

Colombia Peace Accord in Danger



The Common Alternative Revolutionary Force of Colombia, the political party that replaced the guerrilla force following the signing of the Peace Accord in that South American nation, has denounced the Colombian Government for not following the signed accords and that the Senate and the so-called Constitutional Court have emptied the agreement of any practical meaning.

The top leader of the former rebel forces and its Presidential candidate for the coming twenty seven May twenty eight elections, Rodrigo Londoño, has sent an open letter to the United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres informing him of the deep concern among former guerrilla members who voluntarily laid down their weapons in favor of a peace accord and have followed to the letter their commitments.

The revolutionary leader recalled statements by Assistant United Nations Secretary General for Political Affairs Jeffrey Feltman, who has warned during a visit to Colombia that the international community will not allow that former guerrillas who opted for peace not be allowed to fulfill their essential right to participate in political activities.-

The concern voiced by the high United Nations official stems from a decision by Colombia's Constitutional Court that approved reforms to the agreement that set up a Special Jurisdiction for Peace, one of the main decisions of the Government-Guerrilla agreement signed in Havana following four years of

negotiations between both Colombian parties.

The agreement set up the conditions to judicially process serious violations by both sides during the conflict and guarantees that the former combatants will have all conditions to join civil and political activities.

The reforms unilaterally introduced to the agreement by the Colombian Government set free former State officials and civilians linked to the Paramilitary groups and establishes that they will be exempted from any responsibility stemming from their violation of the peace accords, while, also in violation of the existing agreements, the former guerrillas will not be able to participate in political activities if they are not tried before hand, a decision that openly violates existing agreements.

Furthermore, the Colombian Senate approved changes in the system for the selection of Supreme Court of Justice magistrates, allowing politicians and judges linked to death squads and to severe violations of human rights be selected as justices of that court.

Such decisions by the Colombian government most seriously violate the spirit and the letter of the peace accords. In this respect, the former guerrilla political party has requested the urgent intervention of the United Nations in order to retake the peace process spirit and avoid such agreement to go overboard because of the violations by the Colombian Government.

To these very serious violations of the Peace Agreement by the Colombian Government must be added the generalized persecution against humanitarian and community personnel, whose lives and personal integrity are in serious danger given the inefficiency of the protection afforded by the security forces.

The Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces have scheduled their participation in the 2018 general elections in that South American nation, when the leaders of both sides will be Presidential candidates: Rodrigo Londoño, on behalf of the former rebels and Humberto de la Calle representing the Government during the Peace talks and currently heading the Colombian Liberal Party.

They are both fully aware of the complexities of the political process and of the risks posed by the attacks from the extreme right-wing, which is an avowed enemy of peace and of the reconstruction of the Colombian society, deeply fractured by over half a century of domestic war.

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