



Bogotá, July 6, 2015

Sir
Juan Manuel Santos
President of Colombia

Sir
Humberto de la Calle
Head Negotiator of the Government in Havana

Sir
Timoleón Jiménez
Commander of the FARC – EP

Sir
Luciano Marín
Head Negotiator of the FARC-EP

We urge a bilateral ceasefire in Colombia

“Today, in view of the common good, there is urgent need for politics and economics to enter into a frank dialogue in the service of life, especially human life.” (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, paragraph 189).

“Peace agreements are often fragile, temporary, and inadequate. Places where peace is declared may still be filled with hatred. Repairing the damage of war and violence may take longer than the conflict that caused it. But what exists of peace along the way, though imperfect, is a promise of greater things to come” (An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace. Paragraph 15. World Council of Churches. 2011).

Above all, we want to manifest our solidarity and accompaniment with the Colombian people who have cried out for many years for peace as the fruit of justice, in order that the lives of all might benefit, especially the poorest men and women in the country. They are the ones who have been the most impacted by the armed conflict, now ongoing for 52 years in this beloved and martyred country.

We view with joy and hope the advances reached in the dialogues underway in Havana, Cuba, between the government and the FARC-EP guerrilla group, on the topics of comprehensive agricultural development, political participation, and the solution to the drug problem. Likewise, we see as advances towards the de-escalation of the conflict: the

agreement about removal of land mines and other explosives; the agreement on the formation of a Truth Commission; and the report published by the Historic Commission on the Armed Conflict.

We cannot help but express our sorrow, as Christians and as human beings, in response to the deaths that continue taking place in Colombia, which could have been avoided with an agreement for a bilateral ceasefire. All lives are sacred, as Pope Francis reminds us in his recent Encyclical *Laudato Si'*: those of the civilian population, those in nature, those of soldiers and police officers, and those of the guerillas. The government should change their position from refusing an agreement for a bilateral ceasefire to a position in favour of life and the greater legitimacy of the continued dialogues. The FARC should return to their willingness and decision to maintain a ceasefire. We call, with the power of the Gospel, for both parties to commit to a bilateral ceasefire and the de-escalation of the confrontation.

As noted by organizations of Colombian society, both parties must put the lives of Colombian women and men ahead of the political calculations offered by those sectors that centre their work on the promotion of war. We are familiar with research that shows that the unilateral ceasefire of the FARC-EP lowered the intensity of the war by 85%. Research estimates that 73% of civilian deaths and 64% of deaths in the Public Forces were avoided. Saving lives justifies setting aside political calculations and stopping the war. There is nothing more sacred than life. God dwells in all creation and inhabits the bodies of women and men, as Saint Paul sates in the Bible.

We join in the call made weeks ago by the governments of Cuba and Norway, in their role as guarantors of the conversations, that an agreement be reached for a bilateral ceasefire and end of hostilities, that the accords already reached be preserved, and that dialogue advance on the topics still pending on the agenda.

We express our satisfaction with the willingness expressed by the government to negotiate a bilateral cease before the final peace agreement is reached and with the decision of the FARC-EP, announced on July 8, to initiate a month long unilateral cease as of July 20. These are important steps towards an agreement that involves both parties. We call on the government to respond accordingly, de-escalating the confrontation, and on the FARC-EP to indefinitely maintain the unilateral ceasefire to facilitate a bilateral cease.

We write with the hope that you will continue following the path of dialogue, including initiating formal dialogues with the ELN so that the process will be complete, until you reach a peace accord, which, "though imperfect, is a promise of greater things to come."

Signatures of representatives of Colombian church and faith organizations,

Dr. Jenny Neme, Directora de JUSTAPAZ

Rev. Diego Higueta, Secretario General de la Iglesia Presbiteriana de Colombia

Dr. Tomas Orjuela, Presidente Iglesia Menonita en Colombia

Padre Alberto Franco, Director de la Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz

Revda. Adelaida Jiménez, Directora Programa de Teología de la Universidad Reformada-CUR

Dr. Ricardo Pinzón, Director de MENCOLDES

Rev. Milton Mejía, Coordinador Programa FEES del CLAI

Abilio Peña, Líder de la Comisión Intereclesial de Justicia y Paz

Dr. Pablo Moreno, Rector de la Universidad Bautista de Cali

Rev. Jairo Suarez, Coordinador de Programa de Diaconía de la IELCO

Pastora Isdalia Ortega, Iglesia Menonita de Colombia, Miembro de la Junta Directiva del CLAI

Rev. Jairo Barriga, Secretario Ejecutivo del Presbiterio de la Costa de la IPC

Curtis Kline, Coordinador Programa de Derechos Humanos de la IELCO

Pastor Jhon Martínez, Representante en Colombia del Foro Pentecostal Latinoamericano

Pedro Acosta, Comisión de Paz de CEDECOL.

Miguel Josep, Comisión de Paz de CEDECOL.

Pastor Javier Gómez, Presidente FIPEC (Federación de Iglesias del Pacto en Colombia)

Pastor Alexis Jiménez, Pastor de la Iglesia “Dios, la esperanza”. Iglesia de NNA Pacto Ciudad Bolívar.

Pastora María Eugenia Villamil, Pastora de la Iglesia “Dios, la esperanza”. Iglesia de NNA Pacto Ciudad Bolívar.

Dr. Gloria Valverde, Coordinadora Programa DH Pacto Colombia

Dr. Mónica Velásquez, Coordinadora Programa DH Pacto y Proyecto “Mujeres creando condiciones para la Reconciliación en Colombia” GemPaz

Pedro Stucky, Pastor Iglesia Menonita de Teusaquillo, en Bogotá

Norma Ines Bernal, Hermanas Auxiliadoras del Purgatorio

Pablo Stucky, Director de la Coordinación Eclesial de Acción Psicospacial-CEAS

John Santiago Espitia Fajardo, Profesor Universitario y Pastor Iglesia Hermandad en Cristo de Colombia

Francisco Mosquera, Director del Centro Bíblico Teológico de Cali

Amparo Beltran, Cepalc, Sicsal, Colombia.

Rev. Lácides Hernández Álvarez Presidente Confraternidad Carcelaria de Colombia

Leonel Narváz Gómez – Presidente , Fundación para la Reconciliación

Pastor Edgar Castaño Díaz, Presidente de CEDECOL y Presidente SBC

Alba Luz Arrieta Cabrales (Programa Alternativas a la Violencia PAV-Colombia)

Signatures of representatives of international church and faith organizations,

John Nduna, Secretario General de ACT.

Georges Lemopoulos, Secretario General en funciones, Consejo Mundial de Iglesias-CMI

Rev, Chris Ferguson, Secretario General de la Comunión Mundial de Iglesias Reformadas-CMIR.

Rev. Martin Junge, Secretario General, Federación Luterana Mundial.

César García, Secretario General Congreso Mundial Menonita

Rev. Felipe Adolf Presidente del Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias-CLAI

Rev. Carlos Tamez, Coordinador General a. i. del Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias-CLAI

Rev. Dr. Darío Barolin, Secretario Ejecutivo de la Alianza de Iglesias Presbiterianas y Reformadas de América Latina-AIPRAL.

Revda. Gloria Ulloa, Presidenta del Consejo Mundial de Iglesias para América Latina y el Caribe

Rev. Angel L. Rivera Agosto, Ejecutivo para América Latina y el Caribe Ministerios Globales Iglesia Cristiana (Discípulos de Cristo) e Iglesia Unida de Cristo en los EEUU

Rev. Valdir Xavier de França, Coordinador de Área, América Latina y Caribe de la Iglesia Presbiteriana de Estados Unidos.

Barbara Gerlach, Colombia Liaison, Justice and Witness Ministries, United Church of Christ

Margot Worfolk, Presidenta de la Junta Directiva, Red de Líderes Religiosxs de Chicago para América Latina

Emily Brewer y Fritz Gutwein, Co-directores de PPF (Presbyterian Peace Fellowship.)

Rev. Felipe Anderson, Ex-misionero pastor, Ibagué, Tolima, Iglesia Evangélica Luterana de América [USA]. Washington, DC

Rvda. Sarah Henken, Enlace Regional para los Países Andinos, Misión Presbiteriana Mundial Iglesia Presbiteriana (E.U.A.)

Jim Hodgson, Coordinador de Programa América Latina, Iglesia Unida de Canadá

Rachel Warden, KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives

Rev. Vitalino Similox, Secretario General del Consejo Ecuménico de Guatemala

Obispo Medardo Gómez, Iglesia Luterana y presidente de Iniciativa pastoral por la Vida y la Paz del Salvador

Rev. Leonardo d. Felix, Director ALC Noticias. Buenos Aires. Argentina

Humberto M. Shikiya, Director General, Centro Regional Ecuménico de Asesoría y Servicio-CREAS

Rev. Roger Cabezas. Presidente. Fe y Santidad Misión Pentecostal de Costa Rica

Rev. Dan González Ortega, Rector Comunidad teológica de México y Secretario Ejecutivo de CETELA

Marcelo Leites, Secretario Regional, Federación Universal de Movimientos Estudiantiles Cristianos en América Latina y el Caribe

Padre Dario Bossi - misionero comboniano – Brasil, Iglesia y Minería en América Latina

Joel Suarez, coordinar del Centre Memoria Martin Luther King de Cuba

Dora Arce Valentin, Ejecutiva de los programas de justicia y coparticipación de CMIR

Luis Ma. Alman Bornes, Iglesia Anabautista Menonita de Buenos Aires – Argentina

Geoffrey A. Black, General Minister and President, United Church of Christ

Anna-Lee Stangl; CSW Senior Advocacy Officer – Americas

P. Conrado Sanjur, Copedehupa, Sicsal, Panamá.

Miguel Angel Giménez Casado Comités Romero de Madrid, Madrid

Red Internacional Iglesia y Minería

Servicio Internacional Cristiano de Solidaridad Oscar Romero -SICSAL-

Red Internacional Fe y Territorios.

Sean Clery, Edmundo Rice Centre, Sicsal, Australia.

Arnoldo Zenteno, S.J, Cristianos Nicaraguenses por los Pobres (CNP), Nicaragua

Rosa del Valle Aráoz de Machado, Cajamarca, Argentina

Cristina Auerbach Benavides, Organización de Familias de Pasta de Conchos, México

Movimiento Franciscano "Justicia y Paz" Bolivia.

Franciscans International -Bolivia-

Hna Ana María Siufi, Hermanas de la Misericordia de las Américas, Comunidad América del Sur Central y Caribe.

Antonio Baños, Caritas de El Salvador.

ICCO Cooperación

James Patton, Executive Vice President/COO, International Center for Religion & Diplomacy

Bruce Knotts, Director, United Nations Office, International

Hna Maria Ivers, Irlanda;

Joseba Barriola, Grupo MikelaGCzulo. Euskalerría País Vasco;

Comité Óscar Romero de Vigo, España Firmada por su secretaria, M^a Olga Álvarez

RED EUROPEA DE COMITES OSCAR ROMERO.

GRUPO BELGA SOLIDARIO CON GUATEMALA

Yves Carrier, Québec, Coordinador de CAPMO Canadá

Gerardo Dure - Comité Oscar Romero Buenos Aires - Argentina

Gustavo Zarza - RR.II Corriente Nacional Emancipación Sur - Argentina

Oswaldo Acosta - Equipo de Comunicación Presencia y Memoria - Argentina

Cora Grevisse - Comité Oscar Romero Moreno - Provincia de Buenos Aires - Argentina

Angelo García Rivera, Junta Directiva de REDES, Puerto Rico

Ramón Rivera, Junta Directiva de REDES, Puerto Rico.

Antonia Lozada Junta Directiva de REDES, Puerto Rico

Norma I. Báez Junta Directiva de REDES, Puerto Rico

Yomaira Valenzuela Junta Directiva de REDES, Puerto Rico

María Jesús Mompó Junta Directiva de REDES, Puerto Rico

Héctor Lizardi Junta Directiva de REDES, Puerto Rico

Sonia N. González, Junta Directiva de REDES, Puerto Rico;

Emilie Teresa Smith co-presidenta, SICSAL parroquia, Iglesia Anglicana San Bernabé New Westminster, Colombia Británica Canada,

Red de Esperanza y Solidaridad. Diócesis de Caguas, Puerto Rico

Mujeres para el Diálogo, México;

Comité Monseñor Romero; México;

Observatorio Eclesial México;

Secretariado Social Mexicano, México

Servicio Internacional Cristiano de Solidaridad Oscar Romero -Sicsal-, México;

Movimiento de Solidaridad Nuestra América, México.

Luíza Virgínia Moraes pelo Comitê Dorothy, Belém Do Para, Brasil;

Coordinadora Nacional Cristiana de Panamá Héctor Gallego, CNCP-HG.

Hna Hersilia Carrascal, O.P, Venezuela.

Hermanas de la Misericordia de las Américas - Equipo de Justicia del Instituto”

Marcela Moreno, COMISION DE VIVENCIA FE Y POLÍTICA, Ecuador

Itziar Aldamendi Gomendio, Comité Mns. Oscar Romero de Madrid.

José M^a Caravantes COMITÉ MONS. ROMERO DE MADRID.

"JS Alrededor de la Bahía" Red de los Comités Parroquiales de Justicia Social de la Diócesis Católica de Broken Bay, Sydney, Australia

Armando Márquez Ochoa: Secretario Ejecutivo del Servicio Internacional Cristiano de Solidaridad con los Pueblos de América Latina: Monseñor Romero (SICSAL).

Víctor Palacios: Coordinación Ecuménica de la Iglesia de las y los Pobres de El Salvador (CEIPES)

José Salvador Gómez: Fundación Hermano Mercedes Ruiz (FUNDAHMER), El Salvador.

María Elena Sanabria: Articulación Nacional de Comunidades Eclesiales de Base de El Salvador.

Ana Guadalupe Hernández: Asociación Salvadoreña Para el Desarrollo Juvenil (Acción y Vida)

Miguel Zepeda Santos, Miembro del Equipo Coordinador, SICSAL El Salvador
Conrado Sanjur, COPODEHUPA, Panamá.

Mons. Hilton F Deakin, Obispo Emeritus de la Arquidiócesis Católica de Melbourne, Australia

Lai a Blauvet Rochester, Minnesota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Betty Renner Rochester, Minnesota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Kevin Ryan New York, New York, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Tanya Kew Blowmington, Minnesota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Ellen M. Stelling Rochester, Minnesota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Mary Siem Rochester, Minnesota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Stacy Haatuedt, Mt. Prospect, IL., Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Pamela M. Captain Rochester, Minnesota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Andreas Phayer Rochester, Minnesota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Mona Stevens Rochester, Minnesota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Janice M. Mamaham Rochester, Minnesota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Lione Wroblesli Rochester, Minnesota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Molly McMahan Rochester, Minnesota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Raienne Hockeman Spring Valley, Mn, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Maeci Madam Oak Park, IL, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Janes H. King Rochester, Minnesota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Shesley Rowley Apple Velley, MN, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Daw S Rochester, Minnesota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Robin Euckson Rochester, Minnesota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Diane Borg, Minnessota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Jean Zawliovi, Owatoana, Minnesota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Lucilli Collstrom, Minnessota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Landa C. Gions, Aoustin, Minnessota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Elcent H. Ooustin, Minnessota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Mary Doucette, Rochester, Minnessota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Eric Rose, Rochester Minesota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN

Kay H. Solyet, Austin, Minnessota, Cojourner Sister of Saint Francis, Rochester, MN