

# *National Liberation Army of Colombia and Government Agree to Temporary Ceasefire*

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Bogota, September 4 (RHC)-- The National Liberation Army, the ELN, and the government of Colombia have reached a ceasefire agreement ahead of Pope Francis' visit to the South American country, according to both parties.

The ELN confirmed the ceasefire on Twitter, thanking those who had helped in the process, while President Juan Manuel Santos made a televised announcement in which he said that it was with great happiness that the country awaited the visit of Pope Francis whose message of reconciliation and unity should be heeded by all Colombians.

Santos said the bilateral ceasefire will be effective as of October 1st and runs until January 12, 2018, and "could be renewed to the extent that it is fulfilled and progress on the other points in the negotiations is made."

The agreement was reportedly reached at dawn as talks were extended between the two parties to hatch out the details of the verification process, which will be monitored by an international body, according to Caracol Radio.

Along with other agreements, the government of Juan Manuel Santos is said to have agreed to ensure the safety of social leaders in an attempt to prevent any further assassinations and will also improve prison conditions for those rebels held by the government.

In an interview with El Espectador Sunday, ELN leader Pablo Beltran said that the parties were discussing the termination of offensive operations and other modalities, along with the structure and monitoring process.

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<https://www.radiohc.cu/index.php/en/noticias/internacionales/140359-national-liberation-army-of-colombia-and-government-agree-to-temporary-ceasefire>



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