

Colombian Government and Rebels Begin First Round of Peace Talks in 2014



Havana, January 13 (RHC)— Peace talks between Colombia’s government and the country’s largest rebel group the FARC resumed today in Havana, as the negotiators continue to address problems surrounding drug production and trafficking.

This first round of peace talks in 2014 will run until January 23, coinciding with the expiration of a unilateral Christmas ceasefire declared by the rebels on December 15th.

The government’s top-negotiator, Humberto de la Calle, minutes before leaving for Cuba to attend the talks, called for a responsible debate between the country’s political parties over the issue of peace with the rebels, calling for a “faithful discussion” on part of those who oppose the government’s efforts to make peace with the rebels.

De la Calle said: “Our road map for 2014 is the same one that took us through last year and it is simple and concrete: work without rest to reach an agreement to end the conflict and open the doors for all of us to achieve peace.”

After reaching partial agreements on agrarian land restitution and political participation for the rebels in 2013, this round of talks will focus on solutions to Colombia's problems with drug trafficking and production.

De la Calle has said that elimination of coca is an "objective not only important for Colombia, but also the international community."

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