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Európsky parlament Evropski parlament Euroopan parlamentti Europaparlamentet

European Parliament
Brussels, 18 November 2016

Subject: MEPs welcome this new stage of peace building in Colombia and call for the participation of civil society in it. MEPs also call for the prompt start and advancement of negotiations with the National Liberation Army, ELN

Dear President Juan Manuel Santos,

We, the undersigned Members of the European Parliament, welcome the new peace agreement signed between the Colombian government and the FARC – EP on 12 November 2016. We reiterate our support for the aforementioned agreement and encourage its prompt implementation in order to achieve a lasting and sustainable peace, always maintaining a central focus on the victims of the armed conflict.

On 10 October 2016, the Colombian government and the National Liberation Army (Ejército de Liberación Nacional – ELN) announced the commencement of public conversations, which were due to begin on 27 October 2016 in Quito, Ecuador, but were subsequently suspended. We invite the parties to reach an agreement to advance in this process, which constitutes a fundamental step towards building peace and a country where human rights and social justice are the priority.

Furthermore, we congratulate you on receiving the Nobel Peace Prize and appreciate your declaration to share this award with all the victims of the Colombian armed conflict.

As MEPs we express concern about the security impacts that the current context may have for Colombian civil society, considering the challenges that exist in these first moments of transition towards peace. Particularly, we wish to highlight the situation of risk faced by those rural communities and vulnerable groups who have been most affected by the conflict, including women and children, Afro-Colombian and rural peasant communities and indigenous peoples, and urge that their protection be guaranteed.

We reiterate the particular need to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity of all Human Rights Defenders, including those who are involved in the construction of peace (both with FARC and ELN), whose level of risk and number of aggressions have increased because of their fundamental work in the society. We call for an immediate implementation of the agreed measures concerning the dismantling of paramilitary structures that continue to pose a threat to different sectors of civil society, and especially, to human rights defenders.

Finally, we wish to highlight the essential role played by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN OHCHR) in monitoring the human rights situation in Colombia, particularly in the implementation of the Peace agreement, and we welcome the renewal of its mandate.

Yours sincerely,

1. Martina Anderson – Ireland – GUE/NGL
2. Ulrike Lunacek (Vice-president of the EP, Austria, member of the EP delegation to support the referendum of 2 October, Greens/EFA)
3. Jude Kirton Darling – United Kingdom – S&D

4. Javier Nart - Spain – ALDE
5. Javier Couso – Spain – GUE/NGL
6. Josep María Terricabras – Spain - Greens / EFA
7. Karoline Graswander-Hainz - Austria – S&D
8. Ignazio Corrao - Italy – EFDD
9. Matt Carthy – Ireland – GUE/NGL
10. Bodil Valero – Sweden - Greens / EFA
11. Nessa Childers – Ireland - S&D
12. Liadh Ni Riada - Ireland – GUE/NGL
13. Bart Staes – Belgium - Greens / EFA
14. Javi López – Spain – GUE/NGL
15. Lynn Boylan - Ireland – GUE/NGL
16. Ernest Urtásun – Spain - Greens / EFA
17. Josu Juaristi – Spain - GUE/NGL
18. Monika Vana – Austria - Greens / EFA
19. Marina Albiol – Spain – GUE/NGL
20. Molly Scott-Cato – United Kingdom - Greens / EFA
21. Marisa Matias – Portugal – GUE/NGL
22. Martin Haeusling – Germany - Greens / EFA
23. Kostadinka Kuneva – Greece – GUE/NGL
24. Tania González – Spain – GUE/NGL
25. Helmut Scholz – Alemania – GUE/NGL
26. Merja Kyllönen – Finland – GUE/NGL
27. Miguel Viegas – Portugal – GUE/NGL
28. Malin Björk – Sweden – GUE/NGL
29. Eleonora Forenza – Italy – GUE/NGL
30. Lola Sánchez – Spain – GUE/NGL
31. Martina Michels – Germany – GUE/NGL
32. Stelios Kouloglou – Greece – GUE/NGL

33. Xabier Benito – Spain – GUE/NGL
34. Miguel Urbán – Spain – GUE/NGL
35. Dimitrios Papadimoulis –Greece – GUE/NGL
36. João Ferreira – Portugal – GUE/NGL
37. Estefanía Torres – Spain – GUE/NGL
38. João Pimenta Lopes – Portugal – GUE/NGL
39. Jean-Luc Mélenchon – France – GUE/NGL
40. Kostas Chrysogonos – Greece – GUE/NGL