

# *FARC to Start 'Humanitarian' Removal of Land mines in Colombia*

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Bogota, March 23 (teleSUR-RHC) The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia said Sunday that process of clearing land mines will consist of several stages, starting with a "humanitarian" removal of land mines.

Speaking before the start of a new round of peace talks in Havana, FARC spokesman Ricardo Tellez said the process will start in several territories, but the rebels will still use explosives for self-defense, especially in light of the government's refusal to enter into the cease-fire called by the guerrilla group.

"We will choose three or four territories, but the demining process at this stage will be humanitarian, so our people in the jungle will not stop defending themselves," said Tellez, who added that all explosive remnants will be removed.

The announcement comes as a result of agreements made at the peace talks, which the rebel group and the government of President Juan Manuel Santos have been engaged since November 2012 in an effort to end more than 50 years of armed conflict in the South American nation.

Tellez added that the demining process will be carried out in areas where civil population is directly affected; however he highlighted that the compliance with the agreement is "a very critical problem" because they do not know the exact location of the mines and some of the people who placed them may be dead.

The mine clearance deal was reached early this month and the Humanitarian Demining Battalion has assumed responsibility for carrying out the endeavor with the support of the guerrillas.

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