

International Civil Society Organisations celebrate the announcement of a temporary bilateral ceasefire agreed between the Colombian government the National Liberation Army (*Ejército de Liberación Nacional* – ELN) and call on both parties to honour their word and make progress in the Peace Talks



As international Civil Society Organisations we welcome with substantial optimism the signing of a temporary ceasefire agreement between the Colombian government and ELN. The ceasefire agreement will enter into force on 1 October 2017, and will be valid until 12 January 2018. Its objective is to reduce the intensity of the conflict and improve the humanitarian situation for the local population. This is without a doubt a clear expression of political will to achieve peace.

We would like to draw attention to several serious facts which highlight the urgency of moving forward with concrete commitments between the parties: on the one hand, the increase in murders and attacks directed against human rights defenders, community leaders and peace activists in the last 18 months¹, and on the other, the attacks against oil infrastructure which have caused irreversible environmental damage, one example being the recent attack on the oil pipeline Caño Limón Coveñas.

Specific commitments by the parties regarding the cessation of hostilities, protection measures for community leaders, ending the criminalisation of social protests, as well as, the initiation of a mechanism for civil society participation in Quito are all necessary to make progress on the agreed agenda and to generate trust between the parties. We urge both parties to keep their word and move this process forward, in order to permanently delegitimise the use of firearms in Colombian politics.

We call on the Colombian authorities to establish and implement guarantees of non-repetition to ensure the effective and sustainable dismantling of paramilitary groups and criminal gangs in all regions of the country, along with the financial and political structures supporting them.

¹ Somos defensores.

We express our solidarity with the millions of victims of the Colombian armed conflict and emphasise our unwavering commitment to continue contributing to peacebuilding in Colombia, based on our specific mandates.

Lastly, we would like to recognise and thank the delegations of the guarantor countries and accompanying countries Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Norway, Venezuela, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Italy, Germany and Sweden, and especially Ecuador as guarantor and host country of these dialogues.

Peace is a right and a duty whose compliance is mandatory.²

This statement has been signed by the following Civil Society Organisations:

CLAI

FAU-AL

MPDL

FLM

MUNDUBAT

Forumsyd

Paz con Dignidad

Grupo de Trabajo Suiza Colombia ASK!

Cáritas Suiza

Christian Aid

Fastenopfer

kolko e.V

ABColombia

TDHS

LAWG

ICCO

Bogotá, Colombia octubre 2 de 2017

Mayores informes

ESPACIO DE COOPERACION PARA LA PAZ

² Art. 22 Colombian Constitution