

Colombia's Peace Talks Advance as Cease-Fire Is Extended



Havana, February 11 (RHC) -- After meeting with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia's (FARC) peace delegation in Cuba, human rights advocate and prominent leader of the Broad Front for Peace, Piedad Cordoba, said the left-wing guerrilla group has decided to extend the unilateral cease-fire, begun in mid-December, indefinitely.

The decision was also confirmed in a statement read to the press by Dutch FARC rebel Tanja Nijmeijer.

Cordoba said that multiple reports and sources confirm that the FARC has fulfilled the cease-fire. She also called on the Colombian government to act accordingly and reciprocate the truce so that further victims can be prevented in Colombia.

The Broad Front for Peace members are expecting to hold a meeting with Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos to directly inform him on the topics addressed during the meeting held with the rebels and on the positive impacts that the FARC's cease-fire has already had.

President of Colombia's agricultural Union FENSUAGRO, Eberto Diaz, said there is no doubt that the cease-fire has brought relief to the lives of campesinos.

For Diaz, it is clear that the rural areas have been strongly affected by the armed conflict, but also due to the long-standing State abandonment of agriculture. He emphasized that the State neglect has had an impact on Colombia's food sovereignty.

"Today we are importing 10 million tons of food products that could be easily produced by our farmers if they had the support from the state as well as if the war was over," he added.

The complexity of actors and dynamics that have played a role in Colombia's conflict, as is the case of state abandonment, is something that the Commission of Historical Conflict aimed to address in a 700-page report submitted Tuesday.

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