

Renewed momentum on peace in Colombia: UK statement at UN Security Council

Thank you, Mr. President. I'd like to thank SRSR Ruiz Massieu, Ms Moreno, and Ambassador Muhith for their briefings. And I give a warm welcome to welcome Foreign Minister Leyva and Ambassador Zalabata to the Council today. Their presence with us is a reflection of their personal commitments to the peace process, and to working in partnership with this Council. So let me make three remarks today.

Firstly, the United Kingdom welcomes the renewed momentum for peace in Colombia. The new Government's commitment to implementation of the peace agreement was clearly demonstrated through President Petro's attendance at the first meeting of the Commission for the Follow-Up, Promotion and Verification of the Implementation of the Peace Agreement (CSIVI) and the National Commission of Security Guarantees on 2 October. We commend the Government's focus on vital rural reforms including the intention to accelerate the titling and purchase of land. We note the progress made by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace with the opening of three new cases and with another due to be opened on Sexual and Gender based violence.

Second, we encourage the Government to keep emphasis on the comprehensive implementation of the agreement, despite the challenges. We remain deeply concerned by the ongoing threats and violence faced by former combatants and human rights defenders. We welcome the swift action taken by the Government to set up 14 command posts as recommended by the Emergency Protection Plan. It is clear that further security initiatives are urgently needed. We welcome the new government's further commitment to making further progress on implementing the gender and ethnic provisions of the agreement including on land ownership.

Third, Mr. President, we recognise the complexity of the instability in Colombia and the need for a multi-dimensional approach to address violence and ensure human security. In this light, the UK welcomes the progress made towards reinitiating talks with ELN. We hope that the delegations to peace talks will be representative and that lessons will be learned from the process which led to the 2016 agreement.

The United Kingdom also welcomes Colombia's commitment to reinforce international cooperation to tackle narco-trafficking and bring to justice those that profit from the misery of the drugs trade, in both producer and consumer countries.

Finally, President, let me reaffirm the United Kingdom's support to Colombia and to the Colombian people who remain committed to implementing the peace agreement despite the many challenges they face. In particular we look forward to working with Colombia, the UN and our co-penholder Mexico on the upcoming renewal of the UN Verification Mission's mandate. Thank you.