

# Implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda for Sustainable Peace in Colombia

**Shadow Report**

**CEDAW Committee, 72nd Session**

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WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR  
**PEACE & FREEDOM**  
COLOMBIA





# Implementing the Women, Peace and Security Agenda for Sustainable Peace in Colombia

## Submission to the CEDAW Committee 72<sup>nd</sup> session (February 2019)

The *Liga Internacional de Mujeres por la Paz y la Libertad* (LIMPAL) Colombia contributed, both in writing<sup>1</sup> and orally, to the pre-session Working Group of the Committee in July 2018. This shadow report elaborates on concerns brought to the attention of the Committee on that occasion, with updated information and recommendations. **Due to word count restrictions, some sections from the written submission to the pre-session have not been included;** therefore, we encourage Committee members to refer to both this present submission and the one to the pre-session.

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<sup>1</sup> LIMPAL Colombia’s submission to the pre-session is available in English and Spanish at:  
[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCEDAW%2fICO%2fCOL%2f31731&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCEDAW%2fICO%2fCOL%2f31731&Lang=en)

## Introduction

1. Through the formulation of the National Public Policy on Gender Equality for Women enshrined in Articles 177 and 179 of the National Development Plan (*Plan Nacional de Desarrollo*, PND) “*Prosperidad para todos*” 2010-2014, Colombia made a commitment to ensuring women’s human rights and gender equality. This commitment was restated in the PND 2014 – 2018 “*Todos por un nuevo País*” and Law 1753 of 2015. With the PND “*Pacto por Colombia, Pacto por la Equidad 2018-2022*”, the government undertook to strengthen the gender institutional framework and, thereby, advance in Phase II of the Gender Equity Policy for Women, as well as in the creation of the National System for Women in order to articulate the entities of the national level with responsibilities for the achievement of equality between men and women. This shadow report illustrates areas requiring prompt action towards these commitments.

## Increase in violence against women and femicides

2. Statistics from the National Institute of Legal Medicine<sup>2</sup> confirm a steady increase of cases of violence against women, with many resulting in homicide. However, such crimes continue not being classified as femicides despite the enactment of Law (“*Rosa Elvira Cely*”) 1761 of 2015 highlighted in Colombia’s report to the Committee.<sup>3</sup> Despite these legislative advancements, there continue to be substantial implementation gaps. In 2018, the UN country team “noted that there was still underreporting of gender-based violence and a gap between legislation and its effective implementation.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The National Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Science is a Colombian public institute affiliated to the General Prosecutor’s Office of the Nation in charge of exercising forensic activities in the country.

<sup>3</sup> CEDAW/C/COL/9, para. 9.

<sup>4</sup> “The country team reported that Colombia had national public policies on gender equity for women, risk prevention and the protection of the rights of female victims of the armed conflict, as well as a comprehensive plan to guarantee women a life free from violence. Progress had been achieved through the laws to combat sexual violence and femicide, as well as the law to eradicate violence against women. However, it noted that there was still underreporting of gender-based violence and a gap between legislation and its effective implementation.” UN Compilation the Universal Periodic Review of Colombia, A/HRC/WG.6/30/COL/2, para. 78, 12 March 2018.

## **Firearm – related femicides**

3. According to the National Institute of Legal Medicine, between January and October 2016, 54% of murders of women were committed with firearms, followed by 23% committed with knives and blade weapons.<sup>5</sup> From January to November 2018, 36,663 women were subject to interpersonal violence and 54,782 to domestic violence.

4. Murders are carried out in the context of domestic violence, conflicts within relationships and interpersonal violence; firearms are the most used weapons, with 528 cases in 2017. In addition, the legal and illegal arms trade have increased due to police and military operations, the rise of private surveillance, ordinary crime and criminal structures of armed groups and drug traffickers. These figures demonstrate that the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the increase in their legal and illegal trade perpetuate conflict situations and limit the guarantee of women's rights, particularly of the right to live free from violence.

## **Investment in military spending**

5. The CEDAW Committee has highlighted how cuts to social spending and the increase of the defence budget represent a setback in the implementation of the Convention and of the Sustainable Development Goals.<sup>6</sup>

6. In March 2017, Sweden and Colombia signed a defence cooperation agreement that includes the sale of war material and combat aircraft.<sup>7</sup> For a country that begins a post-conflict stage and a decrease of the intensity of internal conflict, investing in the modernisation of its arms and combat aircraft is contradictory to investing in peace. This is especially so given the need for greater investment in development and in the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement with FARC-EP.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.medicinalegal.gov.co/documents/20143/57992/Violencia+contra+las+mujeres.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> See, CEDAW Committee's Concluding observations on the eighth periodic report of Australia, UN Index: CEDAW/C/AUS/CO/8, paragraph 45, July 2018.

<sup>7</sup> According to AVIACOL.NET – the aviation portal of Colombia – “the need of the Colombian Air Force to replace its IAI Kfir frontline aircrafts has led it to analyse proposals by different manufactures, and the Swedish Saab increasingly marking the presence of its products in the country in order to increase the interest in the JAS 39 Gripen combat aircraft” (unofficial translation). Similarly, “the multi-role features of the Gripen offer the possibility to monitor the territory, undertake air-to-ground missions and secure the country's sovereignty. It has advanced sensors that allow it to identify objects in the air and on the ground, even under unfavourable weather conditions, with which it can perform surveillance tasks in peace or war missions” (unofficial translation) <http://www.aviacol.net/noticias/pilotos-saab-gripen-colombia.html>.

## The need for a robust arms' regulatory framework

7. Building a solid framework for arms control is essential to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women. Even though Colombia signed the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in 2013, it has not ratified it yet due to the fact that the Constitutional Court declared the ratification process unconstitutional.<sup>8</sup> It has not ratified the UN Firearms Protocol<sup>9</sup> or the Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War either.<sup>10</sup>

8. In the context of continued armed violence in the country and in the post Peace Agreement context, there need to be crosscutting unifying elements, legal norms, early warnings and specific security measures in all state institutions that work towards addressing and preventing violence against women. Joint efforts by the different institutions – both national and local – are needed to guarantee that all women and girls enjoy their right to live free from all forms of violence.

9. Colombia should indicate which legislative measures are being put in place to ratify international instruments on arms control, especially the ATT, and which measures are being implemented to strengthen controls over the legal and illegal firearms trade. It should also indicate any outreach efforts, reception and processing of complaints conducted to increase the control and restrictions on the carrying, owning and trafficking of the small arms and light weapons covered by the Decree 1581 of 2017.

10. At the end of 2018, the prohibition of a free use of weapons was extended until 31 December 2019 through Decree 2362. However, the decree includes a provision that leaves open the possibility of delivering permits for the carrying of weapons at the discretion of the Ministry of Defence, which can lead to an increase of the circulation of weapons in the hands of the civilian population and focuses the debate on security again on the militarisation of communities.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The Court concluded that in relation to the issue under review, not all inherent requirements of the legal procedures to adopt an international treaty have been met, and that the claim of procedural irregularity cannot be remedied. Court's judgment C-047 of 2017.

<sup>9</sup> Protocol against the illicit manufacturing and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition.

<sup>10</sup> Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War to the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW).

<sup>11</sup> The Ministry "during the validity of this Decree, will provide the competent military authorities with the guidelines and / or guidelines for the issuance of special authorizations required by the holders for reasons of urgency or safety and the corresponding exceptions, taking into account among other factors, the particular conditions of each application." (unofficial translation). In Spanish: "Durante la vigencia del Decreto, para impartir a las autoridades militares competentes los lineamientos y/o directrices para la expedición de las autorizaciones especiales que requieran los titulares por razones de urgencia o seguridad y de las excepciones que corresponda, teniendo en cuenta entre otros factores, las condiciones particulares de cada solicitud."

11. Colombia has also become one of the military industry powers, especially in the naval industry, in the Americas. Currently, warships built in the country are exported to several regions of the world.<sup>12</sup> In 2016, it was reported that *Indumil*, a State-owned company, was looking to export to Middle East countries bombs manufactured in Colombia.<sup>13</sup> In November 2017, the *Indumil* CEO stressed that “our products enjoy a high degree of prestige, they have all been tested in combat, and this has resulted in a high level of interest by different armed forces of the [Middle East] region and in other continents. We have developed some commercial approaches for government-to-government sales.”<sup>14</sup> (unofficial translation).

## Recommendations

12. Colombia should:

- a) Review, update and strengthen arms control regulations and permits in order to ensure that arms are not used to commit or facilitate human rights violations, including femicides and other acts of gender-based violence, and to address the increase in armed violence against women;
- b) Ratify without delay the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and incorporate its provisions into national legislation, including the requirement to assess, prior to authorization of the export of arms under Colombia’s jurisdiction, the risk of conventional arms being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women;
- c) Ratify and implement the UN Firearms Protocol and the UN Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War;
- d) Decrease military spending and increase investments in peace, justice and gender equality;

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Available in Spanish at

<http://caracol.com.co/descargables/2018/12/26/b911752b1f6846517ac234cba646164f.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> The president of the Science and Technology Corporation for Naval, Maritime and Riverine Industry Development has stated that “we are the leaders in Latin America and in Central America as the most important in the production of goods and services for the military industry; we want countries and foreign companies to come and invest in the Colombian industry” (unofficial translation). Available in Spanish at: <https://www.rcnradio.com/colombia/colombia-exporta-buques-de-guerra-y-construyebarcos-hospital>

<sup>13</sup> In Spanish. “¿Cuáles son los países latinoamericanos que más armas exportan?”.

[http://www.bbc.com/mundo/america\\_latina/2016/06/160602\\_economia\\_venta\\_armamentos\\_america\\_latina\\_if](http://www.bbc.com/mundo/america_latina/2016/06/160602_economia_venta_armamentos_america_latina_if) .“Colombia quiere venderles bombas a países de Oriente Medio” <https://www.elespectador.com/noticias/judicial/colombia-quiere-venderles-bombas-paises-de-orientemedi-articulo-633593>.

<sup>14</sup> “Los productos de Indumil han sido probados en combate, esto genera alto interés en otras fuerzas armadas de la región y del mundo” <https://www.defensa.com/expodefensa-2017/productos-indumil-hansido-probados-combate-esto-genera-alto>.

- e) Strengthen the control over the legal and illegal firearms trade, including the procedures of control and restriction on the carrying, owning, and trafficking of small arms and light weapons, covered in the Decree 1581 of 2017 and ensure greater control in the implementation of Decree 2362 of 2018 to prevent the delivery of permits to individuals who have or have had complaints or trials for violence against women, femicide or attempted femicide;
- f) Develop a robust registry that allows to identify and relate femicides and other killings of women to other multiple acts of violence against women taking place in the country.<sup>15</sup>
- g) Develop proactive strategies to address root causes of violence and to promote social transformation that address exclusions, violent masculinities and create conditions for achieving disarmament and gender equality;
- h) Remove its declaration under article 10(1) of the Optional Protocol regarding the competence of the Committee under articles 8 and 9.<sup>16</sup>

## **Women's participation in political and public life**

### **Reintegration (reincorporation) process of FARC-EP women**

13. The Final Agreement with the FARC-EP<sup>17</sup> established the process of reintegration (reincorporation) of FARC-EP ex-combatants.<sup>18</sup> As of February 2018, 16875 FARC-EP ex-combatants had laid down their weapons; of those, 5.524 (32.7%) remain active in the process of reintegration. The census of the FARC conducted by the National University of Colombia<sup>19</sup> based on 10,015 people, showed that

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<sup>15</sup> <http://limpalcolombia.org/pdf/INFORME%201325%20BAJA%20CALIDAD.pdf> page 35.

<sup>16</sup> Although Colombia has ratified the Optional Protocol to the CEDAW, the country still holds a declaration under article 10(1) stating, inter alia, that it does not recognise the competence of the CEDAW Committee provided for in articles 8 and 9 to initiate a confidential investigation on alleged grave or systematic violations of the Convention. See, [https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg\\_no=IV-8-b&chapter=4&clang=\\_en#EndDec](https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtdsg_no=IV-8-b&chapter=4&clang=_en#EndDec).

<sup>17</sup> Final Agreement to end the armed conflict and build a stable and lasting peace (2016) between the National Government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (FARC-EP)

<sup>18</sup> Point 3 on End of the Conflict, Peace Agreement, 2016, p. 57. English Version.

<http://especiales.presidencia.gov.co/Documents/20170620-dejacion-armas/acuerdos/acuerdo-finalingles.pdf>.

<sup>19</sup> This is a 2017 census of people who had recently laid down weapons; it may be consulted at: (in Spanish) [https://www.elspectador.com/sites/default/files/pdf-file/presentacion\\_rueda\\_de\\_prensa\\_julio\\_6\\_2017.pdf](https://www.elspectador.com/sites/default/files/pdf-file/presentacion_rueda_de_prensa_julio_6_2017.pdf).



23% of them, that is 2,267, are women. Of those, 7.4% were pregnant and 77% of these pregnant women received prenatal care.<sup>20</sup>

14. The Reintegration Roadmap designed by the Reincorporation and Normalization Agency (ARN) consists of eight elements that correspond to priority areas: Personal Dimension, Productive Dimension, Family Dimension, Habitat Dimension, Health Dimension, Education Dimension, Citizenship and Security.<sup>21</sup> As stated in the Peace Agreement, “the reincorporation process shall have an equity-based approach, with a particular emphasis on women’s rights;”<sup>22</sup> this recognizes that the reintegration process for men and women is not the same and deserves additional attention in order to deconstruct social and cultural structures that perpetuate violence and discrimination against women. This means that each of above-mentioned aspects of the reintegration process must include an approach that gives specific attention to the situation of female ex-combatants.

15. Yet, at the time of writing, limited initiatives with a gender focus are being implemented in the Territorial Areas for Training and Reincorporation (ETCR). The Model of Multidimensional Attention implemented by the ARN in the reintegration process does not demonstrate clearly the incorporation of a focus on gender and women’s rights. This can lead to the replication of gender stereotypes that limit the social and economic empowerment of women, which would run counter to the recommendations made by the CEDAW Committee in relation to the particular challenges faced by female ex-combatants in these types of programs.<sup>23</sup>

16. A more sensitive approach to the individual and collective dimensions of these women’s experiences, the complex roles they played in wartime, and the processes of citizen participation in

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<sup>20</sup> In Spanish. <http://agenciadenoticias.unal.edu.co/detalle/article/vivienda-y-salud-los-principales-retos-que-muestra-el-censo-a-las-farc-ep.html>.

<sup>21</sup> The Final Agreement has determined that a socioeconomic census should be undertaken, with the “purpose of providing the information required to facilitate the process of comprehensive reincorporation of the FARC-EP into civilian life as a community and as individuals. The NRC shall define the content of the census, the way in which it is conducted and the safekeeping and proper use of the information. The National University of Colombia (Universidad Nacional de Colombia) shall be responsible for conducting the census.” The results of this census can be consulted in Spanish in Informe Final Gestión ARN-2014-2018. Planeación estratégica y de gestión. <http://www.reintegracion.gov.co/es/agencia/SiteAssets/20180416%20%20INFORME%20FINAL%20GESTION%20JOSHUA%20MITROTTI%20.pdf>.

<sup>22</sup> Peace Agreement, 2016, p.69. English version. <http://especiales.presidencia.gov.co/Documents/20170620-dejacion-armas/acuerdos/acuerdo-finalingles.pdf>.

<sup>23</sup> CEDAW/C/GC/30, para.67 and 68.

which they are engaged is necessary. There is a need for reintegration programs in the territories that translate into practice the recommendations issued by National Economic and Social Policy Council (CONPES)<sup>24</sup> and that link the gender perspective and women's rights with the aim of guaranteeing the exercise of their citizen participation in the post-conflict framework.

17. The reintegration process and the commitment to implementing peace are unique opportunities to change the structures of inequality, stigmatization and stereotypes so deeply rooted within the Colombian society and to overcome the conditions of vulnerability of work in the reintegration process. It is critical to strengthen the work undertaken in the territories with ex-combatants, communities and both local and regional governments to ensure linkages that can successfully address these social changes and contribute to the reduction of structural inequalities of women in the reintegration process.

## **Recommendations**

18. Colombia should:

- a) Develop methodologies in the Territorial Areas of Training and Reincorporation (ETCR) to address reintegration with a gender and women's rights approach;
- b) Strengthen the empowerment of female ex-combatants in view of their effective reintegration, including economic empowerment through the implementation of cooperative and solidarity programmes such as *Economías Sociales del Común* – ECOMÚN, as well as professional training courses;
- c) Include FARC-EP female ex-combatants in all stages of the post-conflict reconstruction process and build a reintegration process that provides a gender-sensitive approach to their individual and collective experiences, including the complex roles that they played in wartime and the processes of citizen participation in which they are engaged;
- d) Provide necessary resources to the Gender Technical Agency of the National Reincorporation Council;

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<sup>24</sup> The National Economic and Social Policy Council (CONPES) was created by Law 19 of 1958. It is the highest national planning authority and functions as an advisory body for the Government in all matters relating to Colombia's economic and social development. To do so, it coordinates and guides the agencies in charge of the economic and social management of the Government through the study and the adoption of documents on the development of general policies that are presented during sessions.

- e) Integrate the Integral Plans of Prevention and Protection (PIPP) in the Territorial Areas of Training and Reincorporation (ETCR) to address the prevention of violations of the human rights, freedom, security and integrity of female ex-combatants in the reintegration process.
- f) Ensure that reintegration areas have adequate measures for boys and girls, such as nurseries and educational centres, as recommended by the Secretary-General in the report on the UN Verification Mission in Colombia.<sup>25</sup>

## **Implementation of the Special chapter on women and Peace Agreement**

19. The Peace Agreement includes more than 100 provisions on the issue of women's rights to be incorporated into the proposed Gender Approach of the Framework Plan for the Implementation of the Agreement (PMI) in order to realize concrete public policies, programs and reforms from which women would benefit.<sup>26</sup> A gender approach was supposed to be at the heart of the PMI and with a requirement to consider the "practical and strategic needs of women, identifying the multiple discriminations that must be addressed for the execution of the agreements [...] including impact indicators that make it possible to identify the progress of implementation in that regard."<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, Peace Agreement sought to strengthen gender equality in the State's institutional structures, policies, programs, processes and projects to be promoted in framework of the implementation of the Peace Agreement.<sup>28</sup>

20. The Peace Agreement envisaged the establishment of a Commission for Monitoring, Promoting and Verifying the Implementation of the Final Agreement (CSIVI) to be put in place the day after the signing of the Peace Agreement, which would be an open space for citizen participation to formulate proposals. Civil society sent their proposals but not all were included in the Plan, the deadlines for their timely review were not met and the final version of the PMI was published approximately one year later than originally scheduled.

21. In addition, the programming of the PMI road map and women's participation has not been established yet, despite the fact that the Final Agreement envisaged gender approach as a cross-cutting component to be guaranteed through the whole implementation.

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<sup>25</sup> [https://colombia.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/n1829781\\_en.pdf](https://colombia.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/n1829781_en.pdf).

<sup>26</sup> Peace Agreement, 2016, p.208.

<sup>27</sup> Final Agreement, 2016, p.208. English version.

<http://especiales.presidencia.gov.co/Documents/20170620-dejacion-armas/acuerdos/acuerdo-finalingles.pdf> .

<sup>28</sup> In Spanish. PMI, 2017, p.145 <http://www.equidadmujer.gov.co/oag/Documents/Plan-MarcoImplementacion-Acuerdo-Final-Paz.pdf> .

22. Providing adequate budget to the institutions at the territorial level is essential as these will be sounding boards to reach the implementation of the Final Agreement in terms of territorial approach and guarantee of the gender and differential approaches recognized by it.

### **Recommendations**

23. Colombia should:

- a) Include specific goals and priorities in the Framework Plan of the Implementation of the Agreement (PMI) to close the gaps and guarantee the right to equality and affirmative actions for women and members of LGBTI community;
- b) Specify in the PMI the affirmative, indicative or instrumental measures, as well entities responsible and timeline, to guarantee the compliance with more than 100 measures for women agreed in the Peace Agreement;
- c) Allocate necessary budget to the implementation of the agreed measures for women in the Peace Agreement, including the continuity of the Women's Special Forum (*Instancia Especial*).
- d) Harmonize the Framework Plan of the Implementation of the Agreement (PMI) with the National Development Plan 2018-2022 so to foster the implementation of all the measures for women agreed in the Peace Agreement;
- e) Provide budget estimates for the implementation of the Plan in the territories.

## **Women participation in political and public life and the peace-building process**

### **National Action Plan 1325**

24. UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (2000) along with subsequent resolutions have been a cornerstone in women's political advocacy in the peace-building process in Colombia. This political advocacy made possible, among other things, the incorporation in the Agreement of a gender approach and of women as political actors. Stemming from the specific provisions on women rights in the Peace Agreement are the creation of the Special Women Instance <sup>29</sup> for the monitoring and

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<sup>29</sup> Outcome of the Final Agreement. This agency is charged with guaranteeing the women's rights approach

verification of the Agreement Implementation, and the recent creation (January 2019) of the Intersectoral Commission for the Incorporation of the Gender Approach in the Implementation of the Final Agreement for the Termination of the Conflict and the Construction of a Stable and Lasting Peace - High Instance of Government Gender – to monitor the implementation of the gender indicators of the Peace Agreement.

25. Progress is also noticeable in the appointment of about 35% of women in leadership positions in the peace institutional framework, which is part of the Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice and Reparation. The high number of women in the chambers of the Special Peace Jurisdiction and the two seats of the FARC political party held by women as well as the 23% of women in the FARC National Policy Committee are also encouraging. However, Colombia is yet to adopt a not have a National Action Plan 1325.

26. UNSCR 1325 has been brought to the territories of the country through efforts by women's organisations and women's social movement to promote within various Departments and Municipalities the inclusion of Local Action Plans in the Mayors' and Governors' Plans. However, to date no Municipal or Department has developed a Local Action Plan on UNSCR 1325. Action Plans, whether national or local, would allow progress in the State's implementation of the resolution and monitoring of State policies, in collaboration with government actors, civil society organisations, the United Nations, multilateral agencies and the private sector. Similarly, having Action Plans would allow to demonstrate budget specifically allocated to women in strategic priorities. The adoption of these Plans would allow that, when initiating processes relating to security and peace-building, either in view of the Agreement's implementation or in subsequent processes, the gender and women's rights approaches cannot be disregarded nor can be the differentiated and exacerbated impacts on women.

27. In addition, having a National Action Plan that radiates into other governance levels of the country would provide a tool to facilitate women's participation in all decision-making levels and to guarantee a specific gender and women's rights approach in the implementation of viable peace actions in conflict and post-conflict zones.

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in the implementation of the Final Agreement; composed of six grass-roots organisations of Colombian women that would have permanent dialogue with the Commission for Monitoring, Promoting and Verifying the Implementation of the Final Agreement (CSIVI).

## Women Human Rights Defenders

28. Implementing the Peace Agreement with women as active participants requires gender sensitive security conditions. Women human rights defenders are under threat with a high increase in violence in areas where there are coca growers and livestock breeders and areas where armed conflict has been present.

29. According to the *Programa Somos Defensores*, seven women human rights defenders were killed in 2017; eight were killed in the first seven months of 2018 alone. According to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Colombia, from 1 January to September 2018, 149 presumed deaths of human rights defenders were recorded, of which 19 were women. In addition, the Ombudsman office has stated that out of 143 women human rights defenders accompanied by the Ombudsman's Office between January 2016 and October 2017, 16.78% were victims of sexual violence.<sup>30</sup> Women have also been victims of mutilation, stigmatization, and humiliation and intimidation.<sup>31</sup> In November 2018, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) conducted a working visit to Colombia to assess the alarming issue of murders of social leaders and human rights defenders. The IACHR noted that “women who are leaders and human rights defenders face differentiated risks and disproportionate effects based on their gender, as women. Further, those risks may be made worse by the rights they defend, their sexual orientation and gender identity, their ethnic background and their location. In Colombia's specific case, the IACHR has repeatedly stressed the conflict's particular effects on women. During the visit, the IACHR was told that there are increasing and increasingly significant signs that violence against women who are human rights defenders is intended to slight those defenders as women.” (Please see press release in the footnote for more information.)<sup>32</sup>

30. The previous government presented, after six years of perseverance and pressure by civil society and women's organisations, a Comprehensive Guarantees Program for Women who are Leaders and Human Rights Defenders. State initiatives are needed to adopt coordination and implementation strategies that reflect the protection approach established in the program; allocation of sufficient resources for its effective implementation is equally important.

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<sup>30</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23960&LangID=E> .

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23960&LangID=E> .

<sup>32</sup> [http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media\\_center/PReleases/2019/008.asp](http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2019/008.asp) .

31. WILPF welcomes the commitments made by the new administration in relation to the prevention and protection of human rights defenders. On 19 November 2018, the President signed decree 2137, which creates the Inter-Institutional Commission for the development of the “*Plan de Acción Oportuna de Prevención y Protección para los Defensores de Derechos Humanos, Líderes sociales, comunales y periodistas*” (PAO) (Action Plan for the prevention and protection of human rights defenders, social leaders, community leaders and journalists).<sup>33</sup> It is essential that the elaboration of the new Plan involve broad participation, including of the Ombudsman, public prosecutor’s office and women human rights defenders. The Plan should envisage the other structures established by the Peace Agreement for the guarantees of social leaders and the dismantling of structures of the armed conflict; this is currently not the case, which is a matter of concern.<sup>34</sup>

## **Recommendations**

32. Colombia should:

- a) Develop and implement a National Action Plan 1325 in consultation with women’s organisations and with clear indicators and timeline, and sustained and allocated budget;
- b) Generate local and national plans, programs and strategies that will prevent and effectively address all forms of violence against women, in particular for rural women living in regions identified for substitution of coca plantations for legal crops;
- c) Ensure full and meaningful representation and participation of women in social, economic and political spaces and particularly in relation to the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement and at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict;
- d) Take measures to ensure meaningful participation of ex-combatants in the reintegration planning and processes to civil life, taking into account their specific needs and recommendations;
- e) Provide specific mechanisms to ensure a gender-sensitive analysis and monitoring throughout the implementation of all points of the Final Peace Agreement;

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<sup>33</sup> *Plan de Acción Oportuna de Prevención y Protección para los Defensores de Derechos Humanos, Líderes sociales, comunales y periodistas* <https://www.mininterior.gov.co/sala-de-prensa/plan-de-accion-oportuna-de-prevencion-y-proteccion-pao> .

<sup>34</sup> Comisión Nacional de Garantías, creada a partir del decreto ley 154 de 2017, el Sistema Integral de Seguridad para el Ejercicio de la Política (Sisep), creado en el decreto 895 de 2017 y el decreto 660 de 2018, que creó las medidas de protección colectivas de comunidades en riesgo.

- f) Ensure respect, protection and an enabling environment for the work of human rights defenders, with specific and enhanced protection mechanisms for women human rights defenders, LGBTI rights defenders and defenders in rural areas. Investigate thoroughly threats, extortion and attacks against them and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice;
- g) Adopt coordination and implementation strategies that reflect the protection approach established in the “Comprehensive Guarantees Program for Women who are Leaders and Human Rights Defenders” and ensure allocation of sufficient resources for Program’s effective implementation;
- h) Invest in strengthening national justice systems to investigate and prosecute sexual and gender-based violence;
- i) Guarantee the continuity of the achievements in the area of women’s inclusion and of a gender approach in the peace-building processes;
- j) Include women human rights defenders in the Inter-Institutional Commission for the development of the “*Plan de Acción Oportuna de Prevención y Protección (PAO)*;”
- k) Review the “*Plan de Acción Oportuna de Prevención y Protección*” to include the other structures established by the Peace Agreement for the guarantees of social leaders and the dismantling of structures of the armed conflict.

## Acronyms

**ARN.** Reincorporation and Normalization Agency – *Agencia para la Reincorporación y la Normalización*

**ATT.** Arms Trade Treaty

**CSIVI.** Commission for Monitoring, Promoting and Verifying the Implementation of the Final Agreement - *Comisión de Seguimiento, Impulso y Verificación a la Implementación del Acuerdo Final*

**CONPES.** National Economic and Social Policy Council - *Consejo Nacional de Política Económica y Social*

**DDR.** Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration – *Desarme, Desmovilización y Reincorporación*

**ETCR.** Territorial Spaces for Training and Reincorporation (Reintegration) - *Espacios Territoriales de Capacitación y Reincorporación*

**FARC – EP.** Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army - *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo*

**PMI.** Framework Plan for the Implementation of the Final Peace Agreement – *Plan Marco de Implementación del Acuerdo Final de Paz*

**PND.** National Development Plan - *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo*