



Ms. Louise Winstanley
Programme and Advocacy Manager
ABColumbia
55 Westminster Bridge Road
London
SE1 7JB
UK

10 September 2018

Our Ref: IUKA180493

Dear Ms. Winstanley,

On behalf of the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr. Simon Coveney T.D., I wish to write to you in response to your correspondence of 8 August 2018 regarding Colombia.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and officials in our Embassy to Mexico which currently has responsibility for our diplomatic relations with Colombia, monitor the situation in Colombia closely and are widely engaged with partner organisations on the ground, as well as with EU colleagues.

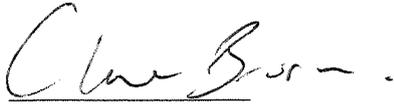
Ireland has a long and special relationship with Colombia. We have been committed supporters of the Colombian peace process, and have been in the unique position of being able to share the experience and lessons we have learned over the last three decades in building peace and reconciliation on the island of Ireland.

While Ireland is a committed partner to Colombia, this government has not shied away from raising concerns about human rights violations and the situation of human rights defenders across Colombia. As you have noted, we took the opportunity of the 30th session of the Universal Periodic Review to highlight existing issues in Colombia and to make a number of recommendations to the Colombian government.

As you may be aware, Ireland will open a new embassy in Bogotá in early 2019, and we look forward to the deepening engagement that this increased presence on the ground will allow. This, along with the recent opening of the new Embassy of Colombia to Ireland, highlights the importance both Ireland and Colombia place on this bilateral relationship.

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, to thank ABColombia for the important work that you do in Colombia in advancing and protecting human rights. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade appreciates and welcomes your continuing engagement on this issue, both with us and on a wider scale nationally and internationally.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Clare Brosnan".

Clare Brosnan
Private Secretary