

July 17, 2018

To:  
Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations  
One Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza  
885 Second Avenue, 46th floor  
New York, N.Y. 10017-2021  
USA

From:  
Church of Sweden  
Sysslomansgatan 4  
75310 Uppsala  
Sweden

## **Letter from Church of Sweden to the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations**

Dear Mr Ambassador,

We are writing to you regarding the critical moment of the Colombian peace process and the role of Sweden as member of the Security Council. The upcoming meeting of the Security Council on the 26th of July - where your delegation will have the presidency – is essential for the future of the implementation of the peace agreement in Colombia.

The Colombian ecumenical network for peace - Dipaz - has been present during the negotiations with the FARC advocating for a gender perspective in the peace agreement, and for the participation of women as well as afro Colombians and indigenous populations. Since the peace agreement was signed, Dipaz is monitoring its implementation through frequent visits to the areas where ex combatants of the FARC are integrated, as well as through contacts with state authorities and civil society. They have published two reports regarding the implementation of the agreement in the field. DiPaz has also participated with other civil society actors in the peace negotiation between the government and the ELN. The continuation of this negotiation is fundamental for peace in Colombia.

Dipaz has also visited New York when the Security Council has met to receive the report of the UN-mission, and they have given their input to the members of the council based on their observation in the field as an ecumenical actor and civil society representative. The Church of Sweden has supported the work of Dipaz for peace in Colombia since they were established.

The week before 26th July Security Council meeting, Dipaz will be in New York to meet with you and other delegations of members of the Security Council with the aim to share their concerns regarding the implementation of the peace agreement, as well as their concerns over the deterioration of the human rights situation in the country. As you know Colombia experience an alarming rise in assassinations and intimidations against social leaders and human rights defenders, including ex FARC combatants and their family members. This is an ongoing tragedy that seriously undermines the situation of those individuals and organizations that works for peace in Colombia.

A new political context with a new congress and a new government in Colombia also represent risks for the fulfillment of the peace agreement with the FARC and the on-going negotiations with the ELN. The congress and the Constitutional Court has already made changes to the agreement and the new government has taken actions and announced intended decisions contrary to the peace agreement, for example:

- The peace agreement includes a transitional justice system, *Jurisdicción Especial para la Paz (JEP)*. The new government proposes changes to the agreement including processing the military in a separate mechanism, limiting the political participation of former high rank commanders of the FARC and enabling extradition to the US and other countries.
- The peace agreement includes a mechanism called the *Circunscripciones Especiales para la Paz (CEP)*, the special peace constituencies, for the participation of the victims of the conflict in the House of Representatives in congress. These seats were not approved by the congress and now there is an intent to give new life to this mechanism but in another form that although it gives a certain level of participation for the victims, it does not allow the victims to partake in legal and political decisions or to exercise political control as per the agreement.
- The areal fumigations with glyphosate, using drones, have started again which goes against what was agreed in the peace treaty. Additionally, these fumigations can complicate the implementation of the chapter 4 of the peace agreement "Solution to the problem of illicit drugs", and the voluntary substitution of illicit crops and the transformation of territories affected by them that this chapter promotes.

The Church of Sweden and Dipaz have received first hand testimonies of the importance of the UN-mission in the implementation of the peace treaty. Our impression is that an extension of the mission's mandate is vital. The confidence that the mission has among all parties' guarantees stability and security in a context of mistrust that will worsen with the change of government. Furthermore, we think that given these circumstances a visit of the Security Council to Colombia is urgent.

With the circumstances described above we would like to ask:

- What actions in favor of a prolongation of the mandate of the UN-mission is the Swedish UN-delegation, and the Swedish government, taking before, during and after the meeting on the 26 of July?
- Will the Swedish UN-delegation, and the Swedish government, take initiative in favor of new visit of the Security Council to Colombia?
- What actions is the Swedish UN-delegation, and the Swedish government taking, in its relations with the new congress and the new government of Colombia, and as a member president of the Security Council, to call for the fulfillment of the peace agreements with the FARC?

We hope to maintain an open dialogue with you on these issues, and we hope you can receive the representatives from Dipaz when they visit New York next week.

Sincerely,

  
Coleen Heemsker

Acting International Director  
International Department