

Iglesia Presbiteriana de Colombia

Consejo del Sínodo

Personería Jurídica Especial 2069 del 10 de Octubre de 1997

DECLARATION OF THE IPC ON THE HAVANA ACCORDS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE FARC-EP

"The fruit of justice will be peace." Isaiah 32:17

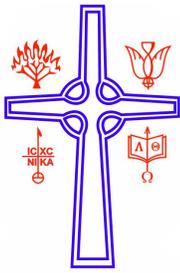
The way of peace is long and narrow. Faced with the great challenge of the construction of peace in our country, we are moved by the dream of the God of Jesus of Nazareth, the dream of an inhabited earth (oikoumene) living in justice, peace, and unity, where abundant life for all is possible (John 10:10). Peace is a human aspiration and a gift of God. To participate in its construction is to recognize that we are children of God (Matthew 5:9), and to reach fullness of life. It is a gift of God because God is the one who puts peace in our hearts, who demolishes the walls of humanity's own making which divide us.

As a religious minority we have lived through the different periods and historical conflicts which our nation has traversed, suffering persecution and religious intolerance. In the time of "La Violencia" in Colombia some of our sanctuaries were bombed; men and women who served as pastors in our communities were assassinated, persecuted and displaced. More recently whole churches have been displaced and their communities decimated in places like Saiza in Cordoba; Batalla, Nuevo Oriente, and Pavarandó in Urabá; Peque, Dabeiba, and Río Verde in southwestern Antioquia; El Guineo in Chocó; and others. In large cities, Presbyterian pastors and leaders have been threatened and exiled because of their work in defense of human rights. Experiences such as these have allowed us to learn the difficult process of peace, forgiveness, and reconciliation, and contribute to peace in the Colombian context. Times have changed, and starting with the Constitution of 1991 the state has recognized the rights of religious minorities. It's time for forgiveness and reconciliation! *"How many times must I forgive my brother and sister?"*

We are tired of the barbarity of war, of hundreds of people disappeared and millions displaced; of families ripped apart; of thousands of children, women, indigenous people and afrodescendent communities expelled from their land. We have wiped away the tears of the widows and the orphans; we have accompanied raped and abused women in their pain and humiliation; we have suffered seeing the anguish of those mutilated by the conflict.

"160 Años educando, sirviendo, anunciando las buenas nuevas..."

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Faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Presbyterian Church of Colombia encourages the Colombian people to maintain hope. In 160 years of presence and witness in Colombia we have worked tirelessly for peace with social justice and will continue on that path. Likewise, we raise our prophetic voice to demand a serious commitment on the part of the signatory parties to fulfill the Havana accords. As followers of Jesus we can choose no other way than that of peace, a sustainable peace that goes hand in hand with repentance, forgiveness, reconciliation, and restoration (Luke 19:1-10).

As an act of faith, the Synod Council of the Presbyterian Church of Colombia, gathered in Barranquilla on September 5, 2016, unanimously agreed to endorse the YES vote on the Havana Accords through the constitutional tool of the plebiscite. This is a possible way forward in the construction of peace, still incomplete and imperfect, but we support it decidedly.

Synod Council
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF COLOMBIA

References: Declarations of the Synod of the IPC from the years 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016.

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