

Communiqué to the general public

**THE PEACE DIALOGUES TABLE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE ELN
VISIT TO SOUTHERN BOLIVAR**

As announced in communiqué N° 25, the Table of Dialogues for Peace between the Government of the Republic of Colombia and the National Liberation Army - ELN, today carried out a visit to the municipality of Santa Rosa del Sur, Bolivar. In that area, last April 21, the renowned social and environmental leader Narciso Beleño was assassinated. In addition to condemning this assassination, the Dialogues Table pointed out that this act seeks to frustrate the peace process.

During the visit, the delegations heard the testimonies of representatives of the community about the difficult situation being experienced, as well as concrete complaints about the presence and advance of paramilitary structures of the so-called Clan del Golfo that threaten the survival of the communities and the historical social organisations of the territory, seeking to control the Serranía de San Lucas and its inhabitants, as a geostrategic point to generate a cross-border corridor between Panama and Venezuela. The complaints received indicate that to date these structures already control 85% of this territory.

Likewise, social leaders expressed concerns about fracking and environmental degradation, increased with the intensive entry of yellow machinery for gold extraction and the subjugation of informal mining. The economic blockade experienced by the communities in the territories of this region generates a silent displacement, due to the impossibility of the development of plans for a dignified life for the inhabitants. Nevertheless, as part of their resistance, they have kept alive the proposal to advance in the environmental protection of the territory. In this context, they made proposals that would allow to strengthen the guarantees for the life of the community, its organisations and popular movements, and a humanitarian appeal for respect for life, which includes the demand for the relief of the troops of Task Force Marte.

Despite the murders and accusations in the Serranía de San Lucas that aim to silence and prevent continuing the struggle for peace in the country, this is a territory where organised communities have been working for decades to achieve it.

To support this decision, the delegations of the Dialogues Table reaffirm the need to hold the Magdalena Medio Regional Meeting of the National Participation Committee - CNP, as a peace-building scenario. And they commit to developing *Agreement N° 20 on Actions and Humanitarian Dynamics in the Critical Zones* in a concerted manner with the communities, who also request the accompaniment of the guarantor countries, the accompanying countries, the UN and the Colombian Bishops' Conference, who were present during the visit.

For its part, the Government Delegation undertakes to raise the complaints and requirements of the communities to the highest state instances.

Bogotá D. C., 3 May 2024.