



Committee: Security Council

Topics: The Situation in Colombia

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Shenzhen College of International Education

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Letter from the Chairs

Dear delegates,

Welcome to SCIEMUN 2023! I am Jinyi Shi from the Shenzhen International College of Education, and I will be chairing Security Council with my co-chair, Jay Yang. It is a pleasure to meet you all.

Security Council is primarily responsible for maintaining international peace and security and mitigating major crises when the need arises. It fosters friendly international relations between nations by encouraging collaboration between countries. Security Council is unique, as out of the six main organizations within the United Nations, only it holds the power to make decisions member states are bound to abide by. Thus, Security Council is crucial to the operations of the United Nations.

The committee's topic, "The situation in Colombia", addresses human rights violations in the Republic of Colombia. After the start of a new chapter of peace, many contemporary issues threaten Colombian citizens' security. In this committee, delegates should aim to produce viable resolutions to a pressing international concern through cooperation and diplomacy.

Delegates should engage in their own background research and be familiar with the UNA-USA procedures in preparation for the conference. We hope you can have a wonderful time here and hope to see you soon!

Sincerely,

Jinyi Shi and Jay Yang

Committee Background and Mission Statement

According to the United Nations Charter, the Security Council is in charge of maintaining global peace and security. The Security Council will decide when and where to send out a UN peace operation.

The Security Council has a variety of alternatives at its disposal and responds to crises across the world on a case-by-case basis. When deciding whether to launch a new peace operation, several various variables are taken into account, including:

1. whether a cease-fire is in effect and whether the parties have agreed to participate in a peace process aimed at reaching a political agreement.
2. whether there is a distinct political objective and whether the mandate can represent it;
3. if a UN operation may be given a specific mission;
4. whether it is possible to properly protect the safety and security of UN employees, especially whether it is possible to acquire acceptable guarantees for this purpose from the principal parties or groups.

By passing a Security Council resolution, the Security Council establishes a peace operation. The resolution specifies the purpose and scope of that mission.

The Security Council keeps a continuous eye on the progress of UN peace operations, among other things by receiving reports from the Secretary-General on a regular basis and by convening special Security Council meetings to examine the progress of particular operations.

The Security Council may decide to vote to prolong, modify, or terminate mission mandates as it sees fit.

According to Article 25 of the UN Charter, all members consent to accept and implement Security Council decisions. The UN Council alone has the authority to adopt decisions that Member States are required to execute, whereas other UN entities only have the authority to offer recommendations to Member States.

Topic Overview

Introduction

Colombia has had a violent history with paramilitary and anti-government insurgent groups starting from the 1950s. FARC, the largest of the rebel groups, conducted numerous bombings, assassinations, and kidnappings on its political and economic targets. Drug trafficking and ransoms from various illegal activities bankrolled FARC's operations, terrorizing the civilians for half a century.

In November 2016, the government of Colombia signed a peace accord with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)—the Final Peace Agreement. The agreement marked the end of FARC activities in the region and its transition to a political party. It called for FARC members to disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate into society. The Colombian government, in turn, promised to establish three institutions dedicated to administering justice and compensation for the victims.

Despite the Colombian public's wishes for long-standing peace, adhering to and executing the terms of the peace treaty has proven to be difficult for both parties. Progress has been slow, in part due to the prominent drug trade and persistent organized crime. Structural issues leading to distribution inequality and the lack of formal legislation of the peace treaty impede further success. As of 2023, Colombia has fallen behind in its implementation budget and territorial and rural reform programs mentioned in the Final Peace Agreement.

The aftermath of the accord has been violent. The power vacuum left by the disappearance of FARC recuperated rogue FARC dissidents and begot thirty armed dissident groups, the largest being the National Liberation Army (ELN), paramilitary successors, the main one being the Gulf's Cartel (Clan de Golfo). Indigenous people, social leaders, the Afro-Colombian and the LGBTQ community are constantly under the threat of illegal armed forces. These groups perpetrate attacks through massacres and explosives, putting civilian lives at risk in the process. As a result, there has been a significant uptick in civilian casualties, missing personnel, internal displacement and forced confinement of citizens. In just the first half of 2022, 41 thousand people were forced to abandon their homes.

The current government of Colombia denies the instances of ongoing conflict and refers to such as drug trafficking and terrorism. However, it cannot be denied that Colombians face significant challenges in the midst of armed conflict and will continue to do so unless action is taken.

History and Current Situation

In 1998, President Andrés Pastrana demilitarized a part of Southern Colombia to encourage the FARC to enter negotiation. FARC was reluctant to commit to a treaty and soon withdrew in 1999.

After President Álvaro Uribe Vélez's election as president, he remilitarized the area and imposed stricter policing on FARC activities, limiting their power and terrorist activities in rural areas. However, the FARC still resisted numerous attempts to negotiate. Following the death of two of FARC's political leaders, Manuel Marulanda Vélez and Raul Reyes, and Uribe's strict military policies, FARC's power was decimated. Hostage release and negotiations continued during this period.

President Juan Manuel Santos Calderón was elected in 2010. In 2012, FARC announced it would no longer hold hostages for ransom and freed army and police prisoners. By 2014, FARC no longer launched large-scale attacks against the targets, focusing on guerrilla warfare. The peace treaty of 2016 was the first successful negotiation between the two parties. The power vacuum caused by the disappearance of FARC resulted in numerous armed militias vying for control over the previously FARC territory. The War of Catatumbo broke out in January 2018 in the Catatumbo regions of Venezuela and Colombia between local militia over drug control. To combat this issue, Colombia and Venezuela issued a joint operation "Armageddon."

In 2019, the former second in command, Iván Márquez, returned to the active sections of FARC. Colombia's President Iván Duque Márquez started an offensive operation aimed at FARC and hereby breaking the terms of the 2016 ceasefire accord. At the same time, FARC dissidents began to rearm and became active as a government rebel group.

On June 9, 2023, a 6-month ceasefire was agreed upon by the Colombian government and ELN in effect on August 3.

Definition of Key Terms

Paramilitary

An unofficial armed force not recognized by its government, organized similarly to a military force in its structure, tactics, and training. Al Qaeda is considered a form of paramilitary as it uses military tactics to launch terrorist attacks.

Guerrilla

Unconventional military practice where fighters avoid direct confrontation with the enemy, employing tactics like ambushes, booby traps, petty warfare etc. An example of this would be the in the Vietnam War, where Vietcong soldiers used traps and homemade bombs against the larger US forces.

Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)

The largest Marxist-Leninist guerilla group involved in the Colombia conflict pre-2016 and was reformed into a political party under the final peace agreement

National Liberation Army (ELN)

The second-largest Marxist-Leninist guerilla group involved in the Colombia conflict pre-2016 and became the largest insurgent group after the peace treaty

Insurgent group

An armed band of individuals based in rural areas that violently rebels against a larger authority through guerrilla warfare

FARC dissidents

Ex-members of FARC who refused to abide by the peace treaty and continued their insurgency against the Colombian government

Timeline of Events

Date	Events
1998	Pres. Andrés Pastrana demilitarized a part of Southern Colombia as a safe haven for FARC.
2002	Pres. Álvaro Uribe Vélez elected.
2010	Pres. Juan Manuel Santos Calderón elected.
2012	FARC announces it will no longer kidnap for ransom; freed army and police prisoners.
27 August 2012	Peace talks begin.
November 2016	Peace treaty signed between Colombian government and FARC.
January 2018	War of Catatumbo.
September 2019	Iván Duque Márquez started an offensive operation aimed at FARC.
June 9 2023	6-month ceasefire between ELN and Colombian government.

Previous solutions

The United Nations Security Council has put forth two solutions to date regarding the peace agreement. Resolution 2261, published in January 2016, established the "Verification Mission" to oversee the progress made in light of the peace agreement between FARC and the government. Resolution 2673, published in January 2023, reiterates the points made in the first resolution and continues with the aforementioned monitoring mandate.

UNHCR and UNDP has issued a joint project for refugee and displaced persons aid in Colombia. The project lasted from 2019-2021 in hopes of "easing pressures on host countries and "increasing refugee self-reliance."

Bloc Positions

The United States of America

The United States has been involved with peacekeeping in Colombia since early 1960s. Up until 2004, 75% of its military aid has been spent on Colombia alone. However, American presence in Colombia became controversial since it was revealed that DEA agents were participating in drug-cartel-funded activities in 2015. Colombian attitudes towards American involvement became critical after the publication of the 2022 Truth Commission Report, which condemned USA for mounting an irresponsible drug trafficking operation.

China

China has maintained a friendly foreign relationship with Colombia, hoping to cement a strong relationship, especially in areas of trade and commerce. In part with the UN verification Mission, China has sent a permanent envoy to the United Nations. Chinese influence in the Colombian region is strong, and the nation reaffirms that it will respect the independence, sovereignty and freewill of the Colombian government.

Venezuela

The relationship between Venezuela and Colombia is complex and fluctuating. Though both Venezuela and Colombia have been influenced by the Colombian conflict in the past, there is a history of mistrust between the two countries, more recently due to ideological differences. Considering the frequent cross-border drug trafficking and armed paramilitary groups occupying both regions, Colombian and Venezuelan armies have had frequent run-ins and joint operations. In 2019, foreign relations stopped completely between the two countries, and it lasted until August 2022. Under the new president Santos, international relations between the two nations have started to improve.

Possible Solutions

The situation in Colombia is tough to mitigate because of the long-term structural and historical problems that remain even after the signing of the peace accord. Radical progress has not been achieved as most countries follow a non-intervention policy and respect foreign sovereignty. Delegates can focus on providing humanitarian aid to rural areas and accelerating economic development in several ways. Another alternative solution is for countries to aid Colombia in setting up a more comprehensive and monitored legal system to resolve issues of impunity and bring justice to victims of paramilitary,

insurgent groups, and militia attacks. Aiding refugees, internal displacement, and protecting the targeted communities is also viable. Delegates should keep in mind their country's foreign policies and propose a pragmatic solution that approved by all parties.

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