

Ivan Cepeda praises Cuba's work as guarantor of Colombian peace process



Havana, 16 July (RHC)-- "Cuba's work as a guarantor was impeccable, both in contributing to the solution of the problems inherent in the talks, facilitating the dialogues, and fundamentally the rapprochements at the most difficult moments of the debate," said Iván Cepeda Castro, who was a facilitator of the peace process in Colombia.

He pointed out that he was also a facilitator at the most critical moments, when events outside the talks, the dynamics of the confrontation that continued in the country and other issues such as the fierce opposition of sectors that were not inclined to dialogue, arose in his country.

"In each and every one of the circumstances, Cuba's role was fundamental, decisive, and essential, because it created the environment and context necessary for the dialogues; a role that has been especially careful, respectful at all times of the Colombian State and its government and, of course, also of the delegation of the FARC-EP," he told the daily newspaper Granma.

He said that in all the moments of difficulty in which the dialogue was in serious danger, the work of Cuba and also of Norway was definitive; both teams of guarantors dedicated to seeking, precisely, to resolve the problems.

"This has also been the case in the implementation of the agreement, in which Cuba -- along with Norway and also the United Nations Verification Mission -- has played a central role," said Cepeda Castro.

As for the role of guarantor played by the island in the peace dialogue between the Colombian government and the National Liberation Army (ELN), a process in which it also acted as facilitator, he stressed that Cuba has been equally fundamental.

"A process that has allowed, for the first time in the history of approaches with the ELN, the concretion of a negotiation agenda and also the beginning of the development of the points contained in that agenda," he said.

He commented that unfortunately the current Colombian government has not had a congruent attitude with such an effort, and has ignored the role of Cuba's guarantor country in this context, ignoring the Rupture Protocol that had been adopted and denying the role of guarantors in general in any peace process.

The Government has not only disregarded this debt of recognition and gratitude towards Cuba with regard to its contribution to the peace process, but has also taken an openly hostile attitude towards its role in the international concert and, in particular, with regard to peace in Colombia, he said.

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