

Ecuador pulls out as guarantor of peace talks between Colombia and ELN rebels



Quito, April 19 (RHC)-- Ecuadorean President Lenín Moreno has announced that his country would no longer serve as the guarantor and host of the Colombian government's peace talks with the National Liberation Army, the ELN. Speaking with local media outlets, Moreno alleged that the ELN was undertaking -- in his words -- "terrorist activities" and announced that he has ordered the foreign minister of Ecuador to stop talks and the country's status as guarantor.

In March, the Colombian government and the National Liberation Army (ELN) resumed their 5th round of peace talks in Quito, Ecuador and agreed to continue this round of talks until May 18. The ELN and the Colombian government stated at the time that they were discussing the possibility of agreeing on a new bilateral ceasefire. The last one was agreed on in October last year and lasted for 101 days.

"We will resume the work of the dialogue table, addressing in this cycle the points of participation of society in the construction of peace, the assessment of the bilateral, temporary and national ceasefire that ended on Jan. 9 of this year and the construction of an agreement to a new cessation," both parties

stated in the document. The announcement made by Moreno Wednesday will significantly derail attempts for the parties to agree on a new ceasefire.

The announcement comes just days after Cesar Navas, Ecuador's Interior Minister, announced another kidnapping had taken place on the country's northern border, with Colombia and Moreno confirming the death of three Ecuadorean journalists kidnapped in March.

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