



Press Release
July 17, 2015

Afro-Colombian Participation Should be Part of the Advances at the Negotiation Table

On behalf of organizations and communities that make up The Afro-Colombian National Peace Council (CONPA), and in the context of the announcements made on Sunday, July 12, 2015 by the negotiating parties on agreements to de-escalate the internal armed conflict, and an eventual bilateral and definitive cease-fire, we express that:

Our black, Afro-Colombian, Palanquero and Raizal people—one of the most disproportionately impacted groups by the internal armed conflict that has always expressed support to a negotiated solution as the only way to end the confrontation and to create conditions for building peace with social justice—salutes the agreement and considers it of utmost importance in achieving what many generations of Colombians have never had: days without armed confrontation.

De-escalating the confrontation is urgent not only for the country in abstract terms and for the hope of all Colombians, but in particular for the millions of Colombians like us, who have suffered and continue to suffer the many effects of war and confrontation; from our children being recruited by legal and illegal armed groups, forced internal displacement, aerial fumigations, and our rivers, estuaries and mangroves being contaminated by oil spills, as it recently occurred in Tumaco, to the huge tragedies like the ones in Machuca, Bojayá, Naya, and Montes de Maria. De-escalating the conflict must also involve reducing the military occupation of our collective, ancestral and urban territories, with all the implications this has on our communities' territories, the pressure on natural resources, and the empowerment our communities, organizations, and leaders. Therefore, we demand that the parties establish a humanitarian commitment to respect the rights of Afro-Colombian people.

Our community has not been heard as a victim, which is necessary if a perspective of truth, justice, reparation and non-repetition that is inclusive, comprehensive, and respectful of social, democratic and ethical values that represents cultural diversity is to be advanced. Therefore, CONPA requests that the parties respond to the communication delivered in December by the Afro-Colombian National Authority (ANAFRO) which proposed that a delegation of black, Afro-Colombian, Palanquero and Raizal people be received by the parties and that along with indigenous, and Rom people the black, Afro-Colombian, Palanquero and Raizal community can work with the parties on guaranteeing our rights in the agreements and their implementation. The history of other negotiation processes, such as the one in Guatemala, has demonstrated to us that it is not enough to be told that our rights will be respected.



From our part, the national government and the FARC only have one mandate- to leave the negotiating table having reached a full agreement to end the armed conflict and to advance the peace that Colombians have desired for so long. In order for this possibility to fully occur, it is essential that the negotiations between the Government and ELN also advance.

As organizations we will do our best to contribute and observe from our territories the compliance of the announcements made by the parties.

AFRO-COLOMBIAN PEACE COUNCIL – CONPA

Afro-Colombian National Authority **ANAFRO**

National Association of Displaced Afro-Colombians **AFRODES**

Association of Community Councils of Northern Cauca **ACONC**

Afro-Colombian Pastoral Center **CEPAC**

Afro-Colombian Labor Council **CLAF**

National Conference of Afro-Colombian Organizations **CNOA**

Interethnic Solidarity Forum of Chocó **FISCH**

Process of Black Communities in Colombia **PCN**

National Network of Afro-Colombian Women **Kambiri**