

UN Security Council members visit Colombia to review failing peace accord



Bogota, July 12 (RHC)-- United Nations Security Council members are visiting Colombia to review the implementation of the 2016 Peace Agreement that ended the armed conflict between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the state.

Contrary to what the peace accords stipulate, the administration of president Ivan Duque has left thousands of the ex-combatants without protection in rural areas. Even prior to Duque's inauguration nearly a year ago, powerful crime rings have been entering these regions to illegally mine, log and cultivate illicit crops, while assassinating Campesino and Indigenous social rights leaders who oppose them.

"There are many programs that were simply never implemented," said Naryi Vargas, a researcher for the Peace and Reconciliation Foundation. "It's a discouraging situation," she told Al Jazeera news agency.

Since the deal was put into effect in 2016, over 700 social leaders and 135 former guerrilla fighters have been violently murdered, according to data from the Institute of Studies on Peace and Development (Indepaz). Few if any of the killings have been brought to justice.

The peace agreement signed between then President Juan Manuel Santos and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia FARC established the creation of a special investigation unit that should dismantle these criminal organizations. This past Wednesday, FARC member and senator Carlos Alberto Lozada told the General Prosecutor of Colombia that the Colombian government has failed to dismantle paramilitarism in the region, which has instead grown significantly.

At least 983 social leaders have been threatened with death in Colombia over the past three years — 50 percent of them women.

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