



Supporting Women's Rights is the Key to Sustainable Peace in Colombia

As the Colombian government and the leftist guerilla group, FARC-EP, negotiate a peaceful resolution to over 50 years of armed conflict, it is crucial that the United States promotes the participation of Colombian women's organizations in the peace process and supports women's rights in post-conflict Colombia.

For more than five decades, Colombia has suffered the longest ongoing armed conflict in Latin America. Over 220,000 people have been killed and 5.8 million more have been displaced. The conflict has stoked regional tensions and impeded economic development.

Women have been disproportionately affected by the conflict. Gender-based violence, increased financial inequality and threats are rampant, undermining the rights of millions of women in Colombia.

For years, the U.S. has been instrumental in helping the Colombian government combat the FARC-EP and drug trafficking, including significant financial support for Plan Colombia. U.S. policy has set the stage for dialogue between the Colombian government and FARC-EP to end the longstanding conflict. As the two sides negotiate a peaceful resolution, the U.S. should also advocate for a stronger role for Colombian women's organizations in the peace process and champion women's equality as our country makes one of the most important transitions in its history.

On behalf of women's organizations across Colombia, Casa de la Mujer proposes that the U.S. engages with Colombia to offer financial assistance in order to:

- ❖ Strengthen Colombian women's organizations at the local and national levels.
- ❖ Bolster the participation of women in truth and justice processes and peace building strategies.
- ❖ Promote policies and projects that ensure that women guerrilla fighters receive

the same opportunities to reintegrate into society as their male counterparts.

- ❖ Support projects that improve living conditions for rural, afro-descendent and indigenous women.
- ❖ Strengthen the justice system to recognize crimes against women and implement mechanisms of alternative justice.
- ❖ Design and implement strategies to educate the public about peace building that include the participation of women as political subjects.
- ❖ Support the construction of historical memory.
- ❖ Strengthen reparation programs that provide social services to women.



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