

Despite 'No' Vote, FARC Rebels and Colombian President Santos Committed to Peace



Bogota, October 3 (RHC)-- FARC-EP Comandante Timoleon Jimenez expressed the rebels' deep disappointment in Colombia's "No" win at a press conference from Havana Sunday night, shortly after electoral authorities declared that the 'No' vote against the peace deal won by a slim margin.

Timoleon said: "The FARC-EP commits itself to use only words as weapons for peace," adding: "The struggle for peace continues and we are optimistic that there is still hope." The rebel leader "deeply deplored" the result as a deceiving campaign by the 'No,' campaign led by the "destructive powers planting the seeds of hatred and resentment among Colombia's people."

"Whoever wishes peace in Colombia can rely on the FARC-EP. Peace shall win!"

A few minutes later, Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos also deplored the results, saying from Bogota that he "acknowledged that the majority, with a very short margin, said 'No' to the peace deal his government negotiated for four years with the rebels, while "the other half said 'Yes.'"

"I am the guarantor of the country's stability, my duty is to maintain public order while continuing to seek

peace for the country," he told reporters, adding that the bilateral cease-fire was still in effect. "We all want peace, without exception."

The head of state announced he will convoke all the political forces on Monday, "especially the forces supporting the 'No,' in order to find points of agreement and unity." In the meantime, he added, the state's chief peace delegation, as well as the high commissioner on peace, would meet in Havana in order to discuss developments with the FARC-EP peace delegation.

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