and welcomes the recent dialogue that took place between the parties, while recognising their political effort, realism and perseverance; reiterates its readiness to continue providing all possible political and financial assistance to support the comprehensive implementation of the Peace Agreement, to accompany the post-conflict phase, in which the participation of local communities and civil society organisations continues to be essential, and to take due account of the priorities expressed by the victims in terms of truth, justice, reparations and guarantees of non-repetition; reiterates its solidarity with all the victims;
 2. Highlights that the Colombian Peace Agreement is often cited as a model around the world because of its determination to address the issues that caused the conflict and its central focus on the rights and dignity of victims; recalls that all parts of such a complex, innovative agreement need to be implemented, as they are bound together in dealing with the root causes of the conflict; calls on the Colombian Government to continue making progress in implementing all aspects of the Peace Agreement;
 3. Welcomes the progress made by Colombia in areas such as the Integral Rural Reform, the rural development programmes (PDET), upholding victims' rights, solving the problem of illicit drugs, substitution of illicit crops, restitution of land and reincorporation of former combatants, and encourages the deployment of additional efforts to implement all aspects of the Peace Agreement, in particular those socio-economic areas where less progress has been achieved; stresses how important it is for the peace process to be accompanied by a determined effort to combat inequality and poverty, including by finding fair solutions for people and communities forced off their

lands; considers that groups that have suffered disproportionately from the conflict, such as Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities, must be given special support; recognises the work of the Territorial Councils for Peace, Reconciliation and Coexistence;

4. Underlines the fundamental and historic role of the Development Plans with a Territorial Approach (PDET), formulated by the communities in the 170 municipalities most affected by abandonment, poverty and violence;
5. Welcomes all actions already taken by the JEP in order to create a future with peacebuilding and lack of impunity at its heart, and calls on the JEP to continue its significant efforts, despite the numerous challenges, including delays to the implementation of legislation; calls on the Colombian authorities to preserve the autonomy and independence of and to protect the Integrated System for Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition as an essential contribution towards a sustainable and lasting peace;
6. Condemns the killings and the violence against human rights defenders, former FARC combatants and social and indigenous leaders; emphasises that addressing the persistent violence against them is one of the major challenges in Colombia; notes that the conflict has escalated in rural areas of the country and deplores the violence caused principally in those areas by illegal armed groups and organised crime linked to drug trafficking and illegal mining; notes that several cases of forced displacement, forced recruitment, sexual violence against children and women, massacres, torture and other atrocities, and attacks against ethnic communities and authorities, as well as affectation on the public authorities have been reported; calls for swift and thorough investigations and for those responsible to be held accountable; urges the Colombian state to increase and guarantee the protection and safety of social and political leaders, social activists and environmental and rural community defenders; sees with special concern the problematic situation in the department of Cauca, as raised in the UN declaration;
7. Recognises the efforts to combat the criminality of organised armed groups and other organisations; stresses the need for urgent measures to be taken to increase protection, and therefore calls for a stronger integrated state presence in the territories, and for the adoption by the National Commission for Security Guarantees of a public policy to dismantle criminal organisations; welcomes, with this in mind, the Strategic Security and Protection Plan for Reintegrating Persons;
8. Welcomes the extension of the Victims Law until 2031 and the increase in its budget, benefiting over nine million people who are registered in the Single Registry of Victims and the effective political participation of the FARC, now the Comunes Party, and the progress made in the reincorporation of nearly 14 000 former combatants; welcomes the land purchase by the government of seven of the 24 former Territorial Areas for Training and Reintegration (TATRs) and highlights the security deployment therein, in addition to the social protection measures that cover more than 13 000 ex-combatants;
9. Recognises the efforts made by the Colombian institutions and encourages them to make more progress in ensuring that human rights are fully and permanently upheld in line with its duty to guarantee the safety of its citizens; highlights the decrease in the homicide rate which dropped from 25 to 23,7 per 100 000 inhabitants between 2019 and 2020, as acknowledged by the report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights;

recognises the government's commitment to the protection of social leaders, human rights defenders and former combatants, and remote communities;

10. Express its concern that despite their obligation to provide information on the drug trafficking routes and sources of financing that sustain the criminal groups that attack defenders, leaders and ex-combatants, to date, the former guerrillas have not provided it; notes its concern, likewise, that the deadline set for the delivery of the assets of the former FARC-EP to repair the victims expired on 31 December 2020, and that only 4 % of the agreed amount has been delivered;
11. Encourages the government to adopt all necessary measures in the current economic context to promote structural changes, as recommended by the UN, that would help to improve the overall situation and maximise the Peace Agreement's potential for a positive transformation of the Colombian human rights situation; calls on civic organisations to cooperate in restoring reconciled coexistence in Colombia;
12. Reiterates once again that violence is not a legitimate method of political struggle, and calls on those who have been of that conviction to embrace democracy with all its implications and requirements, involving, as a first step, the permanent abandonment of weapons and the defence of their ideas and aspirations through abiding by democratic rules and the rule of law; in this sense, calls on the ELN, listed as terrorist organisation by the EU, and dissident groups of the FARC-EP to end the violence and terrorist attacks against the population in Colombia and to commit firmly and decisively, without further delay, to peace in Colombia;
13. Highlights the progress in the clearance of 129 municipalities of anti-personnel mines and the extension of the deadline for their elimination until 2025;
14. Praises the remarkable and unprecedented step taken by Colombia to give Temporary Protection Status to approximately 1 800 000 Venezuelan migrants resident in the country, which will contribute to guaranteeing the enjoyment and protection of their human rights and to reducing human suffering for the Venezuelan migrants in Colombia, while providing opportunities for better assistance, including on vaccination against COVID-19, protection and social integration; hopes that the EU's initiative of assisting regional efforts to cope with the migration crisis will pave the way for stronger support in line with Colombia's outstanding solidarity and calls on other members of the international community to come together to support Colombia in this process; calls to reinforce of the response to find a political and democratic solution to the crisis in Venezuela;
15. Calls on the Commission and the European Council to redouble political and financial support to Colombia within the framework of the new cooperation instruments during the new budget period;
16. Highlights the contribution of the EU, especially through the European Fund for Peace in Colombia, which focuses its resources on Integral Rural Reform and Reincorporation, with emphasis on PDET programmes and the formalisation of land ownership;
17. Highlights the participation of the private sector in the support of victims, reincorporation, the substitution of illicit crops and the 170 PDET municipalities;

requests that the Commission deepen the synergy between the trade agreement and the new cooperation instruments aimed at guaranteeing access to the European market, exchange and investment in order to ensure the sustainability of the productive projects, the income of the beneficiary population and to reduce their vulnerability to crime and illicit economies;

18. Believes that the successful implementation of the 2016 Peace Agreement, as a contribution to global peace and stability, will continue to be a key priority of reinforced bilateral relations through the Memorandum of Understanding approved by the Council last January; along the same lines, encourages further cooperation between the EU and Colombia so as to enhance the livelihood of Colombian and EU citizens alike through enhancing synergies between the EU-Colombia Trade Partnership and the Peace Agreement; supports the prolongation of the mandate of the Special Envoy for Peace in Colombia;
19. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the rotating Presidency of the EU, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly and the Government and the Congress of Colombia.