

# *Vice-President-elect of Colombia says she will defend peace and social justice*

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**Márquez established other priorities of her government, such as gender equality, quality and free education, and attention to the agricultural sector, among others. She met with Nobel Peace Prize winner Adolfo Pérez Esquivel | Photo: Télam**

Buenos Aires, July 31 (RHC)-- The vice-president-elect of Colombia, Francia Márquez --during her visit to Argentina over the weekend -- said that her country will experience a change towards a new national project in which peace, dignity, social, racial and gender justice, and care for the environment are prioritized.

During an interview with feminist and researcher Verónica Gago at the Kirchner Cultural Center, Gustavo Petro's running mate said that "the greatest challenge we have is to achieve peace, silence the guns and attack the causes that generated the armed conflict, which have to do with hunger, lack of guaranteed rights, neglect by the State and racism."

She added that it was urgent to address drug policy, including marijuana: "We can generate a whole industry, in terms of pharmaceuticals, food and textiles, to generate opportunities for the same communities that have been victims of drug trafficking," said Marquez.

She also advocated the need for free and quality education; to provide better attention to peasants; to defend equality and respond to the demands of women, diverse populations, indigenous peoples, ethnic groups, youth, and historically forgotten and excluded regions in his country.

Regarding the Ministry of Equality, of which she will pull the strings, the vice president-elect pointed out that among its priorities will be to achieve wage equality between genders; the recognition of household work for retirement; and the implementation of a minimum wage for mothers.

"Black and indigenous women are not fighting to break the glass ceiling, Black and indigenous women are fighting to stand up and walk with their sisters, because they have always been on their knees," she said.

To which she added that she will seek to weave an agenda of Latin American construction that allows to collectively face the challenges, such as the neoliberal policies that prevail in the region and put at risk every day the life of human beings, but also of mother earth.

Márquez, who will be the first Afro-descendant vice-president of her country, received words of praise from Nobel Peace Prize winner Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, who considered her a sister and friend. At the same time, Perez Esquivel said that "you will have many difficulties, but you know that you can count on the Argentinean people and we will continue forward together."

The researcher and politician stated that "we intend to be free peoples. And for that we need struggles, experiences, solidarity, and today this challenge they have in Colombia is a struggle that continues. And it is also to change, to overcome the deaths, the violations of human rights, the tragic situation of the Colombian people; the right of men and women in their differences, but also in equal rights."

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