

PRELIMINARY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AND THE  
INDEPENDENT REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT – ARMED COMMANDOS

21 January 1997

The national government, under the constitutional mandate for peace, as a mandatory duty and right, in order to find a permanent solution to the armed conflict and provide the basis and conditions for the growth of long-lasting peace through negotiations, the expansion of democratic channels, respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, and the participation and reconciliation of all Colombians, has decided in mutual agreement with the insurgent armed group the Independent Revolutionary Movement – Armed Commandos (*Movimiento Independiente Revolucionario Comandos Armados*, MIR–COAR) to initiate a dialogue process to find ways to permit the affirmation of genuine participative democracy, the social development of the communities under the influence of MIR–COAR, the peaceful coexistence of Colombians, and the reincorporation of the organisation's members into civil, social and political life.

To achieve this, MIR–COAR undertakes to overcome all obstacles that may arise in order to carry out this process and guarantee the military demobilisation of its members, respect the rules, standards and provisions of international humanitarian law for the duration of the process to reach a permanent agreement, suspend offensive military activities throughout the process, and submit, in the course of the process, details of the urban and rural zones in which it operates and which are known to be under its influence.

The national government undertakes to:

1. Provide the guarantees required by the spokespeople and representative members designated by MIR–COAR while the political–social negotiation process takes place.
2. Guarantee under the terms set out in Law 104, 1993, reformed by Law 241, 1995, the suspension of the execution of capture orders for the representatives–members and spokespeople appointed by the organisation and recognised by the national government.

3. Guarantee legal assistance to members of the organisation from the signing of this document throughout the talks. Under all circumstances, the government reserves the right to suspend them if this is warranted by the development of the process.
4. Guarantee secure transport of spokespeople and representatives—members, as required, to carry out talks.
5. Provide sufficient operative measures to make progress in this contact process.

The parties mutually agree the following commitments:

1. Carry out meetings with the greatest possible discretion and privacy, without issuing communications to the press, in order to respect the security of the members of the commissions.
2. Work together to establish a professional team that will jointly evaluate with communities the socio-economic situation of the areas submitted as zones of influence of the insurgent group to provide the basis for making decisions regarding social investment in these areas, this being understood as the social restoration of neighbourhoods.

Signed on 21 January 1997.

For the national government:

- HORACIO SERPA URIBE, Minister of the Interior
- DANIEL GARCIA-PEÑA, Peace Commissioner
- TOMÁS CONCHA SANZ, Head of the Presidential Reinsertion Programme

For MIR-COAR:

- LUIS FERNANDO QUIJANO MORENO
- ALVARO DE JESÚS RAMÍREZ RIVERA
- SANTIAGO QUIJANO MORENO

- CARLOS MARIO ARENAS LÓPEZ