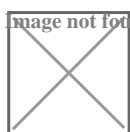


Colombian Politicians and Religious Leaders Urge Peace Talks between Government and ELN



Bogotá, February 3 (RHC)-- Colombian legislator Ángela María Robledo, and the General Secretary of the Episcopal Conference Darío Echeverri have called on the government and the National Liberation Army (ELN) to take the necessary steps towards engaging in official peace negotiations as soon as possible.

In an open letter sent to President Juan Manuel Santos and ELN leaders, Robledo, Echeverri and other Colombian political and religious personalities have expressed concern over 'stalling tactics' in negotiations over the past several days.

The two sides have been engaged in preliminary talks for months, with the ELN saying that “their delegation to the peace dialogue has been ready since last November.”

However, on Tuesday government negotiator Frank Pearl said the ELN was neither “ready nor willing” to continue with the talks. He also warned the guerrilla group that it was “running out of time to be a part of the political solution to the armed conflict in Colombia.”

The signatories proposed that the two sides seat at the negotiating table without further delay, as demanded by the Colombian people.

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