

Cuba urges Colombian government and ELN to adopt measures to implement agreed Peace Dialogue Protocols



Havana, January 26 (RHC)-- Cuba issued a call on the government of Colombian President Iván Duque and the National Liberation Army (ELN) to adopt the necessary measures to facilitate the return of the ELN negotiating team to Colombia as agreed upon in the Peace Dialogue Protocols, after the rupture in peace negotiations between the two sides.

The Cuban Foreign Ministry issued a statement Friday, noting that in the wake of the January 17th car bombing attack at the police's cadets academy in Bogota, President Miguel Díaz-Canel, on behalf of the Cuban people, sent a message of condolences to his Colombian counterpart, the victims' families and the Colombian people, and also expressed Cuba's unabated stance against all forms of terrorism regardless of the perpetrators and their motivations.

The Cuban statement adds that the country's foreign ministry also issued a statement, condemning the attacks and expressing sympathy with the victims' families and the Colombian people.

One day after the attack in Colombia, on January 18th, Colombian President Iván Duque, publicly announced the decision to abandon the peace negotiations, which were taking place in Havana, Cuba, and issued arrest warrants against ELN peace negotiators present in the Cuban capital.

The Cuban statement notes that in the wake of the rupture in peace negotiations between the Colombian government and the rebel group, the two sides should move to implement the 'Established Protocol in Case of Rupture in Peace Dialogue between the Colombian Government and the ELN', that was signed by the sides and the guarantor nations of the Colombian peace process on March 30th, 2016, before the talks even started.

Guarantor nations of the peace dialogue between the Colombian government and the ELN are Ecuador, Venezuela, Chile, Brazil, Norway and Cuba.

Under the Protocols, the sides in the conflict and the guarantor nations have 15 days to plan and implement the safe return to Colombia of the ELN negotiating team.

The statement issued by the Cuban Foreign Ministry notes that Cuba has strictly complied with its responsibilities as alternative venue and guarantor nation of the peace talks between the Colombian government and the ELN, just as it did previously during the peace negotiations between the Colombian government and the former Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-peoples Trade Treaty (FARC-EP), leading to the 2016 peace accord between the two sides.

The Cuban statement insists that the island's authorities asked the ELN negotiating team that their presence in Cuba was solely for the peace talks with the Colombian government and that they should refrain from doing anything that could jeopardize that goal.

The Cuban foreign ministry states that Cuba's role as guarantor nation and venue of the talks between the Colombian government and the ELN was as a gesture of good will to contribute to Colombian and regional peace and stability, in line with the proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a zone of peace.

The Cuban foreign ministry further reiterated Cuba's firm determination to never allow its national territory to neither plot nor carry out terrorist attacks against any State. It also reaffirmed Cuba's strong position against terrorism and war, and in defense of peace.

The Cuban foreign ministry also reiterates Cuba's conviction that the Colombian people deserve peace and will find their own path to achieve it.

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