



## Security Council briefing on Colombia, 11 January 2024

Malta Statement delivered by Francesca Gatt

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

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Thank you, Mr President. I thank Special Representative Massieu for his briefing, and Ms Perea Mosquera for her strong testimony. I also welcome the participation of Foreign Minister Leyva of Colombia.

Malta commends the renewed commitment of the Government to the Peace Agreement, and trusts that its continued implementation will yield positive results.

We welcome the prioritisation of the 'Ethnic Chapter' with the commitment to have least 60% of its implementation completed by 2026. This is critically important in light of the disproportionate impact of violence and child recruitment faced by Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities.

We also welcome the Government's progress on comprehensive rural reform, and call for continued efforts to provide access to land for groups in vulnerable situations and transform conflict-affected areas.



Malta commends the Government for their dedicated effort to reduce violence through dialogues with armed groups. We welcome the peace talks with the ELN and commend the appointment of a woman as head of the Government delegation to these peace talks, underscoring the importance of women's participation in ongoing dialogues.

We also welcome the agreements reached between the Government and the EMC and urge a formal extension to the ceasefire and greater protection of civilians.

President,

Persistent violence continues to hinder the implementation of key aspects of the Final Agreement.

The lack of security guarantees in several regions of Colombia have hindered the transition of former combatants into civilian life, and prevented rural reform efforts from improving the lives of entire communities.



Former combatants, human rights defenders, Indigenous, LGBTIQ+ and Afro-Colombian leaders, continue to face violent attacks and targeted killings. Women and girls face multiple and intersecting forms of violence, including sexual and gender-based violence. These crimes must be condemned in the strongest possible terms, and those responsible brought to justice.

We deeply regret reports that crimes of kidnapping, extortion, forced recruitment, and attacks on schools, persist or have increased. The Government must accelerate its deployment of an integrated State presence to regions suffering insecurity, and allocate the adequate resources to ensure robust security guarantees. We also call for sustained attention and resources in the search for those forcibly missing and disappeared.

Violence and insecurity also threaten Colombia's transitional justice process, obstructing the truth from coming to light.

The Special Jurisdiction for Peace must be allowed perform its critical work unimpeded, and receive full support from all stakeholders.



By opening Case 11, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace has rightly elevated the importance of investigating gender-based, sexual, and reproductive violence and other crimes against persons with diverse sexual orientation, expression and/or identity.

Malta is pleased to see the progress across cases of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace as it prepares to issue its first restorative sentences. This next step is crucial to the transitional justice process and overall implementation of the Peace Agreement.

To conclude, President, Malta is pleased to see the strides made by Colombia in its path to peace. We stand ready with the international community to support the peace process, and we look forward to a visit by this Council next month.

I thank you.