

ELN rebels willing to advance in Colombian peace process

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ELN guerilla fighters in Colombia. | Photo: Twitter/ @Barreja

Bogota, June 21 (RHC)-- In a statement on the victory of Gustavo Petro in the 2022 elections, the National Liberation Army (ELN) affirmed that it will continue fighting but is also willing to seek peace.

"The ELN keeps its political and military resistance system active. However, it is also fully willing to advance in a peace process that continues with the talks started in Quito in February 2017," the ELN

Central Command stated, warning Petro that he will lose the support of the popular movement if he does not implement the transformations Colombia needs.

"If the President-elect makes changes that lead us to overcome patronage and remove violence from politics, to advance in social inclusion plans that include employment and entrepreneurship for the majority, to implement an agrarian reform plan and a new model of fight against drugs, and to continue with the peace process, Colombia will have a government backed by the popular movement," the ELN said.

"But if he installs himself in power to do 'more of the same', he will have the people in the streets demanding changes more vehemently than in 2019 and 2021."

Previously, during an interview held in May, Petro assured that he wanted to resume the peace plan of President Juan Manuel Santos administration (2010-2018) and implement the 2016 peace agreement signed with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC).

The peace proposal implies resuming the negotiations with the ELN that began in Quito (Ecuador) and then continued in Havana (Cuba) until the administration of the far-right Ivan Duque interrupted them in 2019.

The ELN agreement "was half way through but it should be accelerated. It is up to the ELN to recreate a climate of peace and democratic progress," Petro said weeks ago.

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