

Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos Extends Cease-Fire Until December 31st



Bogota, October 14 (RHC-teleSUR)-- Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos announced Thursday that the bilateral cease-fire with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia will be extended until December 31.

"Let's be clear: this is not an ultimatum or deadline, but I hope that this whole process to have a new agreement is completed earlier," said Santos.

Santos met with social movements who have organized massive protests in different cities since the "No" campaign against the peace accord won by a slim margin, sending the country into a tailspin. The protesters are demanding peace and an end to the internal armed conflict that has lasted for more than 50 years.

The announcement comes after Santos had said the cease-fire with the FARC-EP would only be valid until October 31st.

According to an official statement by the ministry of defense, the cease-fire agreement that began on

August 29 was effective until the day of the plebiscite, October 2, adding that it could be extended if needed, to protect the safety of different sectors in Colombia.

FARC-EP head Timoleon Jimenez, known as Timochenko, said the rebels would continue the cease-fire and would abide by what they had agreed with the Colombian government, despite the "No" vote.

After failing to get popular approval, the peace delegations from the government and the FARC-EP returned to Cuba to analyze the possibility of adjusting parts of the peace agreement, although the rebels have warned that some issues are not up for re-discussion, citing the years of delicate negotiations that went into major parts of the agreement.

Colombians marked one week of occupying the main square in Bogota's historic center, where they installed an "Encampment for Peace," saying they won't leave until definitive end-of-conflict measures are put in place.

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