



Briefing on Colombia, 12 July 2023

Malta Statement delivered by Adam Kuymizakis
Deputy Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

Thank you, President

I would like to start by thanking Special Representative Massieu and Ms Salcedo López for their insightful briefings today, and welcome the participation of Colombia's Foreign Minister.

Malta remains encouraged by the efforts and determination of the Government of Colombia to bring lasting and sustainable peace. Since our last meeting in April, we have seen significant progress in the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement, complemented by the Government's policy of 'Total Peace.'

We were pleased to see the approval by Congress of the Government's National Development Plan, which includes key elements of the Peace Agreement. We further welcome the approval on key bills relating to comprehensive rural reform, and the Government's recent purchase and formalisation of land in this regard.

The culmination of the third round of peace talks between the Government and ELN in Cuba, and the agreement on a six-month national bilateral ceasefire are also positive developments.



Furthermore, we welcome the announcement by the Government of upcoming talks with several illegal armed actors, and we call on them to seize this opportunity and engage in good faith.

We acknowledge the request made by the Government on 14 February for a further expansion of the mandate of the Verification Mission, and we look forward to working closely with Security Council colleagues on supporting the Government's efforts for sustainable and permanent ceasefires.

Malta is deeply concerned with the high levels of violence perpetrated by illegal armed groups and criminal organisations, which continue to undermine peacebuilding efforts across Colombia.

We condemn any violence and threats made against judges and politicians, human rights defenders, social leaders, and LGBTI persons, in the strongest terms.

We are deeply concerned by reports of thousands who have been forcibly displaced in recent months, and those forcibly confined, as well as reports of forced recruitment of children, disproportionately affecting Indigenous and Afro-Colombians.

We condemn the murder, violence, and threats against former combatants in several regions in Colombia, particularly in areas under the social and territorial control of illegal armed groups.



Government authorities must do all they can to stem violence against civilians, including increased efforts to extend State presence in rural areas to protect vulnerable communities.

As highlighted again today, we are concerned that gender provisions of the Agreement continue to face implementation challenges.

The recently approved bills to address violence against women in politics and establish a 50% quota for women in public entities are important for ensuring that women can fully, meaningfully, and safely participate in the political process.

Ongoing and future peace initiatives must include specific measures to prevent attacks, threats, killings, and conflict-related sexual violence against all women leaders and former combatants.

Malta supports the progress made by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace within Colombia's transitional justice system. We reiterate our support for women and LGBTI organisations' call to open Case 11 on sexual and gender-based violence, and for the full implementation of the Truth Commission's recommendations on reparations for victims of sexual violence.

We are encouraged by efforts to advance the implementation of the ethnic chapter across the Peace Agreement, and urge the Government to ensure adequate funding to address historic inequality.



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We also call for sustained attention and resources in the search for those forcibly missing and disappeared.

President

Colombia continues to progress towards lasting and sustainable peace. Malta reaffirms our commitment to support the peace process, and commends the determination and resilience of the Colombian people.

I thank you.