

Colombian President Moves to Negotiate Bilateral Cease-Fire with FARC Rebels



Bogota, January 15 (RHC-teleSUR) -- After years of refusing calls by the FARC rebels for a bilateral cease-fire, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos has instructed his negotiators in Havana to settle on terms for an armistice.

"I gave instructions to the negotiators to begin — as soon as possible — the discussion of the bilateral and definitive cessation of hostilities," Santos said in a nationwide speech. He added that the insurgency group must comply with the unilateral and open ended cease-fire they implemented last December 20th.

President Santos said that the peace talks in Havana, which have been underway between government and FARC delegates for more than two years, are currently dealing with the last two points regarding the matters of victims' rights and the end of the conflict.

Meanwhile, senator and former president Alvaro Uribe harshly criticized Santos' decision and said that he is simply "rewarding terrorism."

"Santos humiliates Colombians and lies about the ceasefire," said Uribe, who is accused over his responsibility in the country's "false positives" scandal -- where armed forces personnel killed over 3,000 impoverished Colombians, dressing them as guerrilla fighters in order to receive bonuses and promotions.

The peace delegations between the government and the FARC will enter their next cycle in Havana, Cuba on January 18th.

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