

Brussels, 19 April 2022

President of the Republic of Colombia,

Ivan Duque Marquez

Office of the President of the Republic of Colombia,

Casa de Nariño: Carrera 8 No. 7 – 26, Bogotá D.C., Colombia

contacto@presidencia.gov.co

We are writing to express our concern about the risk situation for women leaders and women human rights defenders in Colombia. These women, their organizations, and the social sectors they represent, are in an extremely vulnerable situation, especially in regions historically affected by the internal armed conflict. We understand that, at present, there is a slowdown in the implementation of the **Peace Agreement** and a weakening of peace policies, thereby aggravating the humanitarian crisis in the country and increasing obstacles for victims to access truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-repetition.

Access to justice is of particular importance for victims of sexual violence committed in the context of the armed conflict, which is considered to be a crime against humanity. Sexual violence has been used by armed actors and the security forces as a war strategy and as a mechanism to prevent women's political and public leadership¹.

As you know, the European Parliament is committed to the implementation of the **Final Agreement for the Termination of the Conflict and the Construction of a Stable and Lasting Peace**. In particular, in its Resolution of 29 April 2021², the European Parliament reaffirmed the importance of the Agreement's gender-specific approach, calling for the active integration of this approach in all areas.

However, according to the GPAZ group, only 20% of the **122 gender measures** established in the Peace Agreement have been adequately implemented³. Moreover, Colombia does not have a National Action Plan that enables the adequate and effective implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution **1325 of 2000**.

Likewise, the **systematic violence against women human rights defenders** continues to be extremely serious, as well as the insufficient investigation into this gender-based violence and the identification and punishment of the perpetrators. In the aforementioned resolution, the European Parliament called for progress to be made in the **Comprehensive Program of Guarantees for Women Leaders and Women Human Rights Defenders** and this has not occurred. Decisive action must be taken to protect those who work for peace throughout the national

¹ Sisma Mujer, B O L E T Í N No. 26. May 25, 2021. *National Day for the Dignity of Victims of Sexual Violence*. P.14. Available in Spanish at: <https://www.sismamujer.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Boletin-25M-2021.pdf>

² See https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0160_EN.html

³ The third monitoring report on the implementation of gender measures is available in Spanish at: https://generoy paz.co/informes/gpaz_informe_2021.pdf

territory, and to strengthen their organizations; however, current protection proposals use a military approach that fails to include important aspects of human security.

We would also like to stress the importance **of women's full political participation** in peacekeeping and peacebuilding⁴. It is essential to implement specific strategies and actions to guarantee women's participation in the elections for the Special Transitional Peace Constituencies.

The undersigned insist on the importance of activating a follow-up mechanism to the recommendations of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), made after their visit to Colombia in July 2021 to investigate the human rights violations that occurred during the National Strike. This mechanism would be particularly important for the investigation of crimes of **sexual violence** committed by State agents during these mobilizations.

In light of the above, we consider it of the utmost importance that you commit to:

- adequately implementing comprehensive prevention and protection measures, individually and collectively, for women and organizations working against all forms of violence and discrimination. In particular, fully implementing the **Comprehensive Program of Guarantees for Women Leaders and Women Human Rights Defenders;**
- drafting and applying a National Action Plan relating to **United Nations Resolution 1325.**
- ensuring the **comprehensive implementation of the Peace Agreement, specifically gender measures.**

We thank you in advance for your attention and wish your government every success in meeting national and international expectations for true, lasting and sustainable peacebuilding. We send you our kind regards.

Konstantinos ARVANITIS, The Left, Greece
Manon AUBRY, The Left, France
Malin BJÖRK, The Left, Sweden
Manuel BOMPARD, The Left, France
Marc Johan BOTENGA, The Left, Belgium
Leila CHAIBI, The Left, France
Clare DALY, The Left, Ireland
Oezlem DEMIREL, The Left, Germany
Jose GUSMÃO, The Left, Portugal
Anja HAZEKAMP, The Left, The Netherlands
Stelios KOULOGLOU, The Left, Greece
Chris MACMANUS, The Left, Ireland
Marisa MATIAS, The Left, Portugal

⁴ Item 2 of the Peace Agreement/Participation in Politics: Democratic openness to build peace. Available: https://www.jep.gov.co/Marco%20Normativo/Normativa_v2/01%20ACUERDOS/Texto-Nuevo-Acuerdo-Final.pdf?csf=1&e=0fpYA0

Sandra PEREIRA, The Left, Portugal
Manu PINEDA, The Left, Spain
Sira REGO, The Left, Spain
María Eugenia RODRÍGUEZ PALOP, The Left, Spain
Miguel URBAN CRESPO, The Left, Spain
Idoia VILLANUEVA RUIZ, The Left, Spain
Nikolaj VILLUMSEN, The Left, Denmark

Rasmus ANDRESEN, Greens/EFA
Benoit BITEAU, Greens/EFA, France
Damien CARÊME, Greens/EFA, France
Anna CAVAZZINI, Greens/EFA
Ignazio CORRAO, Greens/EFA, Italy
Ciarán CUFFE, Greens/EFA, Ireland
Rosa D'AMATO, Greens/EFA, Italy
Eleonora EVI, Greens/EFA, Italy
Claude GRUFFAT, Greens/EFA
Martin HÄUSLING, Greens/EFA, Germany
Tilly METZ, Greens/EFA, Luxemburg
Hannah NEUMANN, Greens/EFA, Germany
Niklas NIENAB, Greens/EFA, Germany
Ville NIISNISTÖ, Greens/EFA, Finland
Grace O'SULLIVAN, Greens/EFA
Piernicola PEDICINI, Greens/EFA, Italy
Terry REINTKE, Greens/EFA, Germany
Diana RIBA I GINER, Greens/EFA, Spain
Jordi SOLÉ, Greens/EFA, Spain
Marie TOUSSAINT, Greens/EFA, France
Ernest URTASUN, Greens/EFA, Spain

Dietmar KOESTER, S&D, Germany
Maria Manuel LEITÃO-MARQUES, Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament (S&D), Portugal
Maria NOICHL, S&D, Germany
Evelyn REGNER, S&D, Austria