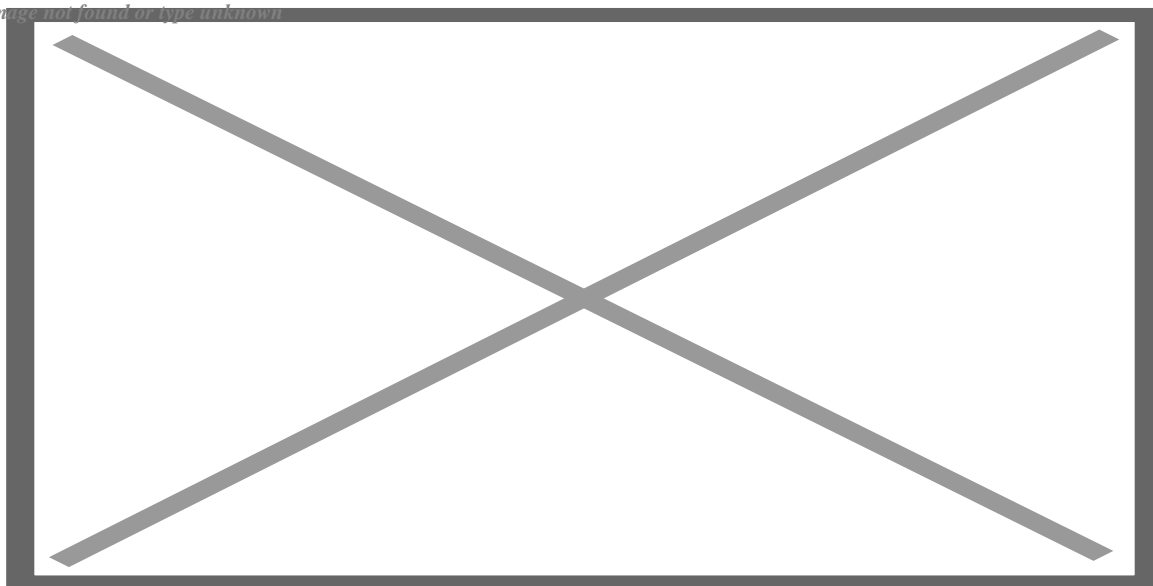


Incoming Colombian foreign minister pledges dialogue with armed groups

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?Incoming Minister of Foreign Affairs, Álvaro Leyva Durán to Gustavo Petro's cabinet. Jul. 21, 2022. | Photo: Twitter/@WRadioColombia

Bogota, July 23 (RHC)-- The government of President-elect Gustavo Petro will dialogue with every armed group willing to disarm, Colombia's incoming Foreign Minister Álvaro Leyva Durán said. The official made his statements in response to the letter sent by at least 30 armed groups proposing a ceasefire conditional on keeping their members out of jail.

"Of course there will be dialogue; of course, there will be, they know it. And I reiterate it through all the microphones, there will be dialogue, and we will seek total peace," Leyva said, referring to the proposal in the letter from armed groups, which was also sent to Petro and Vice President-elect Francia Márquez.

Colombia's most prominent criminal gang, the Clan del Golfo, proposed to Petro a ceasefire conditional on its members not going to jail, including those imprisoned abroad who are genuinely committed to uncovering the truth.

The Clan del Golfo released a letter that over 30 of the country's criminal organizations, including Los Rastrojos, Los Caparros and Los Mexicanos de Quibdo, have signed. They are open to coordinating a ceasefire against the institutional framework when President-elect Petro is sworn in on August 7th.

The next Colombian foreign minister, Álvaro Leyva Durán, assured that the government of President-elect Gustavo Petro would dialogue with all the armed groups that wanted to lay down their arms.

In the letter, they expressed their willingness to lay down arms at the indicated time, requesting forgiveness, offering the total and integral truth, reparation, and non-repetition of the criminal acts.

Regarding the dialogue with the National Liberation Army (ELN), Leyva said: "It is not that we are going to start a conversation with the ELN; we are going to continue with the same agenda, with the same principles."

Showing willingness to move forward in the peace process, the ELN has proposed to resume the peace dialogues that began in Quito in 2017 and then moved to Havana until their interruption in 2018.

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