

Colombia: New Congress marks rebel group's transition 'from weapons to politics', says UN

Celebrating the holding of the first session of a new Congress in Colombia, the United Nations has said that the inclusion of former rebels in the legislative body marked their transition "from weapons to politics".

In a press release issued Friday, the [UN Verification Mission](#) in Colombia and other UN operations there said they "celebrate [the installation today of the Colombian Congress](#) resulting from the most participative and peaceful legislative elections in decades".

They added that the inclusion in the Senate and House of Representatives of the political party of the Common Alternative Revolutionary Force (FARC-EP) "marks this group's transition from weapons to politics and the country's transition from conflict to the search for reconciliation".

In 2016, the Government and the FARC-EP signed a peace agreement, ending their 50-year conflict. In mid-March this year, the first congressional elections after the peace deal were held, drawing millions of Colombians to the polls.

The UN entities noted the challenges of violence and poverty persist in rural areas of the country, and hoped that "in a climate of national harmony, the work of a new Congress will be decisive for the extension of state presence under the rule of law and the consolidation of peace across Colombia".