

Colombian Government and Rebels Resume Talks in Havana



Havana, February 24 (RHC) – Negotiators from the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, (FARC) kicked off Monday the 21st round of peace talks here in Havana, focused on the issue of illegal drugs.

Talks resume with a favorable precedent, as a partial agreement on the issue of illegal crops was reached during the previous round of talks, according to a joint statement.

"We have been working nonstop throughout this round of conversations and we have started building agreements on the point 'solving the illicit drugs problem,'" the statement said.

Drug trafficking is the third of six points under discussion by the two sides. The talks, hosted by Cuba over the past 15 months, aim to end half a century of hostilities in Latin America's longest running guerrilla conflict.

The two sides have reached tentative agreements on the first two points relating to agriculture and land reform and on allowing the FARC to participate as a legal political party if they reach an accord.

The initial agreement referred to crop substitution, which has been crucial to convincing farmers to give up cultivating lucrative but illicit coca leaves.

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