

# *RHC's Viewpoint May 28 - Elections in Colombia*

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Many Colombian citizens have voiced their fear that following the first round of the presidential elections the hatred that signaled the conclusion of the first step will continue to deepen the difference among voters.

As things stand today, two aspirants will dispute the second round of the elections: the current President, Juan Manuel Santos, and his extreme right wing opponent, Oscar Zuluaga, widely regarded as the representative of the warlords that have spread destruction murder for decades in Columbia.

For the next fifteen days, the second round of the presidential elections will most certainly overcharge the political climate.

President Santos, seeking another term, has spoken for peace, while Zuluaga, a puppet of former rightwing President Alvaro Uribe, continues to speak for the annihilation of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia or FARC. who, in a gesture of political wisdom much appreciated by many Colombians, declared a cease-fire to allow the peaceful celebration of the elections.

Former President Uribe, always a protagonist of paramilitary action aimed at smashing peasant demands for justice and land, is calling for renewed military activity.

Not too long ago, the rightwing chieftain Alvaro Uribe, and current President Juan Manuel Santos were allies. But now Uribe is accused of the widespread murder of peasants during his eight year Administration, a fact that fueled a revolt in the countryside that strengthened the left wing guerrillas.

Uribe and his followers are also charged with getting major funding from drug dealings and of turning Colombia into one of the largest producers in the world, bent on feeding an insatiable US market.

Further, both Uribe and his dupe, Zuluaga, are involved in a highly charged criminal case for spying on Government intentions to control drug trafficking.

The plan calls for the interruption of the fruitful peace talks in Havana between the Administration and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, as the guerrillas are known.

The explanation for the refusal of the extreme right wing Candidate to accept a cease fire and a peace agreement between the Government of Colombia and the guerrillas is that a close aid of this right wing group –named JJ Rendon, received not less than \$12m from the drug dealers in Colombia to sabotage any deal between the guerrillas and the Government to kill their drug dealings with their US partners.

Colombia, a nation ruled by a Government that employs crude neoliberal policies, follows an economic route that has fostered the increase in social and economic inequalities. Blatant injustices in the countryside keep hundreds of thousands of unemployed, homeless peasants, children without schools, women and families without protection.

The next voting call in Colombia, in fifteen days time, when both the current President and his right wing challenger will dispute the second and final round of elections, will show whether that country stays on the road to peace or is plunged back into what Churchill aptly described of the Nazi threat—the prospect of a NEW DARK AGE!

For RHC this has been a commentary by GJ

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