

Colombia's FARC Will Seek Peace Instead of Presidency



Bogota, January 10 (RHC)-- The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, FARC, which is set to become a political party after signing a landmark peace deal with the government, announced it will seek a national consensus for peace, instead of seeking the presidency, in the upcoming elections.

The head of the FARC, Rodrigo Londoño, also known by his alias Timoleon Jimenez or Timochenko, said the group won't put forward a presidential candidate in the 2018 general elections. Instead, the new political party will support and promote "a great front that brings together all those who worked for peace in Colombia," Timochenko said in an interview with Crisis magazine.

On November 24th, when the government of Juan Manuel Santos and the FARC signed the definitive peace deal, Timochenko said his mission was to establish a transition government in Colombia.

"We have to demand an implementation within the framework, word by word, and in the spirit of the agreements reached in Havana between the FARC and the Colombian state," said Timochenko during the interview. And the FARC leader added: "Colombia deserves peace."

According to Timochenko, the group does not intend to go back to war and will focus on the implementation of the peace deal and reaching out to the rest of the kidnapping victims who were released and they haven't been able to talk to yet.

Timochenko said the next step for the FARC is to complete the process of its members laying down their arms in the next six months, but stressed that it must happen in "decent conditions." The rebel leader also said that one of the reasons why Colombia failed to initially approve the first peace deal in the October 2nd plebiscite was because the country was expressing its discontent with President Juan Manuel Santos and his administration.

Santos and Timochenko signed a revised version of the historic deal which brings an end to over half a century of armed conflict between government forces and the FARC that has claimed the lives of more than a quarter of a million people.

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