

## **ACSN Urges Inclusion of the Ethnic Commission's Recommendations in the Colombia Peace Accord**

**August 23, 2016**

After ignoring the recommendations of the Afro-Colombian and indigenous territorial and traditional authorities in Colombia's peace process for over 22 months, the parties to the Colombian conflict negotiating in Havana, Cuba finally received a delegation that included representatives of the Ethnic Commission on June 26 and 27. This historic dialogue was due in part by international pressure to include ethnic voices in the peace talks by the international community including the United Nations, United States, U.S. Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) and U.S. and European human rights organizations.

As decided upon in Havana, the Ethnic Commission presented the parties with a detailed documented titled the 'Ethnic Chapter' that contains detailed, pragmatic and realistic recommendations for how to guarantee a sustainable, durable peace that upholds the rights of Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities. This document consists of nine principles that must be applied in all of the pre-accords that will guarantee their effective implementation in areas where ethnic communities are present. Based upon international norms and Colombia's national laws, as well as, key Constitutional Court orders that uphold ethnic minorities rights such as Orders 004 (indigenous), 005 (afrocolombians) and 092 (women) these authorities are guaranteeing that the accords not only serve the needs and rights of their communities but that they are effective and supported by these communities when applied on the ground. The document has "safeguards" for these communities that guarantee that rural development in these areas addresses the long-term needs and historic discrimination and marginalization faced by these communities. It also includes recommendations on how the various objectives of the illicit drugs, political participation and victim's accords can best be met. Lastly, it deals with implementation and verification of the final accord in a manner that upholds ethnic rights and guarantees non-repetition of events. Throughout, the document the specific vulnerabilities and rights of Afro-Colombian and Indigenous women and global anti-racism agreements are integrated in accordance with international norms including the CEDAW and CERD.

It must be emphasized that these recommendations are a historic roadmap consulted and written by the most prominent Afro-Colombian and indigenous leaders and territorial authorities that will guide Colombia in order to prevent future cycles of violence in these areas which are at the highest risk when it comes to challenges for the accord's implementation. Without the help or prompting of the international community and Colombian authorities, the Ethnic Commission is making a major contribution towards humanity.

Therefore, it is unconscionable that given the Ethnic Commission's tremendous efforts and seriousness with which they have upheld their commitments to the parties to the Colombia conflict, that it appears that the Colombian government is not taking these recommendations seriously. Also that it may not integrate most of them in the final accord.

Given this, we urge the international community, guarantor countries, United Nations, U.S. Congress, European Parliament and all activists and organizations in solidarity with ethnic groups in Colombia to contact the following persons today. These persons should be asked to commit to upholding ethnic rights and guaranteeing a sustainable peace that builds a pluralistic society that respects its minorities and cultural differences by contacting the following persons:

Minister of the Interior Fernando Cristo's office, [juan.cristo@mininterior.gov.co](mailto:juan.cristo@mininterior.gov.co) @CristoBustos @MinInterior

Minister for Post-Conflict, Rafael Pardo: [rafaelpardo@presidencia.gov.co](mailto:rafaelpardo@presidencia.gov.co)

Colombian Government Peace Negotiator, Sergio Jaramillo, [sergiojaramillo@presidencia.gov.co](mailto:sergiojaramillo@presidencia.gov.co)

Also all are encouraged to send tweets to:

Ambassador Kevin Whitaker, U.S. Embassy in Bogota, @USEmbassyBogota

National Security Council, White House, @WhiteHouse

DRL Department of State, @State\_DRL, @Malinowski (Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor)

Western Hemisphere, @WHASpeaks , @WHAAsstSecty (acting Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs)

The parties at the negotiating table in Cuba: @EquipoPazGob, @FARC\_EPaz

Please use the hashtags: #FinalAgreements #EthnicChapter #ComisionEtnica

For further information please contact the Afro-Colombian Solidarity Network (ACSN) at [gsanchez@wola.org](mailto:gsanchez@wola.org)