

Colombian political party FARC expels dissident commanders who have taken up arms



Bogota, September 5 (RHC)-- The Common Alternative Revolutionary Force party (FARC) has formally expelled Wednesday its former leaders who split from the main organization to take up arms once again, condemning the new armed grouping and reaffirming their commitments to the principles of the 2016 peace agreements.

FARC's official ethics commission released a statement Wednesday, formally announcing the expulsion of six former commanders who are part of the minority faction who split off to take up arms last Thursday.

Those expelled are Ivan Marquez, Jesus Santrich, 'El Paisa', Walter Mendoza, Romaña and Aldinever. The statement says that their decision to return to armed struggle is a violation of "our organizing principles, which are collective leadership and democratic centralism."

The split has been a blow to the political organization and the country's peace process as some of those expelled were themselves part of the FARC's negotiating team at the peace talks.

Those who have split have blamed the Colombian government for not implementing their end of the deal. Since the 2016 Peace accords were signed, the FARC and 95 percent of its ex-combatants have complied with their obligations to lay down arms and enter politics peacefully. However, the state and far-right paramilitaries have failed to meet their part as over 160 former-combatants and at least 627 social activists have been killed in that time.

While the FARC leadership agrees that the state has not met its obligations, they believe that efforts must be maintained to realize the principles of the peace agreement. Earlier this week, FARC leader Rodrigo Londoño said that "the proven noncompliance of the state may not be responded by other failures to comply."

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