

Congratulate Colombia for Finalizing Landmark Peace Accord



Dear President Santos:

We write to congratulate you for finalizing the historic peace agreement with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and to praise the persistence and visionary leadership of countless Colombian leaders and citizens who made this breakthrough possible. We also write to express our renewed commitment to ensuring that the United States remains a steadfast partner as you implement this landmark accord.

If ratified by the Colombian people next month, the peace agreement will bring an end to the longest running conflict in our hemisphere. As you know, Colombians of all walks of life have suffered over half a century of fighting, which has claimed more than 220,000 lives and displaced over 6 million people. This accord – the product of four years of painstaking negotiations – will help to reintegrate former combatants into society and promote security and economy opportunity in rural areas plagued by violence. We strongly encourage your government and all relevant parties to ensure that it is carried out in a manner that promotes the rights of victims of all armed actors and honors their demands for truth and justice. We also welcome the inclusion of provisions on Afro-Colombian and indigenous rights and urge their full implementation.

For these reasons and recognizing the serious challenges that Colombia will face in implementing the agreement, we strongly support the Peace Colombia initiative announced in February during your visit to Washington. We also believe that this commitment must be honored by our next Administration. After standing with Colombia through decades of war, we must to continue to stand with the Colombian people as you work to build a just and lasting peace.

Again, congratulations for reaching this historic milestone. Your progress is indicative not only of the Colombian government's commitment to peace, but also of the Colombian people's remarkable capacity for healing and forgiveness. We look forward to continuing to support Colombia at this momentous time in your nation's history.

Sincerely,