

*For peace in Colombia:
commitment, coherence and
responsibility*

Statement *MinRe*

Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Cuba



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For peace in Colombia: commitment, coherence and responsibility

Havana, February 13 (RHC)-- The Cuban Foreign Ministry has issued a statement in Havana ratifying that Cuba will maintain unchanged its rigorous and discreet action attached to the principles and demonstrated during decades of participation in Colombia's peace efforts.

Following is the full text:

The Cuban Embassy in Colombia received information, whose veracity could not be determined, about an alleged military attack by the Eastern War Front of the ELN to be carried out in the coming days in

Bogota.

The ELN Peace Delegation in Havana was immediately alerted about this information, which expressed total ignorance about it and reiterated the guarantee that it had no involvement in the military decisions or operations of the organization.

Faced with information of this nature, about a possible event that could put the lives of innocent people at risk, Cuban Ambassador José Luis Ponce was immediately instructed and requested, on Saturday, February 6 at 7:49 pm, an interview with Colombian Foreign Minister Claudia Blum or a designated official to convey sensitive and urgent information about a possible attack in Colombia.

At 8:39 pm, we were able to contact Deputy Foreign Minister Francisco Echeverry, although due to the fact that he was outside the capital, we could only give him the content of the information by telephone, for which he was grateful.

In this call, in spite of our manifest interest in holding the meeting immediately, he set a meeting between the two for Monday, February 8, at 10:00 am.

The meeting, by decision of Colombian authorities, finally took place at 5:15 p.m. on Monday, during which the Cuban Ambassador handed the deputy foreign minister a Memorandum containing the information that was sent to our Embassy.

We then observed with surprise that a security matter of the utmost sensitivity, treated with total discretion and urgency by our country, was immediately handed over to the media. Twenty-five minutes after the Memorandum was presented by Cuba, the Colombian press was already using the information and publishing a copy of the document itself.

On Thursday, February 11, at 6:30 p.m., our Ambassador in Bogota was finally received by the Colombian foreign minister and other high-ranking officials of the Colombian government.

Three days earlier, on February 8 at 08:00 pm, the High Commissioner for Peace, in a statement to the press, had used this sensitive information, on a security issue, as a pretext to attack Cuba under mendacious assumptions, with the usual hostility and approach that only tend to fuel the differences between the two governments and damage the participation of international actors in the peace process.

Cuba does not know whether the Colombian authorities proceeded to carry out any investigation, quickly discarded the information or already knew about it.

The Cuban position on the Colombian government's demand that Cuba extradite the members of the ELN Peace Delegation who remain on the island, under the responsibility of the Colombian State, in Havana, has been established and reported in private and also through official and public channels.

Cuba will rigorously fulfill its obligation, as Guarantor and Venue of the Peace Dialogue, the guarantee of the safe return of the ELN Peace Delegation, established in the Protocol of Rupture of that negotiation, agreed and signed between the Colombian State and the ELN, together with six States, on April 5, 2016.

As the Colombian government is aware, this position has the broadest support from the international community, which has made direct representations to the Colombian government in defense of its implementation.

The constant call for Cuba to violate the signed agreements is contrary to international law.

Our country will maintain unchanged its rigorous and discreet action, firmly attached to the principles and demonstrated during decades of participation in peace efforts in Colombia. We reaffirm our willingness and commitment to continue cooperating with the sectors committed to the search for a negotiated solution to the Colombian armed conflict in order to achieve peace.

In this regard, we reiterate our concern for the non-compliance and unilateral attempts to modify the Peace Agreement with the FARC-EP; as well as for the growing number of assassinations and massacres of former rebel fighters, social leaders and human rights defenders in Colombia.

Cuba has been patient and prudent. We hope that, at some point, the will for peace, the legitimate interest and self-determination of the Colombian people, sanity and good sense will prevail.

Havana, February 13, 2021

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