



## Security Council briefing on Colombia, 11 October 2023

Malta Statement delivered by Ms Francesca Gatt

Deputy Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

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Thank you, Mr President. I also thank Special Representative Massieu, Deputy Permanent Representative Ćurić Hrvatinić of Croatia, in his capacity as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, and Mr Botero García for their briefings. I also welcome the participation of Foreign Minister Leyva of Colombia.

Malta commends the Government's efforts in peace talks with armed groups. We also welcome the commencement of a six-month ceasefire with the National Liberation Army at the beginning of August.

The unanimous adoption of resolution 2694 to verify the implementation of this ceasefire demonstrates this Council's commitment to Colombia in its path to peace. It also highlights the progress being made on the ground.

We also welcome the progress being made towards a ceasefire with the Estado Mayor Central, and trust this is a promising step forward.

Regrettably, persistent violence continues to hinder the realisation of the full potential of the Final Peace Agreement. Targeted killings, threats, and violence against people running in the upcoming elections is cause for great concern. We urge the Government to ensure comprehensive safeguards for meaningful political participation and representation.



Violent attacks and targeted killings of former combatants, human rights defenders, indigenous, and Afro-Colombian leaders, as well as environmentalists as highlighted by Mr Botero García, pose an existential threat to the Final Peace Agreement. We condemn this violence in the strongest possible terms, and call on the authorities to swiftly bring those responsible to justice. The State must honour its obligations to those who chose peace. It must ensure robust security guarantees for former combatants and social leaders.

We are deeply concerned by both the high number of people who have been forcibly displaced, and those forcibly confined. More must be done to prevent and address these human rights violations.

We urge the Government to redouble its efforts for effective State presence in areas most affected by conflict, as well as creating suitable conditions for returns and reintegration. We also call for sustained attention and resources in the search for those forcibly missing and disappeared.

President

Malta welcomes the Government's efforts towards comprehensive rural reform. We call for continued work to provide access to land for vulnerable groups and transform conflict-affected areas.



The implementation of the 'Ethnic Chapter' in the Final Peace Agreement is of the utmost importance. It is deeply worrying that ethnic communities continue to suffer disproportionate violence and child recruitment at the hands of illegal armed actors.

We call on the Government to redouble its efforts to ensure the full and timely implementation of these crucial provisions to address historic inequalities.

Priority must also be given to the gender provisions in the Final Agreement. The full, equal, meaningful, and safe participation of women in its implementation remains key.

Malta is pleased to see the progress across cases of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace as it approaches the pivotal phase of issuing its first restorative sentences. This next step is crucial to the transitional justice process, as well as peacebuilding efforts and overall implementation of the Peace Agreement.

We also commend the announcement on the opening of Case 11 on sexual and gender-based violence, and the inclusion of sexual violence and slavery among the first regional indictments for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

To conclude, President, we are pleased to see clear progress being made on Colombia's path towards lasting and sustainable peace. It is essential to build on what has been achieved, and take decisive action to stem the ongoing



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violence and ensure the comprehensive implementation of the Final Peace Agreement.

Thank you.