

Colombia Newsletter January 2019

The Peace Agreement

- Only three of the sixteen development plans for the territories, that were most affected by the conflict, are not completed. Eleven of the development plans were made during the Duque government. Of the sixteen development plans those created in order not to repeat the violence, only three remain to be completed: the sub-region of La Macarena and Guaviare, the middle Pacific, the Caguán basin and the piedemonte caquetaño. It is expected that these remaining plans will be implemented at the beginning of the year.¹

More than 450 social leaders in Colombia have been killed since the peace agreement was signed, according to UN reports.²

- Five social leaders were assassinated in the first five days of the year.³
- The Colombian government admits to have assassinated at least 348 social leaders and human rights defenders between 1985 and 2016.⁴
- After half a year of inaction and dozens of assassinations, Duque reactivates attempts to dismantle groups suspected of the assassinations of social leaders on a top-level commission.⁵
- President Iván Duque closed the door to the dialog with the ELN in Cuba in response to an attack on the 'Escuela de Cadetes de la Policía' in Bogotá. The attack left 21 soldiers dead and more than sixty wounded. Duque says that once the government's demands have been met, the peace dialogues will be reinstated.⁶

¹ <https://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/asi-avanzan-los-planes-para-las-zonas-que-mas-sufrieron-el-conflicto-con-farc-311918>

² <https://colombiareports.com/un-in-colombia-received-reports-of-assassinations-of-more-than-450-social-leaders/>

³ <https://colombiareports.com/colombia-2019-five-social-leaders-assassinated-in-first-five-days-of-the-year/>

⁴ <https://colombiareports.com/colombias-state-admits-to-assassinating-348-social-leaders-between-1985-and-2016/>

⁵ <https://colombiareports.com/duque-reactivates-attempts-to-dismantle-groups-and-people-threatening-and-killing-social-leaders/>

⁶ <https://colombia2020.elespectador.com/jep/punto-final-los-dialogos-con-el-eln>

- The UN calls for more attention and action to prevent the assassinations of social leaders in Colombia.⁷

Mental Health

- On December 28, 2018 the High Council for the post-conflict announced a new health model for the ex- combatants, FARC. According to the agreement between the government and the members of FARC, doctors will visit the reincorporation spaces three days a month and in some areas they will be present 24 hours a day.⁸
- Starting on January 9th, la Superintendencia Nacional de Salud may impose fines of up to 8,000 dollars minimum on a monthly basis. The legal salaries are controlled by life threatening entities and individuals will receive up to 2,000 SMLMV according to the 1949 Law passed on January 8, 2019 that was signed by President Iván Duque Márquez. This law strengthens Supersalud's institutional capacity regarding sanctions and redefines some of the entity's competences and gives it greater tools to exercise its surveillance and control functions.⁹

Cauca

- 6 new investment projects were approved with a total value of 3,952 million dollars. The projects are in the education sectors; culture, sports and recreation.¹⁰
- Indigenous communities of Cauca declared an educational emergency. *“El estado no ha materializado los derechos que tienen los pueblos indígenas al reconocimiento de la diversidad étnica, la consulta previa, la autonomía, la autodeterminación y la educación propia”*, claims the indigenous communities.¹¹

⁷ <https://colombia2020.elespectador.com/politica/naciones-unidas-pide-mas-acciones-para-evitar-asesinatos-de-lideres-sociales>

⁸ <https://colombia2020.elespectador.com/pais/cambios-en-el-modelo-de-salud-para-excombatientes-de-farc>

⁹ <https://www.eltiempo.com/vida/salud/nueva-ley-de-la-supersalud-que-aumenta-castigos-a-las-eps-312742>

¹⁰ <http://elnuevoliberal.com/seis-proyectos-aprobados-y-que-beneficiaran-al-cauca/>

¹¹ <http://elnuevoliberal.com/comunidades-indigenas-se-declaran-en-emergencia-educativa/>

Meta

- There was a protest in Villavicencio due to the lack of water.¹²
- An attack by FARC dissidents in Meta resulted in two injured soldiers. The attack in which they used improvised explosive devices, a second sergeant was injured as well as a soldier. All of whom were transferred to the city of Villavicencio to be treated in a medical center.¹³
- ‘Boyaco Mordisco’, leader of the support network of the first front of the FARC’s dissidence was captured in El Retorno, Guavire, where he executed an attack in 2017.¹⁴
- The suicide rates in Meta have increased within the last year. There were 52 cases of suicides reported in the region with a rate of 6.76 percent for every hundred thousand inhabitants which is higher than the country’s 5.72 percent. In the first 25 days of this year there have already been six cases.¹⁵

Tolima

- Ecoopsos and Asmet Salud entered preventive measure of special surveillance due to several failures, among them, not to comply with 100 percent service coverage and patrimonial deficit. The decision means that they will not be able to enroll more users or accept the transfer of other EPSs for one year.¹⁶
- Tolima did not manage to diminish the amount of people injured with gunpowder in the region. When making a comparison between the end of 2017 with the year of 2018, the Tolima remained with the same number of injured.¹⁷

¹² <https://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/protesta-por-falta-de-agua-en-villavicencio-315248>

¹³ <https://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/otras-ciudades/otras-ciudades-315570>

¹⁴ <https://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/captura-de-disidente-de-las-farc-en-guaviare-316114>

¹⁵ <https://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/sucidio-y-derecho-a-la-informacion-319052>

¹⁶ <http://www.elnuevodia.com.co/nuevodia/tolima/regional/426268-ecoopsos-y-asmetsalud-entran-a-medida-especial-de-la-supersalud>

¹⁷ <http://www.elnuevodia.com.co/nuevodia/tolima/regional/426627-el-tolima-no-logro-disminuir-cifras-de-personas-lesionadas-con-polvora>

- President Duque visited Fresno because of a workshop called ‘Construyendo País’, which has led him to different regions of the Colombian territory. The purpose of the president is to serve the community of Fresno to listen to their concerns and proposals in favor of the development of the municipality and the region.¹⁸

Bolívar

- The Minister of the Interior, Nancy Patricia Gutiérrez promised to do an effort to guarantee the protection of leaders. On the 7th of February will be held the ‘Mesa por la Vida’ in El Carmen; A space to work for the protection of social leaders.¹⁹
- The governance offered a reward to find threats against social leaders. After death threats against social leaders, posted on the social network Facebook, the government of Bolívar offered a reward up to 10 million pesos for those who provide information about threats.²⁰
- In order to support the victims of the armed conflict in the municipality of Arjona, the municipal government delivered 25 technical aids to victims with disabilities.²¹
- Inhabitants of Arenal del Sur found a sign that warns of a mined area signed by the ELN. The population in the south of Bolívar fears the presence of the ELN and asks the authorities for greater presence and security in the zone.²²
- The growing wave of homicides against social leaders in the country has set off the alarms and opened again the debate on the protection of those. In just 15 days, 8 leaders from different parts of the national territory lost their lives.²³

¹⁸ <http://www.elnuevodia.com.co/nuevodia/tolima/regional/426859-el-presidente-duque-estara-en-fresno-este-sabado>

¹⁹ <https://www.eluniversal.com.co/regional/bolivar/gobierno-se-compromete-con-los-lideres-amenazados-XG668653>

²⁰ <https://www.eluniversal.com.co/regional/bolivar/gobernacion-ofrecio-recompensa-para-dar-con-autores-de-amenazas-CH548613>

²¹ <https://www.eluniversal.com.co/regional/bolivar/entregan-ayudas-a-victimas-del-conflicto-armado-en-arjona-FB560676>

²² <https://www.eluniversal.com.co/regional/bolivar/temor-en-el-sur-de-bolivar-por-presencia-del-eln-MG594680>

²³ <https://www.eluniversal.com.co/regional/bolivar/proteccion-de-lideres-de-bolivar-es-una-prioridad-DY616603>

Putumayo

- The army managed to avoid two terrorist attacks in Putumayo. They located a large quantity of explosives that were intended to attack the public force.²⁴
- The Zonal Indigenous Organization of Putumayo (OZIP) denounced from Mocoa the circulation of threatening pamphlets to social leaders of the department of Putumayo. *“Nos preocupa por la ola de asesinatos a líderes sociales que se ha incrementado en el país. Este año ya van 9 asesinados en el Putumayo, muchos indígenas. También el panfleto habla de autoridades indígenas, y en Putumayo hay más de 240 gobernadores indígenas, quince pueblos indígenas y nueve asociaciones de autoridades tradicionales. Pedimos a la Fiscalía que investigue de dónde provienen estas amenazas”*, said Robinson López, one of those threatened.²⁵

²⁴ <https://www.eltiempo.com/justicia/conflicto-y-narcotrafico/ejercito-neutraliza-plan-terrorista-de-las-disidencias-en-putumayo-319216>

²⁵ <https://www.elespectador.com/noticias/nacional/amenazan-diputados-indigenas-y-periodistas-en-putumayo-articulo-835065>