



Security Council

Distr.: General
27 March 2025

Original: English

United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution [2754 \(2024\)](#), by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, and resolution [2366 \(2017\)](#), in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the mandate of the Mission every 90 days. The report covers the period from 27 December 2024 to 26 March 2025.

II. Major developments

2. During the first days of the year, the President of Colombia, Gustavo Petro, and his Cabinet held a series of meetings to take stock of the results of the Government policies to date and conduct strategic planning for 2025. The implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace was addressed as one of the Government's priorities for the remainder of the Administration. Signatories to the Final Agreement and civil society organizations called for the urgent redoubling of efforts towards its implementation.

3. In February, President Petro requested the formal resignation of all members of his Cabinet, stating that this would enable those who wished to do so, to participate in the 2026 elections. Those remaining in Government would be expected to concentrate on implementing its programmes. There were changes in several ministries, including Defence, Interior, Foreign Affairs and Equality.

4. On 15 January, the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) launched an offensive across the remote Catatumbo region in northeastern Colombia against a branch of the Estado Mayor de los Bloques y Frentes (EMBF) – a splinter from the dissident group of the former FARC-EP known as Estado Mayor Central FARC-EP (EMC FARC-EP) which is currently participating in a peace dialogue with the Government. The offensive followed months of tension between the two groups, although Catatumbo – a region historically plagued by armed conflict – had recently experienced a sharp reduction in violence. This was due to a truce in place between the two groups since 2018 and bilateral ceasefires between the Government and ELN, and the Government and EMBF since 2022. According to the Office of the Ombudsman and the regional government of Norte de Santander Department, more than 60 people were killed in a



week, some reportedly summarily or extrajudicially executed. Among the fatalities were four children, four social leaders, and six former FARC-EP combatants; seven former combatants were reported as missing. More than 50,000 people were forcibly displaced – half of them women, including 180 former FARC-EP members (30 women, 3 Indigenous, 3 Afro-Colombians, and 21 persons with disabilities). Over 30,000 people suffered restrictions to their mobility. The Barí Indigenous People were also affected, including by the arrival of displaced peasants on their territory. The public security forces in the area were not targeted during the violence.

5. In response, on 17 January, President Petro suspended the peace talks with ELN, following the parties' meeting in November 2024. On 24 January, he declared a 90-day state of exception for the Catatumbo region, allowing the Government to adopt extraordinary measures, including issuing decrees with the force of law as provided for in the Constitution. The Government issued specific decrees on security, agriculture, economy, transportation, environment, commerce and housing, applicable to the affected municipalities. The decrees were aimed at, for example, enabling the adoption of extraordinary protection measures for affected individuals, groups and communities, as well as safeguarding agricultural and livestock activities. In addition, on 6 March, the President launched a Pact for Catatumbo, expected to cost approximately \$660 million, developed with the participation of civil society organizations, and aimed at strengthening the presence of State institutions. Under the state of exception, the plan includes the compensated and voluntary eradication of 25,000 hectares of coca crops, land ownership formalization, roads and infrastructure, as well as other measures targeting the local economy. The state of exception and the subsequent decrees issued by the Government are currently undergoing a review process by the Constitutional Court, as required by the regulatory framework.

III. Overall progress report

6. The crisis in Catatumbo has drawn attention to the persistence of structural challenges and factors underpinning the ongoing violence in conflict-affected regions, which the Final Agreement aims to address, notably the limited presence of the State, land reform and the illegal economies. The situation has prompted renewed calls for the accelerated implementation of the Final Agreement, while also generating discussion about the challenging landscape for dialogues with the remaining armed groups under the Total Peace policy of the Government. In view of the aforementioned events, the present report provides an overall assessment of the status of the implementation of the Final Agreement and a description of developments related to other dialogue initiatives, as well as the customary quarterly update.

Implementation of the Final Agreement

7. The Final Agreement was devised as a comprehensive set of interconnected mechanisms and programmes aimed at addressing underlying causes, as well as the impact of armed conflict. During the eight years that have followed its signing, progress in implementation has varied across its different sections.

8. The laying down of arms of the former FARC-EP guerrilla was concluded expeditiously following the entry into force of the Final Agreement. Nearly 9,000 weapons were handed over to the United Nations to be destroyed (a high weapons-to-combatant disarmament ratio by global standards), as well as over 30,000 kg of explosives, and more than 1 million rounds of ammunition, among other weaponry. This was a historic step in the transition of former FARC-EP combatants to civilian life.

9. Eight years later, the vast majority of those who laid down their arms remain committed to their reintegration process. Out of about 14,000 former combatants originally accredited by the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace (a figure that includes persons that have since died and those deprived of liberty), close to 12,000 (27 per cent women) are linked to and benefit from the support of the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization. The support these former combatants receive includes financial assistance to develop individual and collective productive projects. Within the National Reintegration Council, long-standing discussions between consecutive Administrations and representatives of former combatants over the establishment of an overarching framework for reintegration came to fruition in 2024 with the formal adoption of the Comprehensive Reintegration Programme. In addition, former combatants have been successfully enrolled in health and social security systems and continue to receive a monthly stipend, as they have since the laying down of arms. The stipend supports them through difficulties experienced in achieving sustainable livelihoods for reasons such as a lack of infrastructure and essential services in remote locations, where many have settled and established projects, as well as security risks and limited employment opportunities. The situation has been particularly complex for women, who face additional barriers, including caregiving responsibilities and stigmatization, which limit their socioeconomic opportunities and political participation. Indigenous and Afro-Colombian former combatants, who represent 25 per cent of the total, face particular challenges in the absence of implementation of a programme tailored to their needs, as established in the Final Agreement, such as access to housing and productive projects in their territories.

10. A key challenge in the sustainable reintegration of former combatants has been ensuring access to land, which successive Governments have sought to address, even though access to land for reintegration purposes was not included in the Final Agreement. To date, land has been secured for 14 of the 24 territorial areas for training and reintegration – in which some 1,800 former combatants reside – and for 47 productive cooperatives, with almost 15,000 hectares purchased, according to the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization. Access to adequate housing continues to be a major challenge for most former FARC-EP members, due to insufficient housing units in most territorial areas for training and reintegration and limited access to housing subsidies outside these areas.

11. Insecurity linked to the expansion of armed groups in areas where former FARC-EP combatants have settled has undermined reintegration (see para. 58). Since 2020, hundreds of former combatants living with their families in five territorial areas for training and reintegration in the Departments of Antioquia, Caquetá and Meta, have been forced to relocate, along with their cooperatives, due to security risks, threats or stigmatization, jeopardizing their social, political and economic reintegration.

12. The transition of the FARC-EP into a political party, established in 2017, exemplified the decision of the former guerrilla group to partake in Colombia's democratic system. The Comunes party has actively participated in Congress for two legislative terms through the 10 seats apportioned to it under the Final Agreement; party leaders have been outspoken advocates for implementation of the Final Agreement and for the remaining armed groups to end violence and seek peace. Former combatants have also engaged in local politics and community life, with some becoming elected officials and others taking on active roles as social leaders.

13. Section 2 of the Final Agreement on political participation aims to consolidate peace through the strengthening of democracy by increasing transparency, enabling the emergence of new political forces to foster greater pluralism, and providing guarantees for their participation. Positive developments include the enactment of the

Opposition Statute, which strengthened rights and guarantees to exercise political opposition at the national and local levels. For instance, parliamentary seats are guaranteed for the runners-up in presidential elections, with similar provisions having been established for departmental and municipal elections. Also as a result of the Final Agreement, 16 special transitory electoral districts for peace in the House of Representatives are occupied by representatives elected from the most conflict-affected regions. Elections for these seats will be held for the last time as part of the March 2026 congressional elections. However, important commitments of Section 2 are still outstanding. The political and electoral reform, due to take place based on the 2017 recommendations of a specially established electoral mission, and subject to a decision by Congress, is pending. Women continue to face significant challenges in accessing decision-making spaces and the political sphere.

14. Many potentially transformative provisions of the Final Agreement that are longer term in nature and aim to address the structural factors underlying conflict are yet to be fully implemented. Indicative of its importance, comprehensive rural reform is the first section of the Final Agreement. Its provisions aim to tackle inequitable land distribution, development gaps and rural poverty through three pillars: adjudication and formalization of land; development programmes with a territorial focus; and national plans for rural reform. Under the current Administration, the comprehensive rural reform was earmarked as a priority of the Government and incorporated into the National Development Plan. Government efforts have centred around the constitutional recognition of peasant rights, accelerating access to land and reactivating the National Agrarian Reform System, established by a law in 1994 without becoming operational. In June 2024, Congress passed a bill incorporating the Agrarian Jurisdiction, a mechanism established under the Final Agreement to resolve land disputes, into the Colombian judicial framework. Another bill regulating the work of the Jurisdiction remains under discussion in Congress.

15. However, despite increased Government efforts, overall implementation of the comprehensive rural reform chapter, however, has been hindered by limited institutional capabilities and coordination, burdensome regulations and security risks and continues to fall short of the goals of the Final Agreement. One of the main challenges is the long-standing weakness of the agrarian institutional framework, with limited territorial presence, operational and technical capacity, hindering its impact on deeply rooted problems such as the prevailing informality in land ownership. According to the Ministry of Agriculture, 181,519 hectares had been adjudicated (i.e. delivered to landless beneficiaries) – 6 per cent of the 3-million-hectare goal – as at February 2025. Formalization of land tenure (i.e. the granting of definitive tenure to those already in possession) had reached 3,216,709 hectares, representing 45.9 per cent of the 7-million-hectare target set by the Final Agreement. The current administration has contributed to 94 per cent of the hectares adjudicated so far since the signing of the Final Agreement and 43.6 per cent of those formalized. Organizations representing peasants, victims, Indigenous and Afro-Colombian peoples and women, the intended beneficiaries of the rural reform, demand faster results.

16. Restitution of land to those from whom it was wrongfully taken during the armed conflict, remains a pressing issue. The Final Agreement called for the strengthening of the land restitution system established in 2011. Restitution claims for over 11 million hectares have been submitted so far, more than half of which have undergone initial processing under the current Administration. However, fewer than 10 per cent of cases, pertaining to about 750,000 hectares, have received final legal resolution through court rulings. Land has been effectively handed over in approximately half of these legally resolved cases. The Administration has reduced rejection rates and given priority to collective strategies to accelerate and amplify

restitution. No progress has been made regarding restitution in the ethnic territories prioritized under the ethnic chapter of the Final Agreement.

17. The development programmes with a territorial focus are a key tool for fostering investments and enhancing State presence in 170 municipalities across 16 historically neglected regions most affected by armed conflict, poverty, and illicit economies. Between 2018 and 2023, rural poverty in municipalities with development programmes with a territorial focus was reduced by 14.9 per cent, according to the National Department of Statistics. Since 2017, the policy focus has progressively shifted from small- and medium-scale projects to larger-scale initiatives aimed at driving the structural transformation of the countryside. While the Agency for Territorial Renewal has prioritized increasing civil society participation and enhanced coordination between national and local authorities, local communities continue to demand more tangible results, as projects are slow to materialize. As part of its rapid response plan to accelerate implementation of the Final Agreement, the Government announced in the second half of 2024 that it would establish a series of pacts with communities and local authorities to speed up the development programmes with a territorial focus process. Most of the pacts are yet to be finalized and implemented.

18. The Final Agreement provides for the establishment of a multipurpose cadastre registering the status of land. The absence of this important instrument over much of the country's history has been considered a significant barrier to rural development. The Geographic Institute of Colombia reports that the work carried out thus far covers 26.8 per cent of the country, and 25 per cent of the land in municipalities and regions with development programmes with a territorial focus that have been prioritized for rural reform.

19. The 16 national plans for rural reform were devised in the Final Agreement as tools for comprehensive State action to improve the living conditions in conflict-affected areas – addressing issues such as education, water and sanitation, infrastructure and healthcare. Their implementation so far has been limited; achieving long-term impact will require prioritization of these plans, and integration with the other pillars of the comprehensive rural reform.

20. The Final Agreement concluded the largest insurgency spanning decades. Conflict indicators remain lower than during the height of that conflict, although they have been steadily rising in recent years. The rise occurred as areas vacated by the former FARC-EP in 2016 were gradually occupied by existing and newly established armed groups, which took advantage of the limited State presence. This was the case in the Catatumbo region and led to the particularly complex situation present today. This border region suffers from the many woes which have affected parts of the country for decades: a strategic location for illicit economies, few alternative economic opportunities for communities, the presence of multiple armed actors, and the absence of State institutions in many parts of its territory. Various Administrations have attempted to address the situation over decades without success.

21. The Final Agreement provides a framework to comprehensively tackle many of the causes and drivers of persisting violence, which continue to particularly affect certain regions, including Antioquia, Arauca, Bolívar, Cauca, Caquetá, Chocó, Guaviare, La Guajira, Meta, Nariño, Norte de Santander, Putumayo and Valle del Cauca. Indigenous and Afro-Colombian peoples, women and children, continue to face heightened and specific risks.

22. Regrettably, the security guarantees provisions of the Final Agreement have been only partially implemented since 2016. The public policy to dismantle illegal armed groups and criminal organizations was adopted by the Government in May 2024, almost eight years following the signing of the Final Agreement and thus the

policy's implementation has only started recently. The policy provides for simultaneous actions related to the investigation of aggregated patterns of crime, including those linked to illicit economies, and the prosecution of those involved, along with prevention, protection and social services for affected communities. Action plans have been developed for 2 of the 11 regions prioritized in the policy, southern Bolívar-Magdalena Medio and northern Cauca.

23. Meanwhile, the implementation of other key mechanisms, such as the Comprehensive Protection Programme and the public policy for the prevention of stigmatization against former combatants, as well as the Comprehensive Programme for Safeguards of Women Leaders and Human Rights Defenders, have yet to materialize. Former combatants have been particularly affected by ongoing violence, with 460 killed since the signing of the Final Agreement (including 11 women, 59 Indigenous individuals and 57 Afro-Colombians). In addition, 161 (144 men and 17 women) have survived attempted homicides while 54 remain missing (all men).

24. Impunity continues to be a major barrier to the effective delivery of justice in the country. The security guarantees section of the Final Agreement includes specific mechanisms aimed at investigating and prosecuting those responsible for violence against former combatants. The Special Investigation Unit of the Office of the Attorney-General has conducted investigations leading to the conviction of 110 individuals, including 5 masterminds, in 95 cases since it began operating in 2017. Delivering justice in these cases is crucial for the implementation of the Final Agreement and the prospects for future agreements.

25. Regarding illegal economies, the report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for 2023, the latest available, indicates a 10 per cent increase in the total area planted with coca crops in the country, from 230,000 in 2022 to 253,000 hectares (in 2016 the number of hectares was 146,000). This increase is primarily concentrated in Cauca Department, the Pacific region and Catatumbo region. The report also notes a 53 per cent increase in cocaine production potential, which marks the tenth consecutive year of increase since 2013. Efforts to reduce the dependence of local communities on illicit crops have focused on substitution programmes, including the National Comprehensive Programme for Substitution of Illicit Crops, created by the Final Agreement and the largest programme to date, with some 99,000 households participating. However, the success of this approach has been limited, including due to lack of follow-through by the State with development assistance, promised to peasants who voluntarily eradicated coca, and the lack of more comprehensive measures. For example, many affected areas lack adequate infrastructure, such as roads, to enable the emergence of viable alternative economies. The Final Agreement sets out a holistic framework linking various dimensions that need to be addressed, including public health, rural development, security conditions, and the investigation and prosecution of criminal networks.

26. The Final Agreement envisioned the end of the conflict between the Government and the former FARC-EP as an opportunity to uphold the rights of victims, open spaces for them to speak about their experiences and their expectations and to offer a chance for perpetrators to acknowledge and help repair the harm they caused. To this end, it established a Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition, including the Truth Commission, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace and the Unit for the Search of Persons Deemed as Missing.

27. The Truth Commission completed its mandate with the presentation of its final report in June 2022. The landmark document was based on extensive research, involving discussions with 28,580 people and drawing from almost 1,000 reports provided by representatives of various sectors of Colombian society. The final report focused on the causes of the conflict and its impact on different groups. It also

provided recommendations for reconciliation and non-repetition, but their implementation remains largely outstanding. The Unit for the Search of Persons Deemed as Missing, created to facilitate emotional closure for relatives of victims of enforced disappearance, has recovered the remains of 2,192 individuals out of the 124,734 people reported as missing in the context of the armed conflict.

28. Following months of public and parliamentary debate regarding key aspects of its regulatory framework, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace was launched seven years ago with a mandate to deliver justice in relation to the gravest and most representative crimes committed during Colombia's decades-long conflict. As the judicial mechanism of the Final Agreement, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace has so far issued detailed indictments against over 200 individuals, charging 61 members of the former FARC-EP, 139 members of the public security forces and six civilians and non-combatant State agents. The indicted individuals include, on the side of the former guerrilla, all seven members of the secretariat of the former FARC-EP, and on the side of the public security forces, 12 Generals, among other high-ranking officials. Results have also included notable and historic contributions to the truth and acknowledgements of responsibility by those deemed most responsible, as well as the active participation of victims accredited across Special Jurisdiction for Peace proceedings.

29. Thousands of former members of the FARC-EP without criminal records for grave crimes during the conflict have been granted amnesty for political crimes through nine presidential decrees, issued in 2017 and 2018. Eight years since the signing of the Final Agreement, clarity and awareness-raising on this important result regarding legal certainty is needed among former combatants and authorities. Notwithstanding, there remains a need for clarification regarding the legal situation of many other individuals under Special Jurisdiction for Peace authority – both from the former FARC-EP and the public security forces, who are not deemed as most responsible – either through amnesties or waivers of criminal prosecution, both issued by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace.

30. To date, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace has opened 11 cases known as macro cases, most of which are subdivided to account for different actors, regions and timeframes. This comprehensive method requires significant time and resources and could result in extended processes, which require timely closure, including through the issuance of long-awaited restorative sentences. The Special Jurisdiction for Peace has recently informed that it was taking necessary steps to streamline internal procedures with a view to addressing this issue. Case in point is a decision it adopted in January, whereby different Special Jurisdiction components will work towards enhancing collaboration and information-sharing to accelerate investigations in all macro cases.

31. The transitional justice process has been affected by violence against individuals appearing before the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, as well as by attacks and threats against victims and Special Jurisdiction for Peace staff. Judicial proceedings have also been affected, preventing the Jurisdiction from reaching some of the places and communities that suffered the most during the conflict. There is a need for comprehensive security arrangements, including strengthening protection for participants in need.

32. Notwithstanding provisions of the Final Agreement, eight years since its signing, a number of former combatants remain imprisoned allegedly for conflict-related crimes committed before the entry into force of the Final Agreement. While in prison, they face challenges related to access to health, education, and reintegration. There is an urgent need for the Special Jurisdiction for Peace to reach

the most favourable legal provisions to enable former combatants to benefit from the reintegration process as foreseen in the Final Agreement.

33. The comprehensive character of the Final Agreement has given rise to various innovative mechanisms, which play a key role in its implementation, such as the Commission for the Follow-up, Promotion, and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement and its civil society-based advisory bodies on ethnic and gender affairs. Although it is the highest-level dialogue and decision-making mechanism between the signatory parties, the Commission did not meet regularly over the past year. Nonetheless, it was able to play a key role in revising the Framework Plan for Implementation of the Final Agreement and coordinating security measures for former FARC-EP combatants.

34. In follow-up to the commitments of the Final Agreement regarding the provision of information to support the clearance and decontamination of areas affected by anti-personnel mines, improvised explosive devices, and unexploded ordnance or explosive remnants of war, a tripartite mechanism involving the Government, former FARC-EP representatives, the United Nations Verification Mission and the Mine Action Service has facilitated coordination over the last four years. This work has contributed to compliance with the agreed provisions on information-sharing and enabling local institutions to proceed with clearance, decontamination efforts and mine risk prevention in the most affected territories. Following the signing of the Final Agreement, a humanitarian demining organization of former FARC-EP combatants was established and works in conflict-affected communities.

35. The gender provisions of the Final Agreement aim to adopt specific actions to ensure women's equal access to plans and programmes, as well as to guarantee their participation in peacebuilding efforts. Progress has been made in the establishment of specialized mechanisms, guidelines and teams. The High-level Forum on Gender, established in 2018, was reactivated during the current Administration to coordinate implementation and reporting. While important progress was achieved in relation to these institutional mechanisms, significant challenges remain to translate the progress achieved into tangible results. For example, women former combatants, as well as rural women in general, continue to face barriers in accessing land and employment. Poor security conditions in several regions constitute the main obstacle to their active and meaningful participation in peacebuilding.

36. The ethnic chapter of the Final Agreement contains provisions cutting across all sections aiming to address historic inequalities and exclusion of Indigenous and Afro-Colombian peoples and to mitigate the disproportionate impact of conflict on those communities. However, the implementation of the chapter has lagged significantly, including on issues such as land restitution, demining and return to territories prioritized under the Final Agreement. In November 2023, the signing of a pact between the Government entities with implementation responsibilities, aimed at accelerating efforts to complete 60 per cent of the chapter's provisions by 2026, was an important commitment. Yet progress has been limited, with most processes remaining in the early stages and challenges linked to lack of coordination and shortcomings in data collection, monitoring and reporting.

Dialogues and other peacebuilding initiatives

37. Conflict dynamics in Colombia have grown more complex due to the proliferation of armed actors seeking to consolidate control, including over illicit economies, in regions with limited presence of the State. The insecurity caused by their increasingly violent competition is a constant danger to communities and a serious obstacle to the fulfilment of the Final Agreement. Upon taking office, the current Government attempted to address this reality through a wide-ranging

approach, combining peace implementation efforts with simultaneous engagement in dialogue processes with multiple armed groups, aimed at ending or at least reducing the violence. This agenda has had limited success so far, as some Government officials have acknowledged. Recently, following the fragmentation of several of the armed groups involved in these efforts, the focus has shifted from national talks to dialogues with a narrower scope and more localized reach.

38. The Government's most recent approach has included discussions on illicit crop substitution, access to land for communities and local infrastructure improvements. Some of the projected activities coincide in location and substance with measures foreseen under the Final Agreement, within the framework of the development programmes with a territorial focus. Echoing the programme's methodology of participatory character and bottom-up approach, the Government has promoted participation by local communities in discussions on development issues, within the context of the peace dialogues. Some of these discussions resulted in partial agreements, which have not always been swiftly implemented.

39. During 2024, peace talks, described by the Government as political dialogues, were held with three armed groups. These include ELN, the group known as EMBF, and the group known as Coordinadora Nacional Ejército Bolivariano (CNEB). In addition, a regional dialogue was held in the Department of Nariño with the Comuneros del Sur, a splinter from ELN. In parallel, the Government established five socio-legal dialogues, including one with the group known as Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia (AGC) or Clan del Golfo, another with the Autodefensas Conquistadoras de la Sierra Nevada (ACSN), as well as three urban dialogues with criminal organizations in the cities of Buenaventura, Medellín and Quibdó.

40. The ELN armed offensive in the Catatumbo region coincided with the planning of a new bilateral extraordinary meeting with the Government aimed at normalizing dialogues, that had previously been under strain. The recent events in Catatumbo have generated the worst crisis affecting the peace dialogue between the current Government and ELN to date, hindering the resumption of talks in the short term. The subsequent decision to suspend the talks, was followed by the reactivation by the Attorney General of arrest warrants against 31 members of ELN, including members of its peace delegation. In line with this decision, the Government reversed a presidential decree that had formalized the status of ELN delegates as representatives of the group at the negotiating table. Despite the low level of trust between the parties and limited public expectations, some sectors of society, especially in the regions most affected by violence, have called for reactivation of dialogue and a ceasefire, considering the positive overall impact of the previous ceasefire and progress made in relation to the participation of society in the peace process. Through its field presence, the Verification Mission continued to monitor conflict dynamics in the Catatumbo region and to assist the civilian population, including in facilitating the release of detained persons and relocation efforts for individuals at risk (see para. 51).

41. Peace talks between the Government and EMBF continued during the reporting period with a specific focus on an action plan for territorial transformations and violence reduction in seven regions. Following the crisis in Catatumbo, activities with institutions and communities in Norte de Santander were put on hold. Nevertheless, some progress was made in the Departments of Caquetá, Guaviare and Meta on small projects related to access to land, education, and productive initiatives. The detention of an EMBF representative in the dialogues, based on an extradition request, generated concerns over legal certainty. The ceasefire reached in 2023 remains in effect until 15 April 2025. The ceasefire oversight, monitoring and verification mechanism enabled communication and coordination efforts between the two parties during the crisis in Catatumbo. According to reports by the mechanism, armed contact

between the parties was prevented on 63 occasions between July 2024 and February 2025 and at least five people being held hostage by EMBF were released.

42. The Government and CNEB held a third round of meetings in Bogotá from 10 to 13 February. The parties announced progress on three issues: setting up a security subcommission to explore a bilateral ceasefire; establishing a legal framework subcommission; and launching a pilot coca crop substitution project in Nariño. However, at the conclusion of the meeting one of the group's delegates was arrested pursuant to an international extradition request. This incident heightened tensions and affected trust at the peace talks. A meeting between the Government and CNEB was held on 14 and 15 March to solve the crisis and resume dialogue. The parties agreed to continue advancing with the implementation of partial agreements, as agreed in the third round of talks, and to resume negotiations on 10 April.

43. Some progress has been made in relation to the three ongoing socio-legal dialogues in urban settings, including in reducing violence. In Quibdó, two new local structures joined the talks, achieving a truce between five criminal organizations until 31 March. However, the continued expansion of AGC in the city over the past few months has strained the process. In Medellín, the ongoing process with criminal groups enabled a reduction in extortion rates in 25 neighbourhoods within the metropolitan areas of Medellín and Bello. In Buenaventura, the truce between the two urban groups that had sharply reduced violence in the city ended in February, leading to renewed armed confrontations. In all three cases, a clear legal framework remains to be established, and the implementation of the partial agreements reached needs to be accelerated to positively impact the lives of communities.

IV. Main activities and verification of the implementation of the Final Agreement during the reporting period

Comprehensive rural reform

44. The Government's programmatic planning for 2025 sets goals for various processes. Regarding land adjudication, the National Land Agency reported that by year-end it intended to adjudicate the remaining 70 per cent of the nearly 500,000 hectares acquired during the current administration (as of February 2025). Regarding land tenure for smallholdings, the Agency aims to formalize 1.6 million hectares by year-end. Despite efforts to accelerate land distribution, administrative delays and budgetary constraints hindered progress, while peasant organizations demanded swifter adjudication. As for the multipurpose cadastre, or land registry, the Government aims to complete 50 per cent of the task by the end of 2025, covering 80 per cent of the land in municipalities with development programmes with a territorial focus and all municipalities prioritized for rural reform policy.

45. The Final Agreement establishes that the Government shall promote solutions that prevent conflicts related to the productive use of land and the preservation of the environment. Although land conflicts and environmental-agrarian disputes persist, the Government formalized the tenure of peasant-occupied land in Córdoba and Guaviare Departments, providing legal security and production incentives, in December. In late December, the Government established 2 new peasant reserve zones, bringing the total to 20, with 7 more planned by the end of 2025. In January 2025, the Ministry of the Environment issued a resolution enabling peasant forestry concessions, a measure expected to enhance sustainable land use while balancing environmental protections.

46. Despite the ongoing challenges facing the land restitution process, such as procedural delays and judicial backlogs, the Land Restitution Unit submitted 8 new

collective cases to the judiciary, including a landmark case on gender-based violence in land dispossession allegedly committed by paramilitaries.

47. Congress has begun debating a bill proposed jointly by the Government and the representatives of the special transitory districts for peace on a 10-year extension of development programmes with a territorial focus. Meanwhile, budget cuts continued to threaten the territorial presence of the Agency for Territorial Renewal and its ability to implement projects. Even with limited implementation capacities and resources, the Agency has advanced several projects, including six regional projects, focused on improving transport infrastructure, access to higher education and economic reactivation. Their implementation has begun and is planned to take place within the next two years.

Reintegration

48. In line with the President's assurances that key areas of the implementation of the Final Agreement would continue to receive necessary funding despite ongoing budgetary constraints, the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization reported having been allocated the funds requested for 2025.

49. To date, 97 per cent of former combatants have enrolled in the Comprehensive Reintegration Programme. Former FARC-EP members have begun the design of their respective reintegration plans. However, the National Reintegration System – an overarching coordination body established at the same time as the Programme – is not yet operational, hindering the implementation of the Programme.

50. During the reporting period, the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization issued a resolution establishing the procedures for recognizing special collective reintegration areas, where groups former combatants are pursuing collective reintegration outside of territorial areas for training and reintegration. Measures to address their particular security needs remain outstanding.

51. Approximately 200 former combatants – some 30 per cent of former FARC-EP members in the Department of Norte de Santander – were affected by the crisis in Catatumbo (see para. 40), according to official sources. The Government, with the support of the Verification Mission, conducted emergency evacuations and provided humanitarian assistance to the former combatants, and the Agency for Reintegration and Normalization assessed their reintegration needs. The Special Jurisdiction for Peace issued orders for the Agency to provide funeral insurance payments, stipend disbursements, and an action plan related to affected productive projects, as well as for other Government entities to prioritize security of territorial areas for training and reintegration. For its part, the National Land Agency was working in line with the state of exception declared by the President, to acquire land for the consolidation of the territorial area for training and reintegration of Tibú, a Catatumbo municipality, in an alternative location.

52. In February, 24 former combatants and 75 of their family members were relocated from a collective reintegration area in Mesetas, Department of Meta, due to escalating risks related to the presence of armed groups. In such cases, there is a need for sustained institutional support for access to land, security and humanitarian aid. The Government has yet to fulfil its commitments regarding land and housing for relocated territorial areas for training and reintegration, including one in San Vicente del Caguán, Caquetá Department, and two in San Juan de Arama and Acacias, Meta Department. Meanwhile, a territorial area for training and reintegration in San José del Guaviare, Guaviare Department, and another in Carrizal, Antioquia Department, are still awaiting relocation.

53. Former combatants continued to demand prompt access to land, taking part in mobilizations across several Departments. Although 21 plots from the Special Assets Administration have been allocated to cooperatives since 2022, challenges remain, such as the effective transfer of plots, ensuring they are free of debt or any other financial liability, as well as the unlawful occupation by previous tenants. The Agency for Reintegration and Normalization prioritized land for possible purchase to consolidate seven territorial areas for training and reintegration, including in Caquetá and Putumayo Departments, while also supporting agricultural cooperatives in these regions, as well as in Arauca and Cauca Departments.

54. Housing construction within territorial areas for training and reintegration has progressed slowly, with 140 houses set for delivery in Cauca Department and 43 in Caquetá Department, while construction continues in Antioquia, Arauca and La Guajira Departments. Some progress has been made in Meta Department for the construction of temporary housing, and in Cesar Department for improvements to self-built houses. Funding shortages and policy delays have limited access by former combatants to urban and rural housing outside territorial areas for training and reintegration.

55. As of February 2025, 6,003 individual and collective productive projects had been approved, benefiting over 11,000 former combatants, including 2,850 women. While 63 per cent of former combatants pursue individual projects, no sustainability strategy has been defined for these projects so far. A total of 129 collective projects have been approved so far. In addition, 110 applications have been received requesting assistance within the Agency's sustainability strategy, with 55 under review and 19 projects (2 of them women-led initiatives) having had their sustainability plans approved.

Security guarantees

56. Developments during the reporting period underscored the importance of enhanced security measures, including through a more robust implementation of security guarantees under the Final Agreement. The complexity of conflict dynamics was illustrated not only by the events in Catatumbo, but also by two simultaneous attacks on 19 February in Cúcuta, the capital of the Department of Norte de Santander, where explosives were used against a road toll and a police station under construction. As a result, a 24-hour curfew was implemented by authorities. The security situation remains critical due to actions by illegal armed groups in the Departments of Antioquia, Arauca, Bolívar, Cauca, Chocó, Guaviare, La Guajira and Meta, as well as the Magdalena Medio region. In Guaviare Department, an ambush by EMBF in January – currently engaged in peace talks with the Government – against EMC FARC-EP, which had pulled out of dialogues, resulted in at least 27 deaths, including six recruited children. The recruitment and use of children by different armed groups continued to be of serious concern, affecting above all Indigenous Peoples such as the Awa, Jiw, Hitnu, Siona, Nasa and Nukak.

57. Various regions continued to be affected by specific conflict dynamics involving AGC, the group that has expanded the most over the past few years, including into regions previously under the influence of other armed groups. The expansion of AGC is an important conflict driver in Antioquia, Bolívar and Chocó Departments, where fighting for control over corridors that are strategic for illegal economies has been particularly intense. In Chocó Department, confrontations between AGC and ELN resulted in the latter confining the populations to their homes or villages between 18 and 21 February.

58. During the reporting period, 19 former combatants were killed, a significant increase compared to the previous period (10), as a result, in part, of the events in

Catatumbo, where 6 former FARC-EP members were killed and 7 were reported as missing. In other regions, violence against former combatants continued, alongside persistent threats undermining collective reintegration efforts in various territorial areas for training and reintegration. Out of the 24 territorial areas for training and reintegration, 16 faced challenges in maintaining the preventive deployment of public security forces.

59. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has reported the forced internal displacement of 59,700 individuals and the confinement of 24,500 people across 36 municipalities in eight Departments between 27 December and 3 March 2025. Of those affected, 24 per cent belong to ethnic communities.

60. The situation of social leaders continued to be extremely worrying. Between 27 December 2024 and 3 March 2025, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) recorded 40 allegations of homicides against human rights defenders (9 verified, 27 under verification and 4 inconclusive), compared with 37 allegations received during the previous reporting period. Among the identified victims, a significant number were traditional authorities and Indigenous guards in Cauca, Chocó and Putumayo Departments. OHCHR received 18 allegations of massacres (5 verified and 13 under verification) during the reporting period.

61. Since 27 December, five early warnings were issued by the Office of the Ombudsperson. One of them in relation to the risks associated with the fragmentation of EMC FARC-EP into two separate factions, in view of armed confrontation between them in the south and southeastern areas of the country. Among the various risks depicted was the recruitment and use of children, including of Indigenous girls for sexual exploitation. Another Ombudsperson's warning referred to the imminent risks for local populations in municipalities of Valle del Cauca Department, emanating from armed confrontation between EMC FARC-EP and a splinter faction. Another warning was issued in view of the exacerbated tensions arising from the presence of multiple armed groups, including ELN, AGC and EMBF, as well as criminal organizations, in Norte de Santander Department.

62. During the reporting period, the Office of the Attorney General established a special task force to investigate the events that occurred in Catatumbo, including the clarification of the six homicides and disappearance of seven former combatants. The Special Investigation Unit of the Office of the Attorney General continued to conduct investigations into cases across the country – including homicides, attempted homicides, missing persons – leading to nine arrest warrants (three for the main instigators of the crimes), three cases reaching trial and two sentences being issued during the reporting period.

Restorative sentences

63. The Verification Mission continued to verify the State's preparations for the implementation of restorative sentences to be issued by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. In February, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace adopted guidelines with regards to restorative sentences, aimed at enhancing internal coordination, as well as with external actors, and facilitating the identification of funding sources. In addition, in March, the Government and the Special Jurisdiction for Peace reactivated joint work within the coordination mechanism on restorative sentences and took stock of available projects that could be suitable for individuals to conduct the restorative component of their sentences.

64. With four cases already in the trial stage, involving 38 indictees, maintaining momentum in this inter-institutional dialogue is crucial, as Government entities need

to make the necessary arrangements within their respective mandates for implementation to take place smoothly once restorative sentences are issued. Recent developments, such as those in Catatumbo, underscore the importance of duly considering matters of security for all individuals to be sentenced, as well as the reintegration process of those who belonged to the former FARC-EP.

65. The Verification Mission and the Special Jurisdiction for Peace have continued to jointly prepare for the monitoring and verification of restorative sentences. The Verification Mission met in February with judges from the Peace Tribunal and Executive Secretariat of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace to assess progress, including in the development of guidelines required for ensuring an effective exchange of information at the local, regional and national levels.

66. Notable decisions of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace during the reporting period included the indictment of 12 former FARC-EP combatants for war crimes and crimes against humanity, within Case 05 (on the situation of northern Cauca and southern Valle del Cauca). Among those indicted there is one member of the last secretariat of FARC-EP, who currently serves as a Senator for the Comunes party. The Special Jurisdiction for Peace also indicted 39 members of the army – including four Generals – and three civilian third parties within Case 03 (on killings and enforced disappearances presented as combat casualties by State agents) for crimes committed in the Department of Antioquia.

67. Regarding the four cases currently in the trial stage, legal challenges brought forward by the attorneys of the indictees and by the victims' representatives continued to be addressed by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, including in some cases by its Appeals Section. Prioritizing and swiftly resolving these legal remedies is necessary to allow trials to advance towards the issuance of restorative sentences within Case 01 (on hostage-taking, other severe deprivations of liberty and concurrent crimes committed by FARC-EP), and on Case 03.

Ethnic chapter

68. During the reporting period, Indigenous and Afro-Colombian peoples continued to be particularly affected by confinement as a result of armed clashes, as well as by systematic targeting and threats against spiritual leaders, ethnic authorities and their families, especially in Cauca, Caquetá, Chocó, Putumayo and Valle del Cauca Departments. These dynamics have resulted in the forced displacement of ethnic families and authorities, often as a preventive measure to avoid child recruitment and to ensure their safety. Indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities underscore the urgent need for stronger protection measures and for the full implementation of the ethnic provisions of the Final Agreement.

69. Regarding land issues, the National Commission for Indigenous Territories expressed concern that budgetary cuts affecting the National Land Agency would limit its ability to support Indigenous peoples, especially in relation to land formalization.

V. Coordination with the United Nations country team

70. The United Nations country team and the Verification Mission jointly support efforts by Colombia to implement the Final Agreement. As part of the 2024 investment plan of the United Nations multi-partner trust fund for sustaining peace in Colombia, the Verification Mission provided inputs to be taken into account in the design of projects, related to implementation of the comprehensive rural reform, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, reintegration, action against anti-personnel mines

involving former combatants, and the public policy to dismantle illegal armed groups and criminal organizations.

71. In February, the trust fund approved a \$45 million investment plan for 2025–2026, with a focus on accelerating the implementation of the Final Agreement, mainly through comprehensive investments at the local level. It also includes funds for rapid implementation of actions within the framework of the other dialogue initiatives.

VI. Conduct and discipline

72. The Verification Mission developed its annual action plan for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and a related communication strategy. Risks outlined in its annual fraud report have been included in the Verification Mission's Enterprise Risk Management Framework for appropriate mitigation.

73. The Verification Mission received two complaints of serious misconduct related to fraud and prohibited conduct.

VII. Observations

74. The Final Agreement's far-reaching and holistic character aims to address historic inequalities, as well as the causes and consequences of decades of conflict. These include challenges such as the consolidation of State presence throughout the territory, the closing of development gaps between urban and rural areas and populations, the provision of opportunities to long-neglected communities, and addressing the problem of illegal economies, with a particular focus on illicit drugs. The current implementation of the Final Agreement offers a mixed picture. While there is notable progress in certain areas, some structural issues remain unaddressed and threaten to undermine the prospects of sustainable peace for all Colombians. State institutions need to urgently and effectively deliver on the promises of the Final Agreement, the needs of rural communities and the expectations of Colombian society at large.

75. Given the importance and long-term nature of implementation, the need to stay the course cannot be overstated. Since the adoption of the Final Agreement, each Administration has made its contribution to the overall progress described in this report. The next 18 months present an opportunity for the current Administration to accelerate the progress it has made to date, leaving solid foundations that can be built upon in the future.

76. I welcome the strong focus on rural reform. I hope the Government can complement the important steps in land adjudication and formalization with efforts to help recipients use this land productively. Appropriate coordination with the implementation of other innovative instruments, namely the development programmes with a territorial focus and the national plans for rural reform, is also needed. Progress in rural reform is essential to bolster institutional presence and facilitate access to goods, services and development opportunities for communities. Effective implementation requires concrete resources, projects and active citizen participation.

77. Transitional justice is crucial to the success of the peace process in Colombia, and it requires faster progress towards the issuance of the restorative sentences to those individuals deemed most responsible for grave crimes. The victims and Colombian society have waited patiently for this next stage of the process. I call upon those appearing before the Special Jurisdiction for Peace to maintain their

commitment to truth, justice and peace, and ask that relevant Government entities spare no effort to ensure they prepare the conditions enabling the implementation of the sentences, including security and adequate funding. In view of the time remaining until the finalization of its mandate, I welcome recent efforts by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace to optimize investigations and expedite the issuance of restorative sentences. Finally, it is as important as ever that the operational autonomy and independence of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace be fully respected by all concerned, and it be provided with the necessary financial resources to fulfil its historic mandate.

78. The current security situation in various regions of the country is concerning and requires urgent attention. Implementation of the security guarantees provisions contained in the Final Agreement is of utmost importance, as they provide a clear and comprehensive framework within which to tackle the drivers and effects of violence that have particularly impacted rural communities, social leaders, former combatants, women, children, indigenous and Afro-Colombians. Achieving comprehensive State presence in conflict-affected areas is imperative to protect vulnerable groups and prevent crises such as the one in Catatumbo. This requires optimizing the complementarity between security and defence policies focusing on prevention and the protection of communities, ongoing peace initiatives, and strategies against illegal economies.

79. The expansion of armed groups in parts of Colombia where peace had been expected to take root is a reality and a threat to the Final Agreement. Unfortunately, the peace dialogue initiatives launched to date have, in general, not yet produced the clear and sustained results that were hoped for. I trust that the Government will make the necessary adjustments to prioritize those political dialogue processes with actors that have demonstrated their commitment to peace, and those with potential to provide tangible benefits for affected communities. The extent to which they enable increased State presence, in line with the Final Agreement and current security policies, should also be taken into consideration.

80. Peacebuilding is a non-linear and complex process. Colombians know this from long experience. In challenging times, it is necessary to stay committed, revise priorities, make strategic decisions, and implement sound policies. The United Nations will continue to accompany and support Colombia in its efforts to consolidate peace, with the firm belief that it remains not only possible but also necessary.

81. I am grateful to the Security Council for its consistent and crucial support to Colombia over the years, especially in enabling the Verification Mission as an instrument to foster progress in the implementation of the Final Agreement. The close monitoring and encouragement by the Council will remain a source of strength as Colombians continue to work for peace in their country.

VERIFICATION MISSION PRESENCE AND MUNICIPALITIES PRIORITIZED FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PEACE AGREEMENT COLOMBIA

Verification Mission
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