

Colombia is Closer Than Ever to Achieving Peace in Decades-old Conflict



Bogotá, September 25 (EFE-RHC) -- Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos said Thursday at the United Nations General Assembly meeting that the Andean nation is "closer than ever" to bringing an end to its decades-old armed conflict.

The president, who said an eventual peace agreement for Colombia will offer hope that other conflicts worldwide can be resolved, called on the international community for support in dealing with the "immense challenges" of the post-conflict era.

He said agreement has been reached thus far on three items of his government's six-item agenda with the FARC: land reform, political participation for demobilized rebels, and the problem of illegal drugs.

The full texts of those draft agreements were released Wednesday, a move the government and the FARC said was necessary to combat what they termed a misinformation campaign being waged by opponents of the talks, alluding to Santos' right-wing opponents, most notably his predecessor, Alvaro Uribe.

In terms of the challenges of the post-conflict era, Santos mentioned incorporating demobilized guerrillas into civilian life and guaranteeing the safety of ordinary citizens, saying the international community will have a "key" role to play.

The remaining items on the agenda of the peace talks, which began in late 2012 in the Cuban capital, are reparations to victims, the demobilization of rebel fighters and the implementation of the peace deal, which would have to be approved in a popular referendum.

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