

Colombia monthly newsletter - December 2018

The peace agreement

- The Government, Contributing Countries and FN approved the continuation of the FN. Contributions from Germany, the United Kingdom, Norway, Chile, and the Secretary General's Fund for the Consolidation of Peace a total of 28.5 million USD for continued support for the Government's efforts in the consolidation of peace in Colombia as a national project. The program will run until December 2022 and will support projects in the 16 regions of Colombia with focus on stabilization, reincorporation, victims, transitional justice and Communication.¹
- Vicente Torrijos was officially named as the new director of the Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica, despite criticism that he earlier was expelled from the Universidad del Rosario for lying about his doctorate degree.²
- Inhabitants of La Guajira, Cesar, Antioquia, Nariño, Guaviare, and Putumayo will benefit from three new projects to strengthen communities in post-conflict zones, supported by the European Fund for Peace and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The projects seek to benefit inhabitants of rural areas of eight municipalities located in these six departments of Colombia which were affected by the conflict, as well as ex-combatants from four Territorial Training and Reintegration Spaces (ETCR). These projects, which have an investment of close to 7 million Euros (more than 25 billion pesos), seek to strengthen the social fabric, resilience and generate productive environments that are economically and environmentally sustainable.³

¹ <https://www.eltiempo.com/justicia/servicios/paises-y-onu-aportan-mas-recursos-para-el-posconflicto-en-colombia-302680>

² <https://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/pese-a-criticas-gobierno-ratifica-a-torrijos-para-memoria-historica-302398>

³ <https://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/fao-y-fondo-europeo-para-la-paz-apoyaran-tres-proyectos-para-el-posconflicto-302692>

- A new disbursement for more than 2,818 million dollars is destined to finance 34 new projects for ex-guerrillas. The resources will benefit 279 ex-combatants. These are initiatives that largely concern agroindustry, goods and services, livestock, fish farming activities and access to communications in both rural and urban areas throughout the country.⁴
- A study by Indepaz reveals that there are 3,000 narco-paramilitaries, 2,500 dissident members, 2,000 members from the ELN and 250 members from the EPL. Even so, violent actions have diminished.⁵
- The United Nations replaced Colombia's peace process' chief observer. The Mexican diplomat, Carlos Ruiz, will become the new chief of the international organization's peace observers in Colombia.⁶
- Colombia's war crimes tribunal asked the country's security forces to locate "El Paisa"; a former FARC commander who disappeared earlier this year.⁷
- The new director of Colombia's Victims Unit, the entity in charge of assisting victims of the country's armed conflict, said that 200 thousand people have falsely claimed to be victims of the conflict. According to the director, the armed conflict left 8.7 million victims of which more than 2% could be people falsely claiming to be victimized in order to obtain state compensation.⁸

General news

- After a 66 day student strike and 10 demonstrations, the students and the President reached an agreement. President Duque announced that during the next 4 years, the budget will increase by more than \$ 4.5 billion.⁹

⁴ <https://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/gobierno-aprueba-recursos-para-34-proyectos-productivos-de-exfarc-304800>

⁵ <https://colombia2020.elespectador.com/pais/los-nuevos-conflictos-en-el-posconflicto>

⁶ <https://colombiareports.com/un-replaces-verification-chief-of-colombias-peace-process/>

⁷ <https://colombiareports.com/war-crimes-tribunal-asks-security-forces-to-locate-missing-farc-commander/>

⁸ <https://colombiareports.com/colombia-claims-200000-people-falsely-claimed-to-be-conflict-victims/>

⁹ <https://www.eltiempo.com/vida/educacion/reacciones-por-el-acuerdo-entre-el-gobierno-y-estudiantes-universitarios-305506>

Mental health

- A new initiative will penalize EPS's that do not comply with their established purpose. Specifically, the project aims to strengthen the sanctioning capacity of Supersalud by tightening control measures and raising fines. According to the Superintendent of Health, Fabio Aristizábal, the initiative is "*para actuar con severidad frente a los casos de abuso y violación en la prestación del servicio de salud*".¹⁰
- Project 'de ley' seeks to reform the health system in Colombia. The initiative proposes replacing EPS with health risk insurers and unifying regimes, as well as unifying the contributory and subsidized regimes "*para que todos los colombianos cuenten con las mismas condiciones y beneficios*", and incorporating a comprehensive care model to improve the quality of services.¹¹
- Ivan Duque announced that the government will invest \$ 488,000 million pesos before the end of the year to solve the crisis in the health sector.¹²

Cauca

- A 19-year-old medicine student was kidnapped in the north of Cauca.¹³

Meta

- The police captured 14 people, one a minor from the gang called 'Los Gomelos'. The gang 'Los Gomelos' was led by a man known as 'Melo'. He is accused of storing, dosing, distributing and selling marijuana and cocaine, through the modality of home delivery, affecting school environments, parks and public roads of the municipality of Acacias.¹⁴

¹⁰ <https://www.eltiempo.com/vida/salud/proyecto-de-ley-de-la-supersalud-que-aumenta-sanciones-a-eps-302268>

¹¹ <https://www.eltiempo.com/vida/salud/el-proyecto-de-ley-que-busca-reformar-el-sistema-de-salud-299680>

¹² <https://www.elespectador.com/noticias/salud/gobierno-inyectara-488000-millones-para-cierre-de-ano-del-sector-salud-articulo-829110>

¹³ <http://elnuevoliberal.com/estudiante-de-medicina-fue-secuestrado-en-el-norte-del-cauca/>

¹⁴ <https://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/desarticulan-banda-los-gomelos-de-microtrafico-en-acacias-304320>

- In Villavicencio and Bogotá twelve people were captured. Those captured included two policemen and three ex-officers of that institution, along with seven people suspected of being part of a gang of criminals dedicated to armed robbery, robbery of residences, and robbery of merchants.¹⁵
- Six people were murdered in the rural area of Mapiripán south of Meta. The information was confirmed by the public force that moved to the Bahía Celeste farm, where villagers reported that the massacre had occurred.¹⁶
- A 12-year-old boy was rescued after being kidnapped in Villavicencio. The boy was released during transport by the road to Puerto López. Three people were captured during the operation.¹⁷

Tolima

- The EPS failed to comply with the requirements of resource agreement with six hospitals of the Red Pública del Tolima. The Secretary of Departmental Health, Sandra Torres, claimed that only 76% of the money owed and arranged was paid in the second turn planned for December.¹⁸
- EPS Asmet Salud y Ecoopsos adopted a special surveillance preventive measure for the Supersalud and EPS Asmet Salud and assure that they cannot enroll more users or accept transfers from other EPS. The decision was taken because it does not guarantee the benefit network, nor 100% coverage of services to users in the municipalities in which it operates.¹⁹

¹⁵ <https://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/capturan-policia-que-hacia-parte-de-banda-de-atracadores-304880>

¹⁶ <https://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/otras-ciudades/masacre-de-mapiripan-de-2018-306758>

¹⁷ <https://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/liberan-menor-que-habia-sido-secuestrado-en-villaviencio-307662>

¹⁸ <http://www.elnuevodia.com.co/nuevodia/tolima/regional/426077-las-eps-vuelven-a-incumplirle-a-la-salud-de-los-tolimenses>

¹⁹ <http://www.elnuevodia.com.co/nuevodia/tolima/regional/426084-eps-aset-salud-y-ecoopsos-entran-en-medida-especial-de-vigilancia-de-la-supe>

Bolívar

- There is an offer of 192 apartments which will be awarded through the DPS to victim families of the armed conflict who apply to receive housing. 190 families claimed that their houses are damaged. They began an indefinite mobilization for the right to decent housing.²⁰
- The Mayor of El Carmen de Bolívar and the Police started a peace process six months ago for a group of youths from different sectors of the municipality. Recently, a large number of youths handed over their weapons and signed a peace contract.²¹
- Residents of Turbaco protested due to a lack of water. *“Tenemos más de dos meses sin agua y no nos solucionan, según han dicho algunos el bombeo lo harán después del 31 de diciembre, pero estamos cansados de la misma situación de siempre y tener que comprar agua”*, said Hortensia Diaz, inhabitant of the neighborhood La Floresta.²²

Putumayo

- The director of the DNP, Diego Dorado Hernández, announced that they will give about 8.2 trillion pesos for projects in Putumayo over the next 4 years. This means that the public resources will increase by 40,1%. Putumayo is home to around 363,967 people, of whom roughly 95,251 are poor.²³

²⁰ <http://www.eluniversal.com.co/regional/bolivar/victimas-aspiran-que-darse-con-una-vivienda-FC352997>

²¹ <http://www.eluniversal.com.co/regional/bolivar/jovenes-en-riesgo-entregaron-armas-y-firmaron-un-pacto-por-la-paz-GX505945>

²² <http://www.eluniversal.com.co/regional/bolivar/habitantes-de-turbaco-protestaron-por-la-falta-de-agua-FY526025>

²³ <http://diariodelsur.com.co/noticias/local/daran-8-2-billones-para-el-putumayo-488935>