



Colombian Rebel FARC Says Peace Process at 'Decisive Stage'



Havana, October 9 (teleSUR-RHC)-- The peace delegation of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) said Thursday that talks with the Colombian government are at its "most decisive stage" and called on the government to act in good faith so that a final deal can be reached before the March 23, 2016 deadline they both recently set.

"It is not right that at this point, artificial obstructions, made with audacity, make us lose valuable time," said Commander Ivan Marquez, the head of the rebel peace delegation, in a press conference to mark the end of the 42nd round of negotiations in Havana.

Marquez was making reference to statements made by Colombian officials that have cast some doubt on the interpretation of the historic agreement signed by both parties regarding transitional justice.

The Colombian government has argued that the text of the agreement was not completely final and subject to interpretation, saying that issues such as extradition, kidnapping and the selection of judges for a special court are still subject to review.

"There was an agreement embodied in ten points, but with respect to the longer document (that contains 75 points), we never accepted that it was a closed agreement and unchangeable," said Humberto de la Calle, the head of the government del



negotiation.

However, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, known as the FARC, considers those matters closed.

The disagreement over the interpretation of the text is threatening to cast a shadow over talks that look to be nearing a successful end. During their meeting in Havana, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos and FARC Commander Timoleon Jiménez, better known as Timochenko, agreed to have the final deal signed in less than six months.

The Colombian government has asked for lawyers on both parties to meet to work out their differences. The FARC have called for the full text of the agreement to be publicized, but only a summary has so far been released.

Marquez reiterated that the FARC are committed to resolving outstanding issues and appealed to the government to honor its word.

He added that any developments could not "change the content and scope of the conceived system (of transitional justice)." The rebel leader also rejected claims made by Colombian Attorney General Alejandro Ordoñez that the FARC made the prosecution of far-right former President Alvaro Uribe a precondition for a deal.

"The FARC have never made any proposals with a single target in mind but instead we are seeking out the best for all our people and to put an end to impunity," stated Marquez.

The next round of negotiations is set to begin in Havana on October 27th.