

International Human Rights Day

Human rights and peace in Colombia – the support of the international community is essential

Brussels, 6th December 2022. Thirty-one MEPs from the European Parliament have sent a letter to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs Josep Borrell and the President of the European Commission Ursula Von der Leyen, requesting the continued support of the European Union for the implementation of the Peace Agreement signed by the Colombian Government and the FARC-EP in November 2016. The signatories of the letter state that the lack of implementation of the Agreement is one of the causes of continued human rights violations.

They also request the European Union's support for the new peace process with the ELN and the different dialogue processes with other armed groups, which are part of the Total Peace policy proposed by the current Colombian government. The issue of peace is the major focus and priority in the political and cooperation agreements between the EU and Colombia.

More human rights defenders are killed and assaulted in Colombia than in any other country in the world. In the first half of 2022, ninety-nine human rights defenders were killed, an increase of 71% compared to the first half of the previous year. There are a number of measures in the Peace Agreement aimed at preventing attacks on social leaders.

According to the ICRC, there are currently six armed conflicts in the country that continue to negatively affect the civilian population in the areas most affected by this persistent violence. Figures on forced displacement, landmines, confinement, child recruitment and sexual violence have increased in recent years as a result of armed clashes. Moving forward with humanitarian agreements would alleviate the impact of violence and improve the civilian population's enjoyment of human rights in those parts of the country. Within this context, it is important to highlight the importance of macro case eleven, in the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, which confronts impunity related to sexual and gender-based violence in the armed conflict.

We would also like to highlight the importance of the vital role of victims and their rights to truth, justice, reparation and non-repetition in the new peace and justice processes with the different groups.

In line with the requests in the aforementioned MEP letter, we also request:

- That the EU demonstrates, as soon as possible, that it supports and is monitoring the new dialogue process with the ELN and dialogue processes with the other armed groups, calling for differential approaches, in particular an ethnic and gender-based approach;
- That Special Envoy Eamon Gilmore plays a more active role in supporting the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement and that EU support is maintained via a special envoy for the ELN process;



- That the EU increases its support for civil society at this key moment for peace in Colombia, as it has played a fundamental role in building peace in the country;
- That the EU provides financial and political support for macro case eleven;
- That the EU specifically monitors the implementation of the Truth Clarification Commission recommendations, finalists in the European Parliament Sakharov Prize 2022.

