

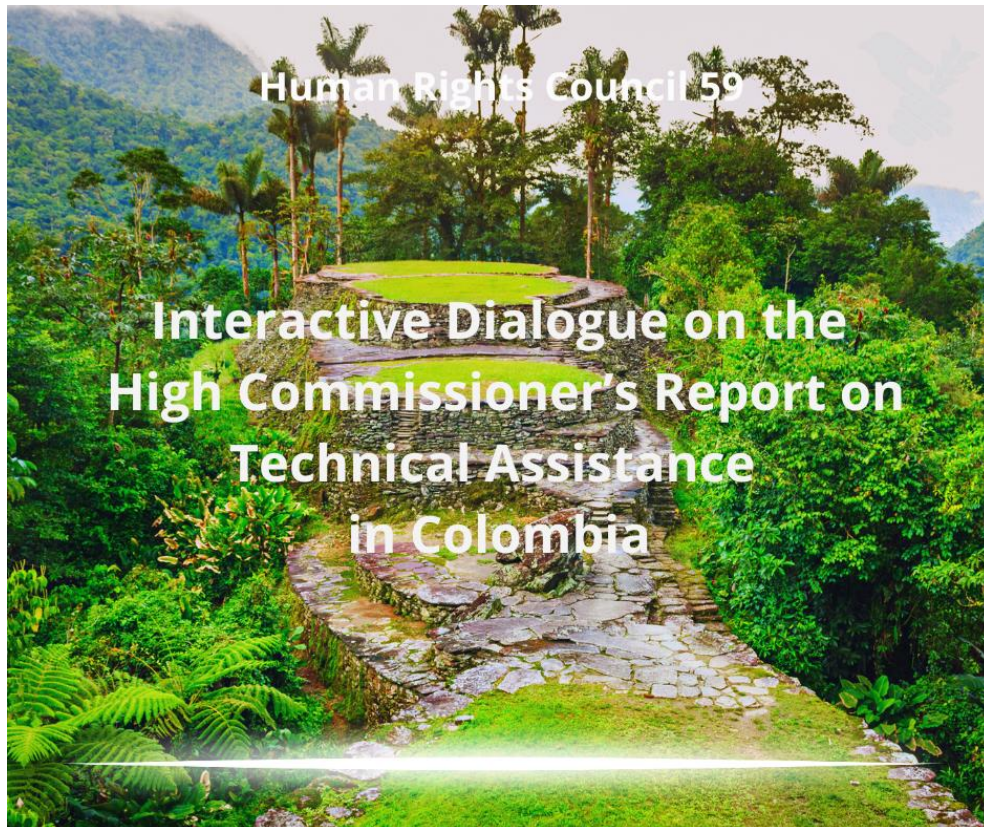


GENEVA CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
ADVANCEMENT AND GLOBAL DIALOGUE

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Interactive Dialogue on the Report of the High Commissioner on the Improvement of Technical Assistance and Capacity-Building in Colombia

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PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT

Ms. Maarit KOHONEN SHERIFF, Director, Global Operations Division, OHCHR

The Director of OHCHR's Global Operations Division presents the report of the High Commissioner on technical cooperation of its Colombian Office. The initiative behind this resolution attests to the firm commitment of the Government of Colombia to human rights, the **search for peace**, and close cooperation with OHCHR. The work of the Colombia Office has been comprehensive. It has coordinated monitoring, technical cooperation, and strategic support.

However, since July 2023, the ability of the Office to provide all the technical assistance provided for in UNHRC resolutions has been limited because of the liquidity crisis of the ordinary budget for the Secretary of the United Nations. Furthermore, in 2025 a number of donors either ended or significantly reduced their financial contributions. As a consequence, OHCHR will have to **close three field offices** - Medellín, Neiva, and Villavicencio - and make redundant almost half of its staff, exactly 46 staff members. OHCHR made this situation public last week, and since then, different sectors have voiced their concern about the closure of the three offices. OHCHR has already seen concrete examples of the **negative impact of the financial cuts**.



Firstly, **Indigenous women** with whom OHCHR has worked have literally cried when they saw that the Office in Neiva was closed. They said *'you're leaving us all alone, you are the only ones who can help us to recover our children out of the clutches of the armed groups.'* Secondly, OHCHR's protection has been reduced in areas where armed non-state actors represent a threat for human rights defenders. Thirdly, OHCHR has reduced its efforts with communities to prevent the recruitment of boys and girls. Fourthly, OHCHR had to reduce its technical assistance to the police force to prevent the excessive use of force.

Whilst the **challenges remain**, there are also **tangible results**. In 2024, OHCHR made progress in following up on 104 recommendations prioritised by the Truth Commission. Furthermore, OHCHR launched a joint public dissemination campaign to raise the visibility of the 222 recommendations made by the Commission. Through the support of the Special Peace Jurisdictions, OHCHR supported crucial investigations on extrajudicial killings, sexual violence and forced recruitment. OHCHR also helped victims and other people due to appear in court to prepare their appearance in court.

OHCHR's technical assistance and efforts to prevent human rights violations are increasingly sought after given the ongoing rise in violence and a rise in pre-electoral tensions. The territorial and social control of armed non-state actors and criminal organisations continue to affect the rights of civilians in a number of areas, in particular affecting women, girls and boys, as well as Indigenous peoples and Afro-descendant and peasant communities. For example, on 11 June, over 20 indiscriminate attacks were perpetrated in the county of Cauca, killing 8 people and injuring at least 83.

There is also **pre-electoral violence**. In this context, on 7 June, there was an attack against Mr. Miguel Uribe Turbay, who is a senator and a presidential pre-candidate who is currently in intensive care. Between 1 January and 25 June this year, we received allegations of 84 homicides or killings of human rights defenders, out of which we verified 20 cases. The report restates that only through the comprehensive implementation of the Peace Agreement, as well as **transitional justice** and the protection of human rights defenders, will we be able to consolidate real guarantees of non-reoccurrence.

As part of its work to prevent human rights violations, OHCHR has continued to provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Defence and to the National Police Force to reform doctrines, embody international standards and improve the **proportionate use of force**. Another example, over 700 human rights recommendations were included in the educational doctrine of the National Police Force in the training of their police officers. OHCHR also drove forward Presidential Decree 1231 of 2024, which embodies once again international human rights standards in the doctrine used for the use of force during demonstrations. The participation of victims has been supported by OHCHR's Office also through, for example, their involvement in the human rights platforms, which are crucial for the government's design of national policies to provide guarantees for human rights defenders.

To conclude, OHCHR reiterates its appeal to the international community to ensure proper support to OHCHR so it can continue to play the unique and essential role it is playing in Colombia, namely to provide support and technical assistance to the country.



REPLIES AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

Starting from some broader remarks, **Ms. Maarit KOHONEN-SHERIFF** positively notes that the interactive dialogue with Colombia shows how the UNHRC can effectively work at its very best when it can play the role it was conceived to play. It is thanks to a cooperative government that with the necessary **political openness** recognises that human rights promotion and protection is the right way to govern a country. In this very cooperative spirit, states can realize that an OHCHR Country Office is actually not a punishment, but it is an added advantage. It has an added value in supporting the government.

OHCHR's Office in Colombia has a full mandate, which includes monitoring, reporting, issuing advocacy statements, and raising human rights concerns with the government. This is openness, but the role of the Colombia Office is not seen as controversial. Rather, it is seen as productive role, making a significant contribution to the various sectors of society. Benefiting from unanimity and resources from the UNHRC is the ideal situation showing that the Council can make a difference on human rights at country level and in people's everyday lives.

It is very unfortunate that this goodwill and political opportunity coincides with the **liquidity crisis** of the regular budget. The resources attributed to the Colombia Office by the UNHRC are not available – they have been considerably reduced. Therefore, the capacity to extend the technical assistance OHCHR has and for which there is an opportunity is not there. In this context, one must pay tribute to the 46 OHCHR staff of the Colombia Office that are going to lose their jobs and will not be able to contribute anymore to human rights protection in Colombia. Many of them have dedicated 20 years of their professional career to their profession and have made a tremendous contribution.

Turning to remarks on Colombia, it is clear that the country is at the cusp where we must firmly protect the gains achieved and where we must fiercely ensure that the **progress achieved in peacebuilding** is not rolled back as we move towards elections. With this in mind, one collective measure to support the government is the ongoing implementation of the peace agreement which needs to be reinforced. It needs to become more effective through additional budget allocations at national level, through institutional coordination mechanism, but also state presence across the country, in particular in areas that have been historically affected by violence, in particular in pre-election times.

Furthermore, there is a need to develop **institutional planning instruments** to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the Truth Commission, including through the human rights-based indicators that have been developed, and the Office has a prime role to play in that in supporting the Truth Commission. It is also true that there is heightened risk of violence at the moment because of the pre-electoral period and because in some areas, non-state armed groups are indeed consolidating their social control over communities. This highly politicised context will continue to sharpen as we move to elections. If not enough **early warning measures** are put in place, preventive mechanisms, and particularly focus on those most affected. Those are human rights defendants, political activists, community and religious leaders, and candidates. This extends to online, the heightened risk of online violence as well, so we need to take good care of that and work together towards that.



As mentioned my many delegations, on the **pivotal role of civil society**, the Colombia Office strongly ensures the participation of civil society in all the aspects of its work. OHCHR facilitates the dialogue, the participation of civil society, and their interaction with state mechanisms. For example, OHCHR facilitated the Attorney-General's Office to hold sessions with civil society organisations in their action plan to strengthen the capacity to investigate killings and attacks against human rights defenders. A key measure to bring down tensions, to prevent further violence. In addition, OHCHR strongly calls on the government of Colombia that the strategy for investigating cases of killings of human rights defenders is complemented by the **policy of dismantling criminal organisations**. This is the way to address some of the pre-electoral violence context.

Finally, OHCHR recommends that the Colombian government continues its consultation with civil society platforms, in particular in adopting the comprehensive policy on guarantees for human rights defenders, and expanding again budgetary and institutional capacity in this regard. In closing, there is a window of opportunity to build a **real culture of peace and dialogue** together as an international community, but we do need the resources for it, in addition to the political will that exists.

VIEWS EXPRESSED BY COLOMBIA AS CONCERNED COUNTRY

The delegation of **Colombia** is thankful for the presentation of the High Commissioner and recognises the valuable commitment of his Office to the country. For 28 years, the Office has worked in Colombia and especially since July 2023 to implement UNHRC resolution 5322, and this, despite that not all resources set aside for it have been received.

Colombia has adopted 212 indicators to monitor the progress made in the **73 recommendations from the Truth Commission**, out of the 104 which were given priority to assistance provided by the office to the Unit for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement and to the Ministry of Justice made it possible to embody in these indicators a human rights-based approach. Equally important has been the support to the Committee for the Monitoring and Follow-up of the Implementation stemming from the Truth Commission through the dissemination of its mandate and its reports. In April this year, Colombia launched a **national campaign to disseminate the 222 recommendations made by the Truth Commission**. The report highlights the technical assistance provided by the office on three recommendations, namely investigations of serious human rights violations and breaches of international humanitarian law; the reform of the security sector; and the protection to human rights defenders and social leaders.

This cooperation has been especially valuable in providing support to the transitional justice mechanisms such as the Special Jurisdictions for Peace and the Unit for the Search of Disappeared Persons, as well as for the support provided to these bodies in the cases related to extrajudicial killings and the killing of human rights defenders. **Technical assistance** provided to the National Commission for Security Guarantees, to the Ministry of Defence and to the National Police and to the Congress has been crucial to help them devise public policies to dismantle criminal organisations, to reform the Intelligence Act and to consolidate an institutional doctrine which is based on human rights. It was also essential in the process to build its national policy for



human rights defenders, as well as the strengthening of the municipal oversight bodies in the revision of the individual and collective protection models.

The **implementation of the peace agreements** and the recommendations stemming from the Truth Commission require a sustained and long-term effort by all. Therefore, it is crucial that the UNHRC continues supporting the strengthening of the technical assistance powers of the Country Office on the ground, in particular given the current context characterised by an uncertain international environment and by serious violent acts such as the heinous attack of a presidential candidate on 7 June in Bogotá. To make progress more effectively in the promotion and protection of human rights in Colombia, it is urgent to **build a culture of peace** pursuant to UNHRC resolution 53/22. It is important that the Office be given the means to design and develop a culture of peace policy which would replace the **culture of war** which has prevailed in the Colombian society due to the domestic conflict, as recommended by the Truth Commission.

Colombia, at this Council's session, has submitted a draft resolution to give continuity to UNHRC resolution 53/22 in connection with five recommendations made by the Truth Commission, which are the four already mentioned and a new one, namely a **review of the national drugs policy to provide economic, social and health measures** to the consumers of drugs and the producers of drugs instead of criminalising them because people are bent on considering these as unlawful. The focus shall be placed on **neutralising the major producers of narcotraffic** which is a fuel for armed conflict in the country. Its dismantling, with the support of the UNHRC and OHCHR, is necessary to make progress towards achieving peace in Colombia.

Colombia respectfully invites the UNHRC member states as well as observers to support this initiative by reaffirming with them the commitment under Agenda Item 10 as a fundamental pillar of the UNHRC for the promotion and protection of human rights. With your valuable support, Colombia will continue to make progress to reach everything that is within the national authorities' grasp to leave behind the hell that has been gripping the country.

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

Views Expressed by State Delegations

Algeria, as a long-standing defended the principles of dialogue and cooperation, fully supports this mandate. Algeria believes this is a constructive example of support between OHCHR and the concerned country. Algeria voices concern over the potential impact of the financial crisis on OHCHR's capacities and all mandates under Agenda Item 10. In this regard, Algeria hopes that this will not lead to a scaling down of technical cooperation offered by OHCHR, whether in Colombia or anywhere else in the world. Commending progress made by the government of Colombia in implementing the recommendations by the Truth Commission, Algeria commends the sustained efforts deployed with a view to overcoming the problems posed by the previous conflict through a human rights-based approach. Algeria urges Colombia to continue its efforts in order to build a lasting, stable peace so that it can benefit the people of Colombia.

Austria commends Colombia for recognising the urgent need for a comprehensive and integral implementation of the 2016 Peace Agreement and welcomes Colombia's cooperation with treaty bodies and Special Procedures as illustrated by the recent visit of the Committee on Enforced



Disappearances and the Independent Expert on sexual orientation and gender identity, to name just two examples. As turning political goodwill into tangible impact on the ground can be challenging, Austria is particularly concerned that OHCHR's lack of financial resources may directly affect its capacity to provide technical assistance in the four areas identified in UNHRC resolution 53/22. Austria welcomes OHCHR's continued support to Colombia for the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission for the clarification of truth, co-existence, and non-repetition, including a comprehensive rule of reform, security and justice, reparations, dismantling criminal organisations, undermining peace-building, and advancing transitional justice. This support becomes even more important in the light of concerning reports on the killings of human rights defenders, the growing number of cases of forced recruitment, especially minors, as well as conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence.

Bolivia welcomes the solid cooperation between his office and the national and local authorities of Colombia and with civil society. This is something that has allowed progress towards implementing the Truth Commission's recommendations. Positively noting the political commitment of Colombia, Bolivia respectfully urges them to continue implementing the recommendations. In order to strengthen programmes and plans to fully implement the peace accords, Bolivia launches an appeal to all institutions and local authorities to support the Government's joint efforts with OHCHR. Bolivia regrets the direct impact on OHCHR's capacities due to budgetary restrictions and this has impeded progress in the four areas identified. Bolivia trusts there will continue to be progress in human rights on the ground and this will partly come about through technical assistance to states with their consent. In closing, Bolivia restates its commitment to supporting the people of Colombia and its Government as they strive to protect all human rights and consolidate peace in the country.

Chile extends its gratitude for the High Commissioner's report on strengthening technical cooperation and capacity-building in order to support the implementation of recommendations of the Commission for clarification of truth, co-existence, and non-repetition. Chile recognises the efforts deployed by the Government of Colombia towards lasting peace based on truth, justice, reparation, and welcomes the central role of the Truth Commission. Chile emphasises the need to implement the recommendations with an approach which is comprehensive and participative. The report highlights the key role of OHCHR in investigating human rights violations, reforming the security sector, and protecting defenders. Given the current context, it is essential to step up efforts to fully implement the recommendations and to ensure sustainability of technical assistance, which is currently under threat due to budgetary restrictions. Chile welcomes recommendations to strengthen institutional capacity to ensure victims are involved and to progress towards public policies that have a differentiated approach on gender, ethnicity, and territorial considerations. Chile will continue to support Colombia's efforts as part of international cooperation and UNHRC-mandated activities.

China consistently stands for dialogue and cooperation, constructive dialogue and cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual respect. Reiterating its firm position against the politicisation of human rights and interference in the internal affairs of concerned countries, China supports OHCHR in providing capacity-building and technical cooperation with the consent of Colombia, befitting its national conditions and the promotion of all human rights, including the right of the right to development, in a balanced manner. China commends Colombia for having promoted



the social reform and the national peace process and explore the right path of development befitting its national conditions. Expressing support for the Government of Colombia in its efforts to maintain national peace, stability and security and to uphold its domestic peace process, China calls on the international community to provide necessary assistance and support based on consultation and cooperation.

Cuba recognises the political will of the government of Colombia led by Gustavo Petro and their cooperation with OHCHR in identifying actions to effectively implement the Peace Accord. Technical assistance and capacity-building, it is proven, are very useful. Cuba strongly believes that constructive cooperation is the only way to improve human rights. All of this can bring about specific changes on the ground and this is quite different to punitive mechanisms that do not have the support of the countries concerned. There should be technical cooperation actions under the agenda items. Cuba supports Colombia's efforts to seek lasting peace and that means acting in pursuant to the Latin American declaration as a zone of peace. There must be a dialogue which truly contributes to institutional strengthening in a bid to protect all human rights for everyone.

The **Dominican Republic** welcomes the report presented on Colombia and recognises the significant progress made in implementing the Truth Commission recommendations, particularly the efforts made to consolidate a peace culture with a human rights-based approach. The Dominican Republic welcomes the close cooperation between Colombia and OHCHR, whose technical support has been key in strengthening institutional capacity and for opening inclusive dialogue with civil society. This is a valuable example for the region. The Dominican Republic further welcomes efforts to protect social leaders and human rights defenders as well as progress towards transitional justice and to reform the security sector using a more human and participative approach. As a sister country, the Dominican Republic restates its historical closeness to Colombia and hopes these efforts will be further pursued with the support of the international community. In closing, the Dominican Republic restates its support for OHCHR's key role and its conviction that when it is sustained, technical cooperation is a powerful tool to bring about change.

Germany recognises Colombia's efforts to address past and ongoing violations of international human rights and humanitarian law in the context of armed conflicts and appreciates the country's strong cooperation with the international community in this regard. At the same time, Germany remains concerned about the human rights situation, including with respect to human rights defenders, persons belonging to ethnic minorities and minors who continue to be victims of forced recruitment. Widespread immunity remains a major challenge. And despite the efforts of the Colombian government, particularly rural and historically marginalised regions suffer from continuing conflict and gaps in state presence with limited access to basic services such as security, education, and healthcare. This is why Germany encourages Colombia to continue its cooperation with international mechanisms and welcomes its commitment to human rights and peace building.

Honduras emphasises the importance to continue providing technical capacity-building as an essential pillar to support states in their efforts to protect all human rights. Recognising Colombia's efforts and OHCHR's work in the country, Honduras welcomes the strategic



approach for a cooperation on security and protecting human rights defenders. This must include a gender approach and meet the specific needs of people in a vulnerable situation. This must also respect sovereignty and the realities on the ground. Honduras reiterates its commitment to multilateralism, building peace and transitional justice process. Expressing full support to OHCHR's work, Honduras hopes that necessary resources will be found so that the Office can continue to do its essential work on the ground and provide technical assistance to Colombia so it can progress in implementing Truth Commission recommendations as part of the peace accords. To conclude, Honduras reiterates its will to continue to contribute to dialogue and cooperation in respect of human rights and the dignity of all peoples.

Ireland commends the commitment of the Colombian government to improving the human rights situation in the country, including through continued cooperation with OHCHR and other human rights mechanisms. Ireland welcomes the reported advances made in the implementation of the 2016 Peace Agreement, notably the development of indicators for monitoring the implementation of the prioritised recommendations of the Truth Commission and the launch of the national system for the search for persons deemed missing. Ireland reiterates its continuing support for all efforts to achieve lasting peace in Colombia. Nevertheless, the challenges reported are concerning, particularly in relation to limited resources for OHCHR and the significant security risks faced by human rights defenders. Ireland continues to support the OHCHR in Colombia and wishes to emphasise its important role in promoting human rights. In this regard, Ireland calls for the adequate resourcing of the Country Office in order to enable it to carry out its mandate. Last but not least, Ireland remains deeply concerned by the high levels of violence towards human rights defenders and encourages the Government to prioritise the adoption of a comprehensive policy on safeguards for human rights defenders.

Luxembourg on behalf of the Benelux countries commends OHCHR's support provided to Colombia in the implementation of the peace agreement, while regretting that the liquidity situation has affected the OHCHR's capacity to carry out all the technical assistance mandated by the UNHRC. The Benelux countries welcome the commitment of the Government of Colombia to implement the recommendations by the Truth Commission and the progress made. However, the Benelux countries consider that stronger action is necessary to ensure its comprehensive implementation and that of the peace agreement, most notably the persistence of impunity surrounding cases of serious human rights violations and abuses and the obstacles to justice are a challenge that needs to be addressed effectively and without delay. The Benelux countries remain concerned by the killing by non-state actors of social leaders and human rights defenders, among whom LGBTQI+ persons; the increasing number of recruitment and use of children by non-state armed groups and organised crime; and the persistence of disproportionate violence against Indigenous authorities, the Afro-Colombian community, members of community action committees and campesino organisations.

New Zealand appreciates the report on the technical cooperation in Colombia. As a co-sponsor of the resolution that underpins this technical mandate, New Zealand expresses its full support for the findings and the recommendations contained. New Zealand commends the meaningful progress that Colombia has made and endorses the areas identified where continued support is needed. Technical assistance provided by OHCHR has made a significant impact to date, and there is much potential to drive further meaningful progress towards the full implementation of



the recommendations by the Truth Commission. However, New Zealand voices concern over the impact of the liquidity situation on the OHCHR's work with Colombia. Without adequate resourcing, these efforts risk stalling at a critical juncture. This report comes at a time when Colombia and its people need continued support from the international community. New Zealand is pleased to reaffirm its support for the implementation of the peace agreement through a recent contribution of \$145,000 to the UN Multi-Partner Trust Funds for Sustaining Peace in Colombia. Alongside previous commitments, New Zealand hopes this contribution will assist in reducing the human rights effects of conflict and help build lasting, peaceful communities.

Peru recognises the support OHCHR has been providing to Colombian authorities to implement the recommendations of the Truth Commission. Peru welcomes the efforts being made by the Government of Colombia to progress in implementing the recommendations made by the Commission; their commitment to transitional justice and a culture of peace; and their openness to dialogue and inter-institutional cooperation. Peru agrees with the recommendation to undertake a root-and-branch reform of the protection system for defenders. There should be differentiated gender, ethnic, and territorial approaches, alongside the participation of civil society. Peru is concerned at the impact of budgetary restrictions and the impact it will have on the operations of OHCHR's Office in Colombia. At the moment, their presence is still necessary. Peru reiterates its readiness and willingness to cooperate with multilateralism and to boost efforts to strengthen capacities. There must be sustainable peace based on truth, justice, and non-repetition.

Russia supports efforts by the Colombian authorities to achieve peace and harmony across the country in resolving key issues in the human rights arena. However, despite significant efforts, some problems remain unresolved. Prosecution of human rights advocates and the former competence who have put down their arms, forced displacement and restrictions on the freedom to movement, violations of the right to and access to medical health care, kidnapping of people and involvement in domestic conflicts of minors. Many years of military actions have led to the formation of professional categories in Colombia who are present in hotspots across the world, Ukraine, Sudan, Libya and a number of others. Private military companies work with them inside Colombia and abroad. While welcoming the efforts of the Colombian authorities to ban by legislation such activities, Russia urges the Colombian authorities to continue efforts already undertaken aimed at the unconditional compliance with the provisions of the final peace agreement, as well as creating the preconditions for an effective negotiations process to achieve sustainable peace in the country.

Spain restates its commitment to the peace process in Colombia and is aware of the existing challenges eloquently laid out in the High Commissioner's presentation. Spain commends Colombia for the progress made towards building a fair, lasting peace founded on the respect of human rights and for their cooperation with UN mechanisms, including OHCHR and with other international verification mechanisms such as the MAP. Spain supports the work carried out by OHCHR's Office on the ground and regrets the lack of resources which has led to the closing of three branches. Spain is concerned that the reports of recruitments and forced disappearances, these particularly affect Indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, children, women, defenders and the LGBTI communities. It is essential to ensure their protection, to guarantee victims access to justice and reparation and to ensure accountability for human rights violations and abuse. Spain



reasserts its willingness to continue to support Colombia as it moves towards a peace based on inclusion and equal rights.

Sweden on behalf of the Nordic-Baltic countries expresses its support for OHCHR's work in Colombia and highlights the importance of ensuring its funding. The Nordic-Baltic countries commend Colombia for recognising the urgent need for a comprehensive and integral implementation of the peace agreement from 2016 and its continued efforts towards sustainable and durable peace. However, former combatants, human rights defenders and social leaders continue to face a dire security situation. This represents a threat to the peace agreement. Further commending the OHCHR's work within the area of security sector reform as well as the Colombian government's cooperation in this regard, the Nordic-Baltic countries appreciate OHCHR's support to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, supporting its important work within transitional justice to ensure accountability for human rights violations and abuses.

Switzerland is concerned that the increase in violence and forced displacement which has resulted from violence, particularly in rural areas, effective strategies to combat the expansion of illegal armed groups and to reach sustainable peace are imperative. Switzerland actively contributes to actions to bring about peace in Colombia and measures against the recruitment of children in armed conflict are indispensable. As the most deadly country for defenders, Switzerland calls on the Colombian authorities to urgently strengthen mechanisms to protect them as well as social leaders. This is in line with the Peace Accords of 2016. Having been involved in peace processes for a long time, Switzerland reiterates the importance of transitional justice mechanisms as well as key elements such as the recognition of responsibility, truth reparation and guarantee of non-recurrence. After the attack on the presidential pre-candidate Miguel Uribe Turbay, Switzerland calls on the authorities to prevent hate speech and to take necessary measures to guarantee the safety of candidates and the exercise of political rights looking forward to the legislative and presidential elections to be held next year.

The **United Kingdom** commends Colombia's continued collaboration with OHCHR and notes that the human rights situation in Colombia remains challenging, as recognised by the UN Committee on Enforced Disappearances on its visit last December and the visit of the UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in May. The UK is concerned at the increase in children being recruited by criminal groups to participate in the armed conflict. Moreover, violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity remains widespread. Human rights defenders, journalists, social and community leaders, as well as LGBT+ communities remain some of the most vulnerable. For the UK, the 2016 Peace Agreement is crucial to securing lasting peace in Colombia. Its implementation requires a whole of society approach. The UK continues to urge the Colombian Government, civil society, and UN agencies to work together on this important issue, particularly through technical cooperation and capacity-building. Furthermore, the UK continues to call on the international community to strengthen its assistance to Colombian-led efforts to secure lasting peace, including through supporting an effective response to the recommendations of the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition.

Venezuela welcomes Colombia's willingness to continue making progress and implementing specific measures to improve the human rights situation. Recognising the efforts undertaken by



the state and its institutions, particularly the adoption of the 2024-2028 Strategic Plan, Venezuela notes that this Plan aims to guarantee that persons have adequate access to justice and to meet the challenges of investigation and prosecution. Venezuela reiterates its support for all initiatives and actions that lead to peace in Colombia. In abiding by the universal principles of respect for sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs of states as enshrined in the UN Charter and aware of the challenges that Colombia faces, Venezuela urges multilateral bodies and competent international agencies to continue providing cooperation and technical assistance that Colombia requires.

Views Expressed by Intergovernmental Organizations

The **European Union** has been standing together with Colombia for over two decades on the journey towards lasting peace anchored in human rights and will continue to support the peace agreement and its implementation politically, technically and financially. The EU commends Colombia's commitment to human rights and multilateralism and looks forward to the CELAC-EU meeting summit in November. Further, the EU welcomes OHCHR's support for the implementation of the recommendations from the Truth Commission and of the peace agreement overall. Despite many positive steps and undeniable goodwill, hurdles remain. The EU is concerned by killings of social leaders, human rights defenders and signatories of the peace agreement and by the persistence of impunity and obstacles to access to justice. To put an end to the cycle of violence, it is crucial to continue to address the underlying causes of the conflict, to ensure the full protection of human rights throughout Colombia, to build a culture of peace and dialogue, to ensure adequate support for the special jurisdiction for peace and to integrate the agency of women and girls as well as individuals in a vulnerable situation.

Views Expressed by Non-Governmental Organizations

Corporación Centro de Estudios de Derecho Justicia y Sociedad (CCEDJS) delivers this statement on behalf of the Justicia, a human rights-based organisation in Colombia. In approaching the 10-year anniversary of the peace agreement, it is crucial to reckon with the persistent reality of global drug policies as drivers for violence, conflict, and insecurity in Colombia. The findings and recommendations from the Truth Commission in this regard are clear. The fight against drugs and its policies of prohibition constitute a persistence factor to conflict and violence in Colombia. The global paradigm of prohibition continues to provide resources for war-making. With regard to drug policies, the recommendation that shall not be forgotten from the Truth Commission concern the transition to a legal and strict regulation. This recommendation is also aligned with the 2023 OHCHR's report, recommending a shift away from punitive drug policies and encouraging member states to consider developing a regulatory system for legal access to all controlled substances. The negative impacts of global drug policies on human rights, the persistence of violence in Colombia, and the difficulties towards peace-building cannot be disentangled. This resolution is an opportunity to integrate drug policy reform into capacity-building efforts in the field of human rights and peace-building in Colombia. As this resolution is discussed, CCEDJS encourages the work of OHCHR and the UNHRC to promote human rights-based drug policies, including cooperation for transition towards legal regulation that can better contribute to peace-building.



Bureau International des Droits Humains - Action Colombie (OIDACO) states that the presence of OHCHR in Colombia remains indispensable for human rights protection to provide support to defenders and to civil society. Their mandate is added to and strengthens the work of other social organisations and agencies in order to meet the persistent challenges in the country. OIDACO is deeply concerned at the cut in resources to the Office, which has led to the closing of the local offices in Antioquia, Chocó and Meta, and the suspension of their presence in Córdoba and other places. This occurs just when the 2024 violence impact index in 23 local authorities shows very high levels of violence. The absence of the Office will mean that slowly there will be a lowering of essential support for Indigenous, Afro-descendant and rural peasant communities. OIDACO launches an appeal to states to redouble their political and financial efforts to strengthen capacity of the Office in Colombia. It is fundamental for them to be there in order to make progress in implementing the peace agreement to protect ethnic communities and those most affected by violence and to ensure that human rights defenders are safe.

The **IDPC Consortium** firmly supports OHCHR's work which brings about significant changes aligned with some of the recommendations, including an OHCHR's 2023 report on drug policies. This embraces a comprehensive approach looking at health, peace building and rural development. But Colombia's capacity to bring about change remains limited. As a result, there are punitive measures such as forced eradication of drugs, which continues to harm the very communities the policy wishes to protect. Human rights violations in Colombia cannot be addressed without also tackling the devastating impact of prohibition on the rights of life, especially for rural populations. The IDPC Consortium calls on the international community and OHCHR to support reforms that move away from punitive policies towards human rights and social justice and alternatives for communities affected by the war on drugs. The IDPC Consortium urges member states to adopt a new resolution on the human rights implications of drug policy. This would strengthen the role of OHCHR in supporting countries to ensure that drug control is in line with their human rights obligations.

The **Colombian Commission of Jurists** explains that for more than 20 years, OHCHR's presence in Colombia has helped civil society and the state in providing support to communities that have been sorely affected by the armed conflict as well as to victims who hope for justice and reparation. The Commission raises concern over financial cuts which have led to half of the team having to be dismissed. Of particular concern is the closure of human rights offices in areas where the state's presence has always been limited. In this regard, the Commission notes with concern massacres and forced recruitment in Guaviare and in Chocó and Afro-descendant communities being confined. These events together with other episodes testify that human rights challenges are increasing and becoming more severe throughout the country, and this makes the OHCHR's offices work all the more important. Stressing that OHCHR's work of in Colombia is more necessary than ever, the Commission calls for the relevant resolution to be adopted and implemented; the implementation of recommendations issued by the Truth Commission. In order to support investigations into human rights violations, there must be more protection for human rights defenders.

Peace Brigades International (PBI) voices concern over the financial crisis affecting OHCHR in Colombia. PBI urges states to redouble efforts to ensure that the office can continue to do its work, especially when their support is crucial in terms of the progressing to the implementation



of the peace agreement and bring about lasting peace. The current context requires an urgent, coordinated response from the state when faced with a humanitarian crisis affecting ethnic and campesino people, such as in Catatumbo, Putumayo, Valle del Cauca and Bajo Atrato. PBI sees with concern the worsening of the conflict and armed illegal groups. These are leading to forced displacement, confinement, silencing, forced recruitment and other serious violations. PBI reiterates the need to implement the public policy to dismantle criminal organisations, to adopt the comprehensive public policy of guarantees for human rights defenders and strengthen measures for collective prevention and protection. In urban and rural contexts, ethnic communities and rural peasant communities have developed their own mechanisms for protection and non-violent resistance. This must be recognised and strengthened. This is happening in various areas of the country. PBI expresses alarm at the persistence of forced disappearances and urges the UNRHC to support the pioneering comprehensive guarantee law for women searching for the disappeared, which was approved in 2024. Their effective implementation will represent a serious progress in combating this crime in Colombia.

International Federation for Human Rights Leagues (FIDH) echoes the High Commissioner's concern about the continuing violence disproportionately affecting indigenous communities in Colombia. FIDH draws the Council's attention to the ongoing armed confrontations impacting the human rights of the *Wiwa people* of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, beneficiaries of precautionary measures granted by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights since 2005. On June 24, clashes broke out between two armed groups in the *Kogui Malayo Arhuaco* Indigenous Reserve. Since then, armed actors have prohibited Indigenous residents from leaving, threatening reprisals and accusing them of being informants, with at least 400 *Wiwa* families currently confined to their territories. In parallel, numerous *Wiwa* families have been displaced and forced recruitment of indigenous children is reportedly increasing. These events are part of a worsening pattern of human rights violations and breaches of international humanitarian law by armed groups in the region since 2023. The situation reflects the concerns underlined in the report, including the lack of state response and the persistent absence of effective protection mechanisms for Indigenous peoples. FIDH hence urges the UNHRC to keep the situation under close scrutiny and to press for stronger guarantees of non-repetition. FIDH further calls on the Colombian authorities to act on the Ombudsman Office's early warnings issued since 2023 and to strengthen coordination with OHCHR, especially in territories where violence is escalating.

International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) deplores that in Colombia, the promise of a comprehensive peace faces persistent challenges. Despite many national plans, illegal armed groups continue to control territories. They affect communities and human rights defenders. From the ground, ISHR views with concern that coordination between national policies and local authorities is weak or non-existent, and this perpetuates historical inequalities and makes it difficult to implement the peace agreement. There is a real gap between business interests, large-scale development projects and human rights violations. The context is marked by threats, displacements, murders of social leaders. Therefore, ISHR calls on the UNHRC to urge the Colombian state to establish mandatory coordination between national and local authorities with clear resources. This will ensure that policies on security, peace and human rights bring real results in areas affected. Much needed are guarantees for meaningful participation of ethnic communities and civil society organisations in putting the policies in place. This must not just be

symbolic, but real participation. Finally, ISHR urges the UNHRC to promote the establishment of an international monitoring mechanism allowing for clear links to be seen between corporate actors, investors and state contractors and human rights violations in Colombia.

Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) thanks the High Commissioner for the report on Colombia. Despite the clear targeting of religious and belief communities by illegal armed groups, the final report of Colombia's Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition fails to meaningfully address the decades of violations against individuals based on religion or belief. As recent developments in the country have made clear once again, this was a grave oversight. On 4-5 April 2025, eight individuals, including seven Protestant church leaders and active church members, were forcibly disappeared after receiving orders to attend meetings with members of an illegal armed group in Guaviare Department. Their bodies were later discovered in a mass grave in a rural part of the municipality, as confirmed in a statement issued by Colombia's Attorney-General's Office on 1 July. CSW calls on Colombia to recognise the specific vulnerability of religious leaders in the country and to ensure their access to government protection programmes and security mechanisms as and when necessary. CSW further urges the Office of the Attorney-General to prioritise its investigations of killings of human rights defenders, including religious leaders, and to take urgent action to determine the whereabouts and well-being of the eight individuals who were forcibly disappeared in Guaviare in April this year.

Alliance Global expresses appreciation for the new FARC and peace agreement. This agreement will be 10 years old with substantial reforms. The society in Colombia has expected major results. The diplomatic corps also have expressed their serious concerns over the lack of progress. The UNHRC and 15 unanimous UNSC members have periodically called for the government to accelerate the implementation of the peace agreement, which has been deprived of public policy, undermined by the poor results of total peace. The figures representing violence, assassinations, recruitment of children and narco-trafficking have constantly grown. The peace agreement contains hundreds of pertinent provisions to meet the reality in Colombia, but they have not been fully implemented or insufficiently implemented. It is more than urgent in the pre-electoral period in Colombia, as political concerns around violence are continuing.

FACTS & FIGURES ON ID PARTICIPATION

20 State Delegations

1 Inter-Governmental Organization

9 Non-Governmental Organizations