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United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution [2435 \(2018\)](#), by which the Council renewed the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, and resolution [2366 \(2017\)](#), in which it requested the Secretary-General to report on the activities of the Mission every 90 days. The report covers the period from 27 March to 26 June 2019.

II. Major developments

2. The reporting period was marked by positive developments in some areas of peace implementation, such as reintegration. But security concerns persisted and polarization and division around the peace process continued, in particular, over the transitional justice pillar. In April and May, Congress held contentious debates on the six objections to the statutory law of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace lodged in March by President Iván Duque Márquez. Votes in the Senate were followed by procedural debates over whether an absolute majority had been reached in the Senate, as was the case in the Chamber of Representatives, in order to overrule the objections. The matter was referred to the Constitutional Court which, on 29 May, ruled that both chambers had reached the required threshold. President Duque enacted the measure into law on 6 June.

3. Congress debated two constitutional reforms proposed by the Government, which it stated were intended to address failings of the current peace agreement but would only apply to future agreements. One proposal would bar the crimes of kidnapping and drug trafficking from being considered as political crimes or as activities linked to them. The measure proposed by the Government includes a provision stating that it would not affect the signatories of current peace agreements. The second proposed reform would have the effect of ensuring that all sexual crimes against children would be tried in the regular justice system. This measure, as proposed by the Government and approved in the first round of consideration, does not include a provision explicitly stating its non-retroactivity. Various parties maintain that this explicit provision should be included at the second reading to avoid a risk of having a negative impact on the current peace process.



4. The Government's four-year national development plan was approved on 3 May, reflecting lengthy negotiations with Congress. The plan includes a "road map for stabilization" that identifies peace-related activities within a broader set of public investments in regions affected by the conflict. The plan also gives the Government the authority to continue to pay basic monthly allowances to former members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo, FARC-EP) participating in the reintegration process and to facilitate access to land for their income-generating activities. Amendments were adopted to strengthen accountability and oversight, including through the inclusion of a multi-year investment plan for peace, yearly targets and reporting requirements on peace-related actions.

5. The judicial process involving Seuxis Paucias Hernández Solarte, also known as Jesús Santrich, accused of drug trafficking and requested for extradition, continued to unfold, deepening divisions around the peace process. On 15 May, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace ruled that it had not been provided with enough evidence to establish that the criminal conduct attributed to Mr. Santrich had occurred after the signing of the peace agreement and it applied the non-extradition guarantee. The Special Jurisdiction ordered his release and stated that the alleged conduct should be investigated in Colombia. This ruling was appealed by the Inspector General on 24 May. The decision on the appeal is still pending.

6. Following his release from prison on 17 May, Mr. Santrich was immediately re-arrested by the Office of the Attorney General, which stated that it had received new evidence in the case against him. On 28 May, the Council of State upheld Mr. Santrich's status as a Member of the Chamber of Representatives. The Supreme Court, which has jurisdiction over members of Congress, took over the investigation and ordered his release on 29 May. The Investigative Chamber of the Supreme Court is reviewing the case, including a request from the Office of the Inspector General that Mr. Santrich be detained during the investigation. Mr. Santrich was sworn in to the Chamber of Representatives on 11 June, further fuelling controversy around the peace process between critics who argued against his release from prison and stated that his presence in Congress was equivalent to impunity, and others who argued for respecting due process and awaiting the outcome of the judicial proceedings.

7. In April, an array of demonstrations were held in more than 20 departments to protest against violence against social leaders and to call for a full implementation of the peace agreement, including a demonstration by an estimated 3,000 social and community leaders who travelled to Bogota to demand the implementation of concrete measures for the collective protection of communities. In addition, a large social protest was held over several weeks in Cauca Department. As a result of its dialogue with protest movements, the Government agreed to create a special protocol for the protection of indigenous peoples and to create an ethnic subcommission of the National Commission on Security Guarantees, which was established on 11 June.

8. With regional and local elections approaching (they are scheduled for October), the non-governmental Electoral Observation Mission warned in a report dated 27 May that acts of intimidation and violence against local leaders might increase in the coming months, in particular in seven high-risk departments, and noted that incidents already reported against potential candidates were 50 per cent higher than in the equivalent period before the previous local elections, in 2015. A pact for non-violence, transparency and pluralism in the elections, launched by the National Peace Council, the Catholic Church and the Electoral Observation Mission, was presented to the Ministry of the Interior.

9. The joint bodies established for the implementation of the peace agreement continued to meet to a varying degree. The National Reintegration Council met

regularly. The Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement did not show tangible results or a clear strategic agenda. The National Commission on Security Guarantees only held regional and thematic sessions.

A. Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition

10. The statutory law of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, enacted in June, was the last missing piece of the legal framework for the restorative model of transitional justice in Colombia. The United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia issued a statement in which it applauded this step, noting that it would help to outline more clearly the rights of victims and the legal guarantees of all those under the authority of the Special Jurisdiction, including former FARC-EP members and members of the armed forces and national police. The Special Jurisdiction welcomed the adoption of the measure as a positive development that provided the tribunal with a solid legal framework to work independently and autonomously.

11. The Special Jurisdiction for Peace continued to make progress on fulfilling its responsibilities. It reviewed more than 58 petitions for guarantees of non-extradition, of which 43 were rejected, including requests from two individuals arrested with Mr. Santrich in April 2018. During the reporting period, 40 former FARC-EP members and 80 individuals from the armed forces provided voluntary statements related to seven cases identified as emblematic of the 60-year-long armed conflict. For all individuals under the authority of the Special Jurisdiction, appearing at hearings for these cases is a legal obligation with respect to the court and a moral obligation with respect to victims.

12. In April, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace concluded that former FARC-EP commander Hernán Darío Velásquez Saldarriaga, also known as El Paisa, had failed to appear at such hearings or to justify his absences and had failed to meet other obligations, and it therefore reinstated an arrest warrant against him and revoked his basic monthly payment and access to a reduced or restorative sentence. In May, the Special Jurisdiction began to review a case of non-compliance by two other former FARC-EP commanders, Luciano Marín Arango, also known as Iván Márquez, and José Manuel Sierra, also known as Zarco Andinever. In June, the Special Jurisdiction opened a similar investigation into Henry Castellanos Garzón, also known as Romaña.

13. Civil society organizations presented reports to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace on cases of sexual violence in eight departments, attacks against members of Afro-Colombian communities in five departments, cases of extrajudicial killings occurred during the conflict and attributed to members of the armed forces and patterns of persecution of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) community.

14. The Truth Commission began on 11 June the first of a series of debates on the “non-repetition” of the armed conflict. The debate focused on violence perpetrated for decades against social leaders and human rights defenders during the conflict and its persistence after the signing of the peace agreement. On 12 June, the Commission announced an agreement to establish regular channels of communication with the People’s Alternative Revolutionary Force (Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común, FARC) to contribute to the work of the Commission.

15. In early June, the Unit for the Search for Persons deemed Missing in the Context of and Due to the Armed Conflict, which is charged with locating victims of forced

disappearances, inaugurated offices in 10 cities, in cooperation with the Catholic Church. Seven more offices are planned in the areas most affected by disappearances.

B. Development programmes with a territorial focus

16. In an important milestone, the implementation of the 16 development programmes with a territorial focus began during the reporting period. These programmes are regional plans covering 170 municipalities affected by the conflict that, in line with the provisions of point 1 of the peace agreement, have been developed with the extensive participation of local communities. To date, the Government has reported that approximately 500 community projects have been initiated in 52 municipalities and that improvements to rural roads have begun in 50 municipalities. Preparations are under way for an additional 4,000 projects to begin. Public investment in these neglected areas also contributes to reparations to victims, the reintegration of former combatants, viable alternative livelihoods for those cultivating illicit crops and reconciliation.

17. Under the road map for stabilization set out in the national development plan, these 16 programmes constitute part of a broader effort to expand State presence to historically neglected areas. The 170 municipalities will also be given priority treatment under the “works for taxes” programme, which permits companies to meet part of their tax obligations through investments in regions affected by the conflict.

18. In line with the comprehensive rural development section of the peace agreement, the Government presented a proposal to enhance the multipurpose land cadastre and expand by 2022 its coverage from 88 to 660 municipalities, out of more than 1,100 in the country, including the 170 municipalities covered by the development programmes with a territorial focus.

19. In accordance with the national development plan, the implementation of strategic zones of comprehensive intervention created as part of a new national defence strategy under Law 1941 of 2018 should be coordinated with the Office of the Presidential Counsellor for Stabilization and Consolidation, when they overlap with development programmes with a territorial focus.

C. Substitution of illicit crops

20. Illicit economies, including drugs and illegal mining, remain a source of violence in the country and a threat to the peace process. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, under the National Comprehensive Programme for the Substitution of Illicit Crops provided for in the peace agreement, an estimated 35,317 hectares of coca have been eradicated voluntarily, out of 57,816 hectares registered by 82,428 families. There are currently 99,097 families in the programme, with an additional 30,000 families waiting to sign individual agreements. The voluntary eradication rate remained high and the replanting rate low. Challenges remained with respect to the sequencing and resourcing to provide interim payments for one year, alongside technical assistance and support for alternative development projects to families that eradicate their crops. Some 22,600 families had received their full year of interim payments or were nearing the conclusion of those payments, and approximately one-third of the 99,000 families had received technical assistance. In addition, approximately 2,335 coca-leaf collectors were working in such alternative activities as infrastructure work, rural services and road maintenance in 13 departments.

21. Families participating in this programme continued to be subject to threats and killings. Several new attacks against leaders participating in the substitution programme were reported, and the Government announced a pilot programme for their protection (see below). According to the Government, 58 individuals involved in crop substitution efforts have been killed over the past two years.

D. National Liberation Army

22. Following repeated calls by civil society organizations and political leaders for the National Liberation Army (Ejército de Liberación Nacional, ELN) to undertake good will gestures, including ceasing kidnapping and hostilities, ELN directed its combatants to undertake a unilateral ceasefire during the Easter period of 14 to 21 April. According to the Government, however, ELN did not respect the unilateral ceasefire. Communities in areas where there have been direct military confrontations and forced displacements, among other scourges, such as Chocó Department, have demanded to be spared from violence.

III. Mission tasks

A. Reintegration

23. The Mission continued to observe a strong commitment to the reintegration process by the Government and FARC. As part of the national reintegration registry, completed in early 2019, the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization was able to survey 10,708 accredited former FARC-EP members, out of a total of 13,068, and they all confirmed their participation in the reintegration process, an encouraging sign almost two years after completion of the laying-down of weapons. The Government stated that the 2,360 remaining former FARC-EP members that could not be contacted for the survey had not necessarily left the reintegration process. A total of 11,018 former FARC-EP members are receiving a basic monthly allowance. Progress in the reintegration of former FARC-EP members will reduce the vulnerability of ex-combatants to recruitment by dissident groups. The Government and FARC leaders have responsibility for providing economic opportunities and effective leadership, respectively.

1. Managing the transition in territorial areas for training and reintegration

24. The legal status of 24 territorial areas for training and reintegration is scheduled to expire on 15 August. This approaching deadline has contributed to a sense of uncertainty on the part of former FARC-EP members and their families who have been living in those areas for the past two years. Approximately 8,000 individuals will be affected by these new arrangements, including 3,500 former FARC-EP members, their family members and residents in nearby communities.

25. The process is being agreed upon by FARC, local communities and authorities, and the Government is taking steps to implement a gradual transition over a period of 12 months and will seek approval for the extension of the provision of food and basic services until long-term measures are put in place.

26. The Office of the Presidential Counsellor for Stabilization and Consolidation, working with the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization, completed an analysis of all 24 locations and shared the results with FARC. In June, the Government, FARC and the Mission began a series of joint visits to 11 areas where the Government had identified obstacles to the integration of those areas into formal municipal arrangements in their current locations. As at 14 June, four visits had been conducted to territorial areas for training and reintegration, in Charras, Guaviare Department,

La Variante, Nariño Department, Caño Indio, Norte de Santander Department, and Filipinas, Arauca Department. Both the Government and former combatants showed flexibility and willingness in taking into account each other's views, as well as those of local communities, which expressed fears that a discontinuation of the territorial areas for training and reintegration would have a negative impact on their security and social and economic conditions.

27. Similar concerns emerged in a meeting organized with mayors from the 23 municipalities with territorial areas for training and reintegration. All expressed support for the continuation of those areas, noting that their municipalities were benefiting from the economic activities generated by their presence as well as the perimeter security provided by the 1,243 members of the public security forces deployed in those remote locations.

28. The Government faces four main challenges with respect to the transition in territorial areas for training and reintegration: the provision of adequate and timely financing to implement all aspects of the transition; the provision of access to land through identified legal routes; the full implementation of a clear communication strategy; and the full commitment of public security forces and the inclusion of adequate security arrangements within that plan. Another challenge for both the Government and FARC representatives is to ensure that the perspectives of members of ethnic groups, women, and more than 800 children living in those areas are taken into account.

2. Reintegration in new rural and urban settlements

29. The aforementioned national reintegration registry identified more than 7,000 former FARC-EP members participating in the reintegration process but living in smaller rural settlements or in urban areas outside territorial areas for training and reintegration. This is expected, as former combatants and their families move to their areas of origin or seek new economic opportunities, among other reasons. It is vital for the eventual success of the reintegration effort that government plans, services and security deployments adapt to this evolving situation.

3. Economic and social reintegration

30. The Office of the Presidential Counsellor for Stabilization and Consolidation has promoted an "acceleration plan" with ambitious goals to be met before August relating to the approval of individual and collective productive projects, housing; and vocational training. To reach those goals, the Government has established an inter-institutional coordinating mechanism on reintegration involving more than 10 key ministries and entities under the leadership of the Office of the Presidential Counsellor.

31. The national development plan authorized the extension of the monthly allowance for former combatants engaged in reintegration activities, identified options for land allocation for former combatants undertaking productive initiatives and set out the broader road map for stabilization, including revenue sources, which includes reintegration activities.

32. Two new collective projects were approved by the National Reintegration Council. Of the 24 projects approved thus far, for a total of 1,566 beneficiaries, funding has been disbursed for 17 projects, benefiting 1,216 former combatants. In addition, 27 individual projects were approved by the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization, for a total of 190 projects to date, of which 160 have received funds, benefiting 188 former combatants. In addition, eight collective projects benefiting 416 people were under technical review by the FARC component of the National Reintegration Council.

33. Accelerating the development, technical review, approval and disbursement of productive projects, including the allocation of land under the identified legal instruments (decrees Nos. 902, 756 and 758), will require greater efforts and resources.
34. Building upon gender inclusion toolkits and training modules prepared under the auspices of the Gender Technical Working Group to enable a gender-sensitive approach to reintegration with the necessary resources and prioritization would be important.
35. Regarding employment opportunities, 931 former FARC-EP members are working in the Specialized Subdirectorate for Security and Protection of the National Protection Unit, while 102 are working for the humanitarian demining non-governmental organization Humanicemos.
36. The Inter-Institutional Committee for Tourism and Reintegration, composed of various governmental entities, FARC, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Mission, is providing support for tourism-related productive projects. In April, the Committee visited Guaviare Department to develop joint action plans for tourism initiatives in two territorial areas for training and reintegration. In May, a team including former FARC-EP combatants from the territorial area for training and reintegration of Miravalle, Caquetá Department, represented Colombia in the World Rafting Championships, in Australia.
37. In April, the Government established a national working group to coordinate education-related activities on reintegration. The Ministry of Education extended the education programme “Arando la Educación” until the end of 2019. As at April 2019, 1,420 former combatants (45 per cent of whom were women) were enrolled and 13 per cent had graduated from high school. In addition, 1,765 community members had benefitted from the programme (67 per cent of whom were women).
38. The Health Technical Working Group of the National Reintegration Council regularly assesses the adequacy of health services in territorial areas for training and reintegration. Some areas report that they require a more regular presence of medical personnel, as well as medicines and ambulances. There is an opportunity, in the context of the post-August transition, to make necessary adjustments. Approximately 95 per cent (12,380) of former FARC-EP members are covered by the national health-care system. However, issues around quality, access and information constitute barriers, especially for pregnant women, children, adolescents and persons with disabilities. Approximately one in 10 former combatants suffer from disabilities and chronic illnesses stemming from the armed conflict, and the special system provided under the peace agreement to attend to those conditions is still pending.
39. The Government shared with FARC and the Mission a proposed national plan for rural health. The full implementation of this plan could contribute significantly to guaranteeing access to health services for former combatants and vulnerable communities in rural areas.
40. Coordination mechanisms have been established within the Government to define a strategy for access to housing. The housing project for 350 beneficiaries in the territorial areas of Tierra Grata and Pongores is still pending approval.
41. With funding from the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs as well as bilateral donations, the Mission is working closely with the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization, the National Vocational Training Service, FARC, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and UNDP on implementing quick-impact initiatives, including urban projects led by women, with the aim of mobilizing additional in-kind support and strengthening confidence in the reintegration process.

4. Regional and community-based reintegration

42. Three new departmental boards for reintegration were established in Bolívar, Huila and Nariño Departments, for a total of nine such forums where regional and local actors coordinate the implementation of reintegration policies tailored to local contexts. At the local level, 24 committees for reintegration have been established to coordinate support for reintegration efforts.

43. Ensuring that reintegration projects benefit both former FARC-EP members and surrounding communities is important for promoting both reconciliation and sustainability. The Mission has encouraged the National Reintegration Council to adopt a strategy to foster such an approach, which to date is reflected in less than one-third of the approved projects.

5. Political reintegration

44. Members of the FARC party continued to participate actively in Congress. On 27 May, the FARC party caucus initiated the request for an oversight hearing on the implementation of the peace agreement and security guarantees for social leaders and former combatants. On 14 June, the Council of State approved a petition by the Inspector General and the Senate to remove senior FARC official Luciano Marín's designation as senator owing to his failure to assume his Senate seat, thereby clearing the way for his replacement with another FARC representative.

45. The FARC party is preparing to participate, for the first time, in local and regional elections planned for 27 October. The registration of candidates is to open on 27 June. The party has reported facing obstacles in opening bank accounts that would allow it to manage campaign funds. Threats against potential candidates have also been reported by multiple parties, including FARC.

6. Security guarantees

(a) Security guarantees for former FARC-EP members

46. It is of deep concern that, since the signing of the peace agreement, the Mission has verified 123 killings of former combatants, 10 disappearances and 17 attempted homicides. During the reporting period, 14 former FARC-EP members were killed, including the second recorded killing of a female former combatant, Lucero Jaramillo Álvarez, on 4 April, in Putumayo.

47. Two other cases were of concern: the killing of former FARC-EP members Dimar Torres, on 22 April, in the village of Campo Alegre, Norte de Santander Department, and of Jorge Enrique Corredor González, also known as Wilson Saavedra, on 5 May, in Tuluá, Valle de Cauca Department. With respect to the former, following a collective response by the community and follow-up by investigators, a non-commissioned officer of the Colombian armed forces was detained on homicide charges, and other military personnel remain under investigation, including a high-ranking officer. In a statement welcomed by the Mission, President Duque called for a swift response, to ensure that all those responsible were brought to justice. The second victim, Wilson Saavedra, had participated in the peace talks in Havana and led a cooperative of former FARC-EP members in the territorial area for training and reintegration of Planadas, Tolima Department. On 1 June, the authorities arrested a person allegedly involved in his assassination.

48. Once again, the homicides verified during the period occurred in some of the areas most affected by the conflict, namely, Caquetá, Norte de Santander, Antioquia, Guaviare and Valle del Cauca Departments. The attacks against former combatants are closely related with the increasing presence of criminal armed groups and illegal

and informal economies in areas vacated by the former FARC-EP where the State has not established an effective presence and control. Urgently implementing comprehensive security guarantees and redoubling efforts to dismantle illegal groups and criminal structures, which pose a major threat to communities and peace implementation, are key steps to address these challenges.

49. The Special Investigation Unit reported progress in more than half of the recorded cases, a majority of which can be attributed to illegal and criminal armed groups, including the Clan del Golfo, ELN, the Popular Liberation Army (Ejército Popular de Liberación) and dissident FARC groups. Investigations identified 68 perpetrators belonging to those groups, of whom 35 were captured, and 50 people who had ordered those killings, of whom eight were captured. The Special Investigation Unit expanded its presence in affected regions, opening six new field offices during the reporting period.

50. No homicides were recorded in the territorial areas for training and reintegration, where both military and police continued to provide perimeter security. However, the constant threat posed by illegal and criminal armed groups in most neighbouring communities and surrounding areas highlights the urgent need to strengthen the capacity of the public security forces to prevent violence and crime. The extension of the deployment of those forces to ensure adequate coverage of the new settlements and communities where former combatants are undergoing reintegration thus remains of utmost importance.

51. The Government and FARC continued to coordinate security measures under the Technical Committee on Security and Protection. Sub-bodies recently created under that Committee met regularly. On 20 June, the Government announced a series of steps to reinforce security for former FARC-EP members, including new security measures for former FARC-EP members outside of territorial areas for training and reintegration, early warnings by the Office of the Ombudsman and enhanced security measures for FARC members involved in the forthcoming elections.

52. As noted in the previous report, the work of the National Protection Unit, including its Subdirectorate for Security and Protection, is hampered by budgetary shortfalls and an incomplete regulatory framework and strategic plan. It will be important for the Unit, the Ministry of the Interior and the Technical Committee to overcome those challenges in a timely manner, especially since requests for protection are expected to increase as the elections approach.

53. The Tripartite Protection and Security Mechanism continued its activities. Dialogue and coordination between the Subdirectorate for Security and Protection, the national police and the army remained important to ensure the effective monitoring of the protection measures for former combatants and FARC political candidates in the run-up to the elections.

(b) Security guarantees for communities, human rights defenders and social leaders

54. Egregious attacks against social leaders and human rights defenders continued, even though many initiatives and consultative platforms on prevention and protection policies that involve, to varying degrees, the Government, regional authorities, affected communities and civil society have been put in place. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Colombia, 230 killings have been verified since the signing of the peace agreement.

55. During the reporting period, OHCHR reported that seven killings had been verified and that eight were under verification. The verified killings had occurred in Arauca, Cesar, Nariño and Chocó Departments. The Office of the Attorney General reported that, of 277 cases under investigation since January 2017, perpetrators had

been identified in 159 cases and 31 individuals had been convicted and sentenced. Continuing efforts are required to investigate those responsible, for killings and other forms of aggression against community and social leaders, in particular the instigators of those crimes.

56. The recent attacks on Francia Márquez in Cauca Department and Mayerlis Angarita Robles in the Montes de María region highlight the risks faced by female leaders. On 4 June, the police elite corps arrested two persons allegedly involved in the attack on Ms. Márquez, and the Government convened a session with women's organizations. The Government has taken steps to reactivate the national Comprehensive Programme on Guarantees for Women Human Rights Defenders and Leaders, and its prompt implementation should be given priority. The recent attacks represent a threat to leaders defending land rights and the environment in Cauca Department and are a factor contributing to their displacement. The killing on 21 June of María del Pilar Hurtado Montaña, a land claimant, in Tierralta, Córdoba Department, in the presence of her young child caused a widespread outcry and appeals for more effective State action to provide security in the regions formerly affected by the conflict.

57. Also of concern are attacks on participants in the National Comprehensive Programme for the Substitution of Illicit Crops. The killings of three farmers in the municipality of San José de Uré, linked to the substitution programme, reveal the vulnerability of those communities and the importance of measures for their protection. The rapid institutional response that led to the detention of five perpetrators is encouraging. The Office of the Presidential Counsellor for Stabilization and Consolidation announced a pilot plan to protect participants in Tumaco, Nariño Department, that would bring together the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Justice, the Office of the Attorney General and the Office of the Ombudsman. Such efforts, linked to comprehensive protection measures for communities, deserve further expansion.

58. On 11 June, the Ombudsman reported 35 massive displacements linked to the presence of illegal armed groups between 1 January and 7 June, affecting 8,223 persons in Nariño, Norte de Santander, Córdoba, Antioquia, Chocó, Magdalena, Valle de Cauca and Cauca Departments. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reported similar figures.

59. As mentioned in the previous report, the reactivation of the National Commission on Security Guarantees, established pursuant to the peace agreement to define, along with civil society, a public policy on the dismantling of criminal armed groups, was a welcome development. The Commission did not meet during the reporting period, although a subcommission led by the High Commissioner for Peace held a day-long meeting with civil society organizations, public entities and international actors to discuss such a policy.

60. On 24 May, the Ministry of the Interior reported that the Action Plan for the Protection of Social and Community Leaders, Human Rights Defenders and Journalists had held 24 regional meetings to coordinate the State response in the most affected areas. This endeavour, together with the comprehensive security system envisioned in the "peace with legality" plan, is key to consolidating governmental relations with communities and strengthening the understanding of local dynamics. There is an urgent need for better monitoring systems, especially for the protection of leaders and communities and for the implementation of concrete prevention and protection measures under the Action Plan.

61. On 30 April, the "Round Table for Life" initiative of social leaders and human rights defenders, led by the Office of the Inspector General and the Office of the

Ombudsman, was held in Soacha, Cundinamarca Department, and focused on the vulnerability of community leaders participating in local action boards. Another meeting was held on 13 June in Ocaña, Norte de Santander Department, in which President Duque participated. The importance of this initiative has been highlighted in previous reports.

62. On 30 May, the National Panel on Guarantees round table, a multisector dialogue mechanism under the leadership of Ministry of the Interior, was reactivated in Popayán, Cauca Department. The concerns and proposals raised by community leaders should be included in the public policy that is currently being formulated.

63. During the reporting period, the Ombudsman issued early warnings concerning the safety of individuals and communities in six departments, stressing that the main causes of violence were related to the inability of the State to establish control and an integrated presence in territories vacated by the former FARC-EP. Four of those warnings indicated that women, female community leaders and LGBTI communities were especially vulnerable and at risk of sexual violence.

64. The Mission prioritized the verification of security guarantees in municipalities for which multiple early warnings had been issued, including the area of Bajo Cauca, Antioquia Department, and south-eastern Córdoba Department. Security challenges in those areas suggest a widespread regional problem demanding a more comprehensive approach.

B. Legal guarantees

65. To date, 13,068 former members of FARC-EP have been accredited by the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace from the original list submitted by FARC on 15 August 2017. However, various challenges remain for identifying and accrediting remaining former FARC-EP members and notifying them of their accreditation status. First, 118 individuals still lack accreditation by the Office despite having submitted all their required documentation and information, including 44 who have been waiting since December 2018. During the reporting period, 74 individuals were identified and their pending documentation was presented by the Office to the Technical Inter-Institutional Committee for Verification, as a result of productive tripartite collaboration among the Office, FARC and the Mission under a joint action plan.

66. An additional 240 former FARC-EP members have been accredited but still need to be notified, despite tripartite efforts to locate them. The Office of the High Commissioner for Peace and FARC have thus agreed that the Office would proceed with an “administrative notification” through an online publication of the resolutions of accreditation, which will allow any of those individuals to claim their benefits, should they eventually decide to do so.

67. A third set of cases involve 277 individuals, including 243 who are currently in jail and were on the list of 15 August 2017 but remain under review for accreditation. On 11 June, the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace communicated its decision to transfer most of the cases pending accreditation to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (more than 300 cases, including those in this third category), noting that they did not meet the criteria for accreditation. The tripartite dispute settlement mechanism of the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement could be used to resolve those cases.

68. There was no progress regarding approximately 1,000 former FARC-EP members whose names were submitted by FARC to the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace on 10 August 2018. To date, some 160 accredited former

combatants remain in prison. Most of those individuals are now under the authority of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace while their legal situation is under review by the latter's Amnesty and Pardon Chamber. The Special Jurisdiction has already denied 24 requests for conditional liberty, finding that the individuals concerned did not fulfil the legal criterion, that is, that their alleged crimes were directly related to the armed conflict.

69. Since its establishment, the Amnesty and Pardon Chamber has received a high number of requests, including for conditional liberty and amnesty, and it took positive steps during the reporting period to address the backlog.

70. The Special Jurisdiction for Peace continued with its efforts to raise awareness of the transitional justice system among former FARC-EP members, including in the territorial areas for training and reintegration. The Special Jurisdiction secretariat thus hired 19 liaison officers in the field and launched a pilot project in the territorial area for training and reintegration of Icononzo to inform former combatants of the rules and procedures of the Special Jurisdiction.

C. Cross-cutting issues

1. Gender mainstreaming and engagement with women's groups

71. Some progress in gender-related issues has been made. The government High-level Forum on Gender developed its action plan, under the leadership of the Office of the Presidential Counsellor for Stabilization and Consolidation and with support from the Presidential Advisory Office for Gender Equality. The plan assigns responsibilities to government entities for each of the 51 gender indicators of the framework plan for the implementation of the peace agreement. Its prompt implementation is necessary, including the gender-related actions of the national reintegration policy¹ and targeted actions for the implementation of security guarantees for women leaders and human rights defenders.

72. The Special Forum on Gender conducted regional forums in Montes de María, Bolívar Department, and Medellín, as well as a national thematic session on the security of women leaders. This Forum, together with the Gender Technical Working Group of the National Reintegration Council, should be prioritized and given the necessary resources.

73. On 1 and 2 June, the FARC Gender Committee held its first national forum, gathering more than 400 women former combatants and providing an opportunity to exchange best practices related to women-led productive projects, cooperatives and community-based childcare systems. The conclusions were presented to the Government.

74. During the reporting period, the Mission supported the participation of LGBTI former combatants in "LGBTI for peace" forums in several regions.

2. Ethnic affairs

75. On 29 May, the High-level Forum of Ethnic Peoples met with 26 government institutions in charge of implementing various commitments set out in the chapter on ethnic matters of the peace agreement. Each of the entities committed to including concrete actions in their work plans and budgets. While this is a positive first step, follow-up to those commitments is essential.

¹ Available at http://www.reincorporacion.gov.co/es/Documents/conpes_finlal_web.pdf.

76. The Agency for Reintegration and Normalization engaged constructively with the High-level Forum of Ethnic Peoples on a proposed coordination programme for the reintegration of former combatants of ethnic origin. The Mission has also verified examples of ethnic authorities working alongside communities and cooperatives of former combatants to build consensus on community-centred productive projects, including in new settlements of former FARC-EP members in Mandé, Antioquia Department, Tumburao, Cauca Department, Jiguamiandó, Chocó Department, Riosucio, Caldas Department and Tallambi, Nariño Department.

77. On 16 May, as required under the peace agreement, a special protocol regulating the inter-jurisdictional coordination between the Special Jurisdiction for Peace and the indigenous justice system was adopted.

3. Children

78. The Mission continued to monitor government-led programmes to support the reintegration of children, particularly the programme entitled “A different path of life” led by the Presidential Counsellor for Human Rights with increased support from the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization through its field presence. It also monitored the living conditions of and services for children of former combatants in the process of reintegration.

79. Of the 123 adolescents in the programme “A different path of life”, 119 had reached 18 years of age. During the reporting period, the Mission received several reports of delays in and denials of compensation. These obstacles must be clarified and overcome. In May, the case of a beneficiary of the programme of 19 years of age who had been arrested for allegedly manufacturing and smuggling weapons raised concerns about the social and economic reintegration of individuals who participate in the programme. Follow-up committees have been established in the field, and the Mission has been participating actively in those committees. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) continued to work with the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization to provide psychological assistance to children separated from FARC-EP.

80. Despite efforts by the Colombian Family Welfare Institute to provide day-care services in territorial areas for training and reintegration in Tolima, Meta, Arauca, Cauca, La Guajira, Guaviare and Putumayo Departments, a comprehensive response is still required to provide education, health and protection to more than 800 children living in such territorial areas, especially in view of the forthcoming regularization of some of those areas. It is also urgent to move forward in the response to cases of former FARC-EP members, especially women, seeking to regularize the legal guardianship of their children.

4. Youth, peace and security

81. In the territorial area for training and reintegration of San José de Oriente, Cesar Department, a group of young former FARC-EP members and a community group of young people founded an arts school to provide opportunities for interaction and reconciliation through dance, theatre, photography and music classes. In May, young leaders from the territorial area for training and reintegration of Icononzo, Tolima Department, and members of the local community who produce together a weekly radio programme visited Bogotá, with support from the Mission, to benefit from mentoring from national media. Young leaders from six political parties from Valle del Cauca Department visited the territorial area for training and reintegration of Monterredondo, Cauca Department, in June, as part of efforts supported by the Mission to foster dialogue with young people.

5. Liaison and outreach

82. The private sector has tremendous potential for and a stake in contributing to the peace process, including through support for market access and technical assistance for reintegration productive projects. President Duque invited business leaders to accompany him on his visits to territorial areas for training and reintegration, and the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization has put in place a strategy to strengthen private sector support for reintegration efforts. The Mission has also been engaging with the private sector on peace implementation. In May, for example, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Colombia met with prominent business leaders in Medellín to discuss further efforts to increase their involvement in peace consolidation. The Mission continued to facilitate an alliance of private sector foundations and companies that are supporting projects in the territorial area for training and reintegration of Llano Grande, Antioquia Department, and its local community.

6. Coordination with the United Nations country team

83. The United Nations post-conflict multi-partner trust fund for Colombia is reviewing proposals to support reintegration, stabilization, development programmes with a territorial focus, voluntary illegal crop substitution programmes, reparations for victims and transitional justice in regions affected by the conflict.

84. Since April, the Mission, the country team and the national authorities have enhanced coordination to accelerate reintegration. The joint reintegration group is working to strengthen coordination in the United Nations system support for the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization on such issues as the relocation of some territorial areas for training and reintegration, the need to consolidate progress in other such territorial areas, community-based reintegration and the growing migration of former combatants to urban areas.

85. To that end, UNDP and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), with funding from the United Nations post-conflict multi-partner trust fund for Colombia, made progress in disbursing funds for 17 long-term productive projects in 17 territorial areas for training and reintegration and in formulating new proposals for productive initiatives and housing improvements. UNDP, UNICEF, UN-Women, the Mission, the Government and FARC, with support from the Peacebuilding Fund, started work to identify productive projects and social impact initiatives to improve the living conditions of women and children in 15 territorial areas. The Mission, UNDP, IOM, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Food Programme and UNICEF continued to coordinate efforts with the Government to accelerate vocational training, access to employment, market access, housing improvements and support for individual productive ventures for adults and young people and the prevention of gender-based violence.

86. The Mission and OHCHR regularly co-hosted meetings with major human rights platforms and numerous civil society organizations on issues of mutual concern.

87. The United Nations country team and the Mission also worked on ensuring a participatory approach in the development of a comprehensive national prevention and protection policy for community leaders and human rights defenders.

IV. Mission structures

A. Mission support

88. The Mission has completed the establishment of all 32 offices required in its redeployment plan. It is keeping its deployment in the field under constant review, given the potential relocation of some territorial areas for training and reintegration and the importance of assuring adequate coverage of new settlements.

89. As at 30 April 2019, women comprised 42 per cent of professional and field service staff on fixed-term, continuing and permanent contracts. The Mission expects to reach its target of 46 per cent in the course of the year. Women represent 59 per cent of United Nations Volunteers, 25 per cent of international observers and 56 per cent of consultants and individual contractors.

B. Safety and security

90. There were increased attacks by illegal armed groups against public security forces in the vicinity of the territorial areas for training and reintegration in Santa Lucía, Antioquia Department, Filipinas, Arauca Department, and El Ceral, Cauca Department. Even though Mission personnel were not targeted, these attacks represent indirect threats and have thus been incorporated in relevant security risk management evaluations. Incidents affecting Mission personnel were predominantly robberies in various parts of the country and two illegal checkpoints set up by dissident groups in Caquetá and Putumayo Departments. In the latter case, Mission movements were temporarily suspended to reduce risk. The residual risk levels after the implementation of the security risk management measures continued to range from medium to low.

C. Conduct and discipline

91. The Mission and UN-Women conducted a joint exercise in Cúcuta, Norte de Santander Department, to assess risk and raise awareness among United Nations personnel, implementing partners and civil society organizations of the United Nations zero-tolerance policy.

92. No cases of sexual exploitation or abuse were reported during the reporting period.

V. Observations

93. The peace agreement provides Colombia with a unique opportunity to overcome a deeply entrenched legacy of conflict. The present report highlights areas of progress and new commitment in aspects of its implementation; however, the overall picture remains mixed, and once again I deeply regret the continuing atmosphere of polarization over elements of the agreement.

94. The debates that continued at the national level and within Congress on the statutory law of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace and constitutional reforms are illustrative of that polarization. Amid this contentious environment, important decisions were issued by several courts in relation to the peace agreement, including on the statutory law. I am heartened by the fact that Colombian institutions appear to be rising to the challenge and are working through constitutionally-defined channels towards the resolution of those difficult matters. I hope that those issues will be

progressively resolved and that the concerns will be addressed as implementation advances.

95. There is, however, a continuing need for inclusive dialogue among all political forces based on respect for deeply-felt differences, in particular in the light of new proposed constitutional reforms. I call upon all parties to ensure that any reforms undertaken respect the commitments made to those who laid down their arms in good faith and on the basis of the provisions of the peace agreement, a principle that the Security Council itself has underscored. I welcome the recent call by President Duque for a national pact with all political actors, recalling his earlier message to focus on what unites rather than divides Colombians. Indeed, I strongly hope that a pragmatic and forward-looking vision can increasingly take root, and I commend all voices calling for such an approach. The challenges of the present and the future are too great for Colombians to remain immersed in a debilitating division over the agreement, as opposed to working together towards its implementation. The consequences of failing to act now to seize the opportunities brought about by the end of the conflict with FARC-EP would be borne by all Colombians.

96. Urgent responses are required to counter the violence in some hard-hit areas where the clear drop in violence immediately after the end of the conflict with FARC-EP was short-lived. It is of tremendous concern that the killing of social and community leaders and former FARC-EP members continued during the reporting period. I acknowledge President Duque's stated commitment to protecting leaders as well as each of the former combatants who participate in the reintegration process, as concrete results in this area are urgently needed. I trust that recently announced security measures for former FARC-EP members will yield improved security for them. The cooperation and commitment of all institutions and sectors will be essential to prevent violence from hampering preparations for the forthcoming regional and local elections.

97. Ultimately, the challenge of protecting communities affected by the conflict, social leaders and former FARC-EP members lies in establishing a comprehensive and effective State presence in these remote and historically neglected areas. While that is a long-term challenge that successive administrations have failed to meet, it cannot be postponed and must now be tackled with urgency, and the authorities can count on the support of the United Nations in that endeavour. The peace agreement maps out a set of short-term actions not only to prevent the irreparable loss due to killings in areas where groups fight for control in a post-war vacuum, but also to lay the ground for the long term. Individual and collective security measures, including adequate resourcing and support for the work of the National Protection Unit and the Special Investigation Unit of the Attorney General, and effective early warning responses and anti-stigmatization efforts are critical to address the former issue. Reconvening the National Commission on Security Guarantees and adopting a strong national strategy for dismantling illegal and criminal groups with the engagement of civil society are essential for the latter.

98. With regard to reintegration, the Government has taken on the short-term challenge of putting in place clear arrangements for the time when the current status of 24 territorial areas for training and reintegration ends, on 15 August. I applaud the spirit of flexibility and constructive dialogue shown by both the Government and FARC in joint visits to find solutions for the transition of some of those areas. Extending the deadline for clarifying the status of the areas is an important and sensible decision by the Government to defuse a source of insecurity and concern. The transition offers an opportunity for the Government to consolidate its institutional presence in those areas. It must also go hand in hand with the accelerated approval and disbursement of funds for economic activities. The tempo of approval and

disbursement of funding for productive activities has not accelerated and remains a persistent and tangible source of insecurity for former combatants.

99. Transitional justice arrangements in Colombia are an innovative model of accountability, based on restorative justice, which maximizes the incentives for truth and reparations to victims, rather than on impunity, thereby contributing to peace and reconciliation. This system should be given the chance to work and to deliver on such weighty expectations. I welcome in this regard the finalization of the legal framework for the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. I urge all parties to respect the independence and autonomy of that body and ensure that the Special Jurisdiction, as well as the other components of the Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition, has the resources necessary to carry out its critical functions. In a short period of time, the Special Jurisdiction has achieved important results. I call upon it to take forward its full responsibilities with the same commitment and diligence that it has shown in the critical start-up period.

100. As verified by the Mission, the vast majority of former FARC-EP members are meeting their commitments under the peace agreement: they have laid down their weapons and are actively participating in the reintegration process. I applaud their perseverance. The FARC party has contributed constructively to congressional debate and is preparing to participate, for the first time, in local and regional elections. In addition, many senior FARC officials have appeared before the Special Jurisdiction for Peace to offer their version of events during the conflict and contribute to truth and reparations processes. I stress the importance that all FARC leaders set an example and contribute actively to the truth under all cases reviewed by the Special Jurisdiction. Equally important is the need for all of FARC leaders to work towards finding creative solutions within the reintegration process and to uphold their commitment to the process, as stipulated in section 3.3 of the agreement. There is no doubt that the decision of the group to end the armed conflict, lay down arms and enter the peaceful democratic political life of Colombia was the correct, historic decision, despite the current challenges.

101. Finally, and with regard to the long-term challenges ahead, I trust that the Government will make progress on the broader stabilization vision set out in the peace with legality plan and the road map for stabilization. The start of the implementation of the development programmes with a territorial focus, a backbone of this stabilization effort, marks an important milestone. It is critical that all elements of this complex stabilization effort advance with the necessary political will, institutional commitment and resources, as well as a continuing focus on community participation. Establishing State presence and services is a long-term effort that draws together multiple threads, of rural development, as provided in point 1 of the peace agreement, voluntary crop substitution and community-based reintegration efforts.

102. I remain confident that Colombians can succeed in consolidating the peace that they have begun to build, especially if they are able to bridge distrust and increasingly work together with a holistic vision of the peace agreement as a package of mutually-reinforcing commitments. The reintegration of former combatants under the terms agreed, including transitional justice, and the corresponding adherence of the former insurgents to their commitments, are but one critical part of what is required to build peace. All Colombians stand to benefit from provisions on rural development, efforts to combat illicit crops, the broadening of political participation and redress to victims. These are elements that can unite them behind peace, and I hope and trust that all those concerned will do their part.

103. In the face of both advances in and new risks to the peace process, the continuing engagement of the international community is essential. The forthcoming visit of the Security Council is both an opportunity to help Colombians to overcome current

obstacles and to reaffirm the example that Colombia can set for other countries in situations of conflict around the world.

104. I take this opportunity to renew the continued commitment and determination of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia and the United Nations system to help Colombians to realize their aspirations for a more peaceful future.
