**Update V: Status of Colombia’s Peace Process**

As a key stakeholder in the U.S.-Colombia bilateral relationship, we want to keep you up to date on Colombia’s Peace Process. Since we communicated with you on October 21, President Juan Manuel Santos and Ambassador to the United States Juan Carlos Pinzón have said the following:

**President Santos:**

“Over the last three weeks, after having publicly acknowledged the result of the plebiscite, we have maintained an open and frank dialogue with citizens, social organizations, victims’ groups, women, youth, trade unions, all political parties, the federation of departments (states), mayors, and many other sectors that promoted the ‘Yes’ and campaigned for the ‘No.’ This dialogue has been fruitful. It allowed us to listen to citizens’ concerns. In many cases we have been able to clarify and answer the questions and doubts they presented us.

“We also received a lot of proposals to make changes, adjustments and clarifications to the Peace Agreement. So far there are 445 proposals which have been cataloged, organized and systematized according to the chapters of the Agreement. All, all are being studied and analyzed carefully, with respect and will be discussed with the FARC to reach a new agreement as soon as possible.”

**Ambassador Pinzón:**

“Our efforts will take more time, effort and political will - and above all, unity - but the efforts to achieve a sustainable peace will continue and are worth it.”

Below is a timeline of major events and meetings that have occurred in Colombia since our last update. Here in Washington, Ambassador Pinzón is meeting with a wide range of stakeholders, including congressional staff and representatives from nongovernmental organizations, think tanks and the U.S. business community. In addition to delivering remarks on Colombia’s transformation and the Peace Process last week at the American Enterprise Institute, George Washington University Elliott School of International Affairs, Americas Society / Council of the Americas and the Inter-American Dialogue, this week, the Ambassador also spoke to students and faculty at Georgetown University’s Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service.

**October 27:**

- Presidents of Ibero-American business organizations issue a formal declaration in support Colombia’s peace process.

**October 23:**

- President Santos addresses the nation and provides an update on the National Dialogue for Unity and Reconciliation and the status of the Peace Process.
President Santos said:

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“This dialogue has been fruitful. It allowed us to listen to citizens’ concerns. In many cases we have been able to clarify and answer the questions and doubts they presented us.

“We also received a lot of proposals to make changes, adjustments and clarifications to the Peace Agreement. So far 445 proposals have been cataloged, organized and systematized according to the chapters of the Agreement. All, all are being studied and analyzed carefully, with respect and will be discussed with the FARC to reach a new agreement as soon as possible.

“Just before the first group of government negotiators will travel to Havana, I gave them instructions to work steadily and effectively to achieve that objective that all Colombians have: a new agreement that allows us to achieve a stable and lasting peace, wider and deeper. I am confident that the same willingness and openness encourages the FARC.

“Today, I sent three more negotiators to focus on some specific issues that require their assistance to move faster.

“Colombians, the opportunity provided by this new phase of peace-building cannot be lost. The dialogue must continue to move forward toward unity, toward reconciliation on the basis of a new agreement.

“… I will keep listening, dialoguing with all Colombians, with all sectors of society, those who voted ‘Yes,’ those who voted ‘No’ and those who for whatever reason did not participate in the October 2 plebiscite. Everyone must be heard and their ideas respected. Thus, through an open and democratic dialogue, we achieve reconciliation and peace that Colombians want and deserve.”

October 20:

- President Santos addresses the nation and provides an update on the National Dialogue for Unity and Reconciliation.

President Santos said:

“The National Dialogue advances without pause. As I committed since October 2, I opened the doors to listen to Colombians from diverse sectors, organizations and citizens, who defended the ‘No’ and those who supported ‘Yes.’ … I listened carefully to their concerns and reiterated to them that the rights of victims to truth, justice, reparation and non-repetition are the backbone of the agreement. … In these two weeks, I have met with representatives of the victims, [representatives] of the Catholic church, with pastors of Christian churches, with all political parties, indigenous, Afro-Colombian organizations, farmers, women, entrepreneurs, trade unions, young people, students, in Bogota and other
“All of them gave us hundreds of proposals for a new agreement with the FARC that allows us to achieve not only a stable and lasting peace, but a wider and deeper peace.

“Today, the term ended for proposals. From the outset, we dedicated a team to catalog, organize and classify the proposals received. There are many who agree and are reasonable. Others are difficult, but not impossible, and there are others that are totally unviable because they start from the basis for example that there is no conflict that can be solved, and therefore, international humanitarian law and transitional justice that was created precisely to help resolve armed conflicts cannot be applied.

“... Facing the citizen outcry for the need to end the uncertainty and move forward, we will work at full speed to achieve the new agreement. With the FARC we have established a working mechanism for review and to decide on necessary adjustments ... I want to finish this soon, very soon.”

- President Santos meets with representatives of organizations from the indigenous, agricultural and Afro-Colombian communities, as well as the National Peace Council, which brings together a diverse group of social actors to advance dialogue on peace and overcoming conflict. The President also meets with victims of the conflict, as well as delegates from various political parties, including Polo Democrático, Alianza Verde, Así, Mais y Mira.

October 19:

- The UN Security Council announces support for the mandate of the UN Mission in Colombia to continue monitoring the ceasefire, which the President extended last week.

October 18:

- President Santos delivers an address to the nation to provide an update on the National Dialogue for Unity and Reconciliation and announces the government will continue receiving proposals for a new Peace Agreement until Thursday, October 20, at which point these proposals will be shared with the FARC.

President Santos said:

“I am glad this space for dialogue has also served as an opportunity to clarify many issues and to reassure Colombians on the [Peace] Agreement. During these days, we also have advanced the study and analysis of the observations and proposed adjustments we have received from multiple sectors.

“We will continue listening and receiving proposals until Thursday and then bring them to the negotiating table with the FARC. A new agreement is already the citizen outcry, is the will of the government and should also be of the FARC. ... [The peace we seek is] a peace that allows us to restore security and tranquility to the country, to ensure that there are no more victims and to open the door to new opportunities for growth, investment and employment across the country.”

October 15:

- President Santos announces three municipalities are free of suspected antipersonnel mines. Demining is a
critical part of Colombia’s road to peace, for which the nation has widespread commitments of support from the international community.

**President Santos said:**

“We are happy to share with the country that three municipalities, Nariño, Guatapé, La Union, are now on the list of municipalities free of antipersonnel mines, which join others here in Antioquia such as San Carlos and San Francisco, El Dorado in Meta, Zambrano in Bolivar and San Vicente de Chucuri in Santander. This is what everyone wants, saving lives and building peace in the regions most affected by the war.”

**October 13:**

- President Santos meets with Secretary General of the Organization of American States Luis Almagro to discuss pathways toward consolidating peace.

- President Santos announces the extension of the bilateral ceasefire and end of hostilities agreement between the government and the FARC.

**October 12:**

- President Santos addresses the nation to provide an update on advancements in the National Dialogue for Unity and Reconciliation, which has included meetings between the government and its negotiating team and political stakeholders, religious leaders, the indigenous community and the private sector, among others.

**President Santos said:**

“I wanted to tell you personally that in recent days I’ve been talking with many people from many sectors and citizens’ organizations who supported the ‘Yes’ and who supported the ‘No,’ to advance national unity for peace. … The vast majority have asked me to find a solution soon, because uncertainty is the enemy of the process. I will continue listening and collecting concerns to clarify them and bring them to the negotiating table to discuss them. Peace unites us. Peace will give us opportunities for all Colombians.”

- In various major cities across the country, the Colombian people participate in peace marches led by relatives of victims, social movements, indigenous communities and young people – all unified for peace.
October 11:

- President Santos holds meetings with victims, religious leaders and former Inspector General of Colombia Alejandro Ordóñez, respectively, to hear their views on the peace agreement, gender issues, transitional justice and sentences and agrarian issues.

- Colombian artist Doris Salcedo leads and Colombians participate in the creation of a giant white flag in memory of victims of the conflict and in a show of solidarity and unity for peace.

October 10:

- President Santos announces that peace talks with the ELN will begin on October 27.

- More than 2,000 members of the indigenous community from the departments (states) of Cauca, Valle del Cauca, Huila, Caquetá, Nariño, Cundinamarca and Magdalena express their full support to President Santos to persist in the search for peace.

October 9:

- During a visit to Bojayá in the department of Choco, President Santos announces that he will donate the money received as part of the Nobel Peace Prize award to victims of the conflict.

**President Santos said:**

“I wanted to come to share [the Prize] with you because you symbolize what this war was in Colombia … You have absolute assurance that this process will be brought to fruition.”
October 7:

- The Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize to President Santos.

Following the announcement, **President Santos said:**

“Infinitely and with all of my heart, I am grateful for this honorable distinction. Receiving this is not just for me, but for all Colombians, especially the millions of victims left by this conflict we have suffered over more than 50 years. Colombians, this award is yours.

“It is for the victims. Not a single victim more, nor one death more. We should reconcile and unite to complete this process and start building a stable and lasting peace.

“... I receive this recognition with great humility and as a mandate to continue to work tirelessly for peace for all Colombians. To this cause I will devote all my efforts for the rest of my days.

“Thank God, peace is near. Peace is possible and it is time for peace.

“Together, together as a nation, we will build it. I invite everyone to join forces, our minds, our hearts, in this great national pursuit, that all may win the most important prize: Colombia in peace.”

October 5:

- President Santos meets with former Presidents Andrés Pastrana and Álvaro Uribe at the Presidential Palace to find common denominators and to hear their concerns and observations. The meeting with former President Uribe was a four-hour working meeting with the Colombian government’s negotiating team and members of Uribe’s political party, which led the “No” vote.

Following these meetings, **President Santos said:**

“As I announced on Sunday, after the results of the plebiscite, it is my duty as President to seek ways to unify and bring reconciliation to the nation. ... This morning, I listened carefully to former President Pastrana. I want to thank him for his generous disposition and willingness to help safeguard the process at this historic moment.

“... Then we met with former President Uribe and those who accompanied him. ... To all of them, I appreciate your willingness and good will.

“We listened for about four hours with close attention to their concerns. All of them and others that were not addressed will be discussed in the framework of the agreed commission. This dialogue will start tomorrow.

“... [W]e are very close to achieving peace – a stable, durable peace, and with broader public support. If everyone has the will and contributes responsibly, with realism and speed, we will succeed.

“... I want to thank the international community, which since Sunday has expressed a willingness to continue supporting Colombia in our search for and consolidation of peace.
“… Consolidating and strengthening peace is the way we should go as a nation. It is my constitutional obligation and my deep conviction.

“To the millions of Colombians who voted ‘yes’ on Sunday, all who have reiterated their commitment and willingness to work for peace, I say firmly and clearly: Persevere! Persevere! Persevere!”

President Juan Manuel Santos and members of the negotiating team met with former president, Alvaro Uribe and members of his party about the national dialogue convened by the President.

- U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry calls President Santos to further express support from the United States for the efforts to advance inclusive dialogue to achieve lasting peace.

**October 4:**

- President Santos announces the extension of the bilateral ceasefire and end of hostilities agreement between the government and the FARC.

- President Santos meets with Colombian business leaders and religious leaders to hear their perspectives, respectively.

**October 3:**

- President Santos declares the opening of a national dialogue and appoints delegates to begin a dialogue with the supporters of the “No” vote.

- The U.S. and EU governments express support for Colombia and the Peace Process and the continued dialogue.
UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon reaffirms the UN's commitment to the Peace Process and praises the government and FARC for their post-plebiscite positions on continuing to pursue peace.

We will continue to update you as the process moves forward.

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