

## **Colombian Democracy Amid Ongoing Civil Conflict**

Rain Lasch

December 11, 2022

PSCI 3032: Democracy, Inequality, and Violence in Latin America

Word Count: 3,738

## Introduction

Since 1964, civil war has been carried out throughout less state-controlled areas of Colombia, yet Colombian democracy remains one of the most durable democratic governments in Latin America and has survived in spite of conflict. This brings to mind the question of how a country's democratic government can survive such perpetual violence and to what extent the government has been affected by conflict. Although Colombian democracy still stands strong and has a firm foundation to grow from, violent conflict has deeply affected Colombia's democratic institutions and processes. Some may say that Colombia's conflict and circumstances are unique, which, in some ways, is true, but like many countries in Latin America, Colombia has a long history of land inequality, political exclusion, and violent repression of mostly left-wing political groups by right-wing death squads, and these problems have seeped into democratic institutions in a number of critical ways.

I will be investigating the overall effect of Colombia's civil war on its democracy and democratic institutions. More specifically, I would like to explore whether civil war has diminished Colombia's democratic quality or whether it has somehow enhanced the effectiveness of its democratic institutions. Colombia's democracy has demonstrably been able to withstand all kinds of anti-democratic pressures from violent groups, but armed entities, especially guerrilla and paramilitary forces, have undoubtedly replaced the functions of government in some areas and influenced many citizens and politicians' decision making. Various groups, such as landowning elites, paramilitaries, and left-wing parties, see Colombian politics as a zero-sum game, and electoral fraud and violence have been evident problems for this very reason. It is true that Colombia's democracy has remained a constant throughout its conflict, but it has been persistently attacked by both non-state and state actors. I argue that while Colombia's democracy

has proven durable and possibly been enhanced over the course of the conflict, more than half a decade of civil war and violence has severely diminished the quality of elections, democratic representation, and overall democratic governance as Colombia has had to endure the disastrous effects of constant violence. I will first provide background to the Colombian conflict, for this is crucial to understanding how different factors affect the relationship between conflict and democracy. Then, I will examine my research findings and discuss the results. I will conclude by offering some thoughts on the future situation in Colombia.

### **Background**

In order to gain a meaningful understanding of violence's impact on democracy in Colombia, it is necessary to be aware of the historical forces that shape the Colombian context. Like many Latin American countries, Colombia has historically had extensive land inequality and political exclusion, but unlike most Latin American countries, it has experienced mostly uninterrupted democratic rule since gaining independence from Spain in 1819. Without a decent understanding of Colombian history, there is little chance that one can grasp how Colombia's democracy has been able to weather a half a century of persistent and prevalent civil conflict.

One significant break in Colombia's democratic history consisted in regulated government power sharing as a result of La Violencia. After the assassination of the Liberal leader Jorge Eliécer Gaitán in 1948, Colombia experienced 10 years of widespread political violence as inflation, political animosity, and general social unrest erupted in communal violence, resulting in hundreds of thousands of civilian casualties. This immediately produced a political landscape characterized by political hostility and regulated exclusion. The Colombian government established the National Front in 1958 "to eliminate the competition between the

parties that had produced La Violencia,”<sup>1</sup> and this was achieved by “alternat[ing] power mechanically every four years”<sup>2</sup> between the traditional Liberal and Conservative parties. The National Front was thus a consociational democracy that relied on political exclusion, so before the current conflict, Colombia had to compromise democratic practices as a means to pacify domestic political pressures. In the end, the National Front was successful in bringing an end to La Violencia, but consociational democracy created a new set of problems for democracy in Colombia.

Due to the structure and goals of the National Front, consociational democracy generated “a lack of political space for individuals attracted to neither the Liberals nor the Conservatives,” “continued violence in the countryside,” and an inability of the state to address overall economic inequality<sup>3</sup>. The National Liberation Army (ELN) and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) were founded in the mid-1960s in response to the state’s shortcomings in solving social issues, for both organizations were founded as Communist groups that worked to defend their interests from an increasingly conservative government. In 1964, “leaders from... Tolima met to constitute themselves as the ‘Southern Bloc’” in a flagrant expression of civil discontent with the Colombian government<sup>4</sup>. Following these developments was years of various guerrilla groups’ violent confrontations with the government and civilian populations, and much of their funding came from global Communist influences in the Soviet Union and China as well as through kidnappings, extortion, and drug trafficking. Continued violence lasted until around 1982 after the Colombian government decided to engage in “democratization efforts” under

---

<sup>1</sup> Harvey Kline, *Colombia: Democracy Under Assault* (New York: Routledge, 1983), 48, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429033827>.

<sup>2</sup> Abbey Steele and Michael Weintraub, “Rebel governance and political participation,” *United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research* 98, (September 2022): 5, <https://doi.org/10.35188/UNU-WIDER/2022/232-4>.

<sup>3</sup> Kline, *Colombia: Democracy Under Assault*, 52-3.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

President Belisario Betancur “as a reaction to exclusionary political institutions” and to limit the violence<sup>5</sup>. Agreements were made in 1984, and the FARC were allowed to formally enter Colombian politics as the Patriotic Union (UP). Unfortunately, this led to its own set of problems and did little to resolve civil conflict.

Once the FARC entered Colombian politics, novel forms of violence took place as the state failed to protect the UP and its sympathizers. UP candidates were assassinated amid “collective targeting of UP sympathizers” by “narcotraffickers and paramilitaries,” who joined forces to mutually protect their interests<sup>6</sup>. Naturally, the FARC left politics and reasserted their position in less state-controlled regions, which prompted the further development of paramilitary groups to combat guerrilla influence in the countryside. The state became complicit in paramilitary activity, and this led to the “emergence of the... AUC in 1997,” which united various paramilitary groups into one national-level organization<sup>7</sup>. The AUC then went on to commit widespread atrocities and human rights violations in its campaign to eradicate subversive left-wing groups. In 2000, the US provided major assistance to Colombia’s war on subversive guerrillas with Plan Colombia, a military and financial aid package with the purpose of helping combat guerrilla groups and strengthen Colombian institutions as an extension of America’s War on Drugs. Plan Colombia was carried out under the Uribe government and saw homicides fall by “40 percent,” but this came with the consequences of increasing human rights violations as a result of increased paramilitary activity and capability<sup>8</sup>. US aid as part of Plan Colombia lasted until about 2015 when the state began renewed peace talks with the FARC.

---

<sup>5</sup> Abbey Steele and Livia Schubiger, “Democracy and civil war: the case of Colombia,” *Conflict Management and Peace Studies* 35, no. 6 (2018): 589, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0738894218787780>.

<sup>6</sup> Steele and Schubiger, “Democracy and civil war: the case of Colombia,” 590.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 592.

<sup>8</sup> Claire Klobucista and Danielle Renwick, “Colombia’s Civil Conflict,” Council on Foreign Relations, last modified January 11, 2017, <https://www.cfr.org/background/colombias-civil-conflict>.

After paramilitaries' involvement in illegal drug trafficking, Colombian black markets, and corrupt political activity, the Alvaro Uribe government "gave de facto amnesty for paramilitaries not under investigation for human rights violations" under Decree 128 in 2003 to achieve paramilitary disarmament, and this amnesty applied to the vast majority of paramilitary organizations<sup>9</sup>. Since the Uribe government indirectly benefited from the support of paramilitary forces, and partly due to paramilitaries' immense influence and power, Uribe opted for amnesty to appease paramilitary groups and ensure the end of their violence. Since paramilitaries had enforced the political status quo and protected many traditional elites' power, illegal collusion between paramilitary forces and politicians was uncovered in the 2006 Parapolitica scandal, and a number of the Colombian Congress's members were prosecuted. The establishment of the Justice and Peace Law granted leniency and "political status" to paramilitary groups though, which may be indicative of a "quid pro quo" where politicians provided paramilitaries with favorable policies after having benefited from their violent repression of subversive groups<sup>10</sup>. Disarmament of the AUC brought mass paramilitary violence to an end, and the FARC agreed to disarm in 2016. Since the end of the deal though, about "150 social leaders have been targeted and killed," and the ELN has yet to disarm and continues to enjoy sympathy from the Venezuelan government<sup>11</sup>. Subsequently, the future of violence in Colombia is uncertain as the state will have to carefully navigate the integration of armed groups into formal politics and civil society after having failed to fully achieve this goal at multiple points in its near history. Though there is much more to be said about the history of civil conflict in Colombia, this short overview

---

<sup>9</sup> Daron Acemoglu, James Robinson, and Rafael Santos, "The Monopoly of Violence: Evidence from Colombia," *Journal of the European Economic Association* 11, no. 1 (January 2013): 17, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1542-4774.2012.01099.x>.

<sup>10</sup> Steele and Schubiger, "Democracy and civil war: the case of Colombia," 593.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 588.

should be sufficient in showing that Colombia's democracy has indeed been affected by violent conflict in numerous ways.

### **Research Findings**

From the research I have done, there are a number of institutions and democratic norms that have been impacted by Colombia's civil conflict. Levels of electoral fraud and violence tend to increase in areas of high land inequality and low government control, and multiple efforts to democratize have been met by new forms of violence that further weaken democratic institutions. Despite this, Colombian democracy has survived due to the economic benefits that it delivers, and as the conflict comes nearer to peace agreements, political participation has become more accessible to Colombian citizens. There are signs of uncertainty for whether these democratic gains can be sustained, but progress toward ending the conflict has certainly been made.

In elections, armed groups often inflicted violence, committed fraud, or forced citizens to abstain from voting to obtain favorable results. Some guerrilla groups like the FARC achieved mass abstention by "circulat[ing] pamphlets that called on residents... to join in 'constructing true popular power' rather than vote"<sup>12</sup>. It was only after the FARC agreed to a peace deal and effectively legitimized the state that those under the group's control gained "final 'approval'" to participate in elections implemented by the state<sup>13</sup>. As Dr. Nicolas Vasquez points out, land and wealth distribution is at the heart of the conflict, and paramilitaries, landed elites, and narcotraffickers work in concert to protect their largely capitalist interests<sup>14</sup>. Consequently, elections often center on land and wealth redistribution, which drives these groups' use of

---

<sup>12</sup> Steele and Schubiger, "Democracy and civil war: the case of Colombia," 592.

<sup>13</sup> Steele and Weintraub, "Rebel governance and political participation," 18.

<sup>14</sup> Vasquez, Nicolas. Zoom Presentation, University of Colorado Boulder, 2022.

electoral violence and fraud. Landed elites in the countryside benefited from paramilitaries' coercive measures and would "preserve their electoral dominance... by capturing the rural public officials and institutions"<sup>15</sup>. Elections of municipal mayors "motivated politicians to ally with paramilitaries to maintain their power," which "provided an opportunity for paramilitaries to expand and consolidate"<sup>16</sup>. Colombian elites have ultimately been "willing to embrace the disorder because it allows them to retain power"<sup>17</sup>. Politicians, narcotraffickers, and other wealthy landowners directly contributed to the proliferation of paramilitary organizations, and this allowed for considerable election interference to take place.

Where paramilitaries exercised control, government authority was essentially replaced and elections were influenced to be favorable to death squads' interests. "Established elites often enjoy privileged connections with key state actors that enable them to engage in violence with limited consequences," and as an extension, paramilitaries enjoyed the same lack of accountability when it came to their election influence<sup>18</sup>. In 2002 and 2006, "paramilitary groups actively tried and succeeded in influencing votes in national elections"<sup>19</sup>. Paramilitaries used force "to keep people at home and away from the polls" and forcibly filled in people's ballots<sup>20</sup>. In these years, Uribe's vote share "was systematically higher in high paramilitary areas," so while paramilitaries exerted their influence, Uribe gained crucial political support while also providing these groups with favorable policies with acts like the Justice and Peace Law<sup>21</sup>. These attacks on elections present a clear and dangerous threat to Colombia's democratic governance,

---

<sup>15</sup> Camilo Nieto-Matiz, "Democracy in the countryside: The rural sources of violence against voters in Colombia," *Journal of Peace Research* 56, no. 2 (December 2018): 266, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343318802986>.

<sup>16</sup> Steele and Schubiger, "Democracy and civil war: the case of Colombia," 591.

<sup>17</sup> Leopoldo Fergusson, "Who Wants Violence? The Political Economy of Conflict and State Building in Colombia," *Cuadernos de Economía* 38, no. 78 (2019): 679, <https://doi.org/10.15446/cuad.econ.v38n78.71224>.

<sup>18</sup> Leopoldo Fergusson, Pablo Querubin, Nelson Ruiz, and Juan Vargas, "The Real Winner's Curse," *American Journal of Political Science* 65, no. 1 (January 2021): 54, <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12508>.

<sup>19</sup> Acemoglu, Robinson, and Santos, "The Monopoly of Violence: Evidence from Colombia," 20.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.



for regular citizens' interests lack effective representation as those in the government and upper echelons of society profit from persistent violence. Even in the legislature, paramilitary electoral interference corresponded "to about a 4-5 percentage points increase in the vote share of the winning candidate" in 2002, and in these areas, there were a "greater... proportion of Senators on the list who [were] arrested for links with paramilitaries"<sup>22</sup>. The electoral data reveal obvious connections between the Colombian state and far-right armed groups, and both the legislature and the executive branches have, to a degree, been captured by violent groups' interests.

Paramilitary activity has evidently diminished the integrity of Colombia's democratic institutions, and the state has worked to eliminate these corrupt relationships through peace deals that aim to achieve disarmament and the protection of democratic procedures.

Even with these efforts, the Colombian conflict has historically stunted efforts to further democratize. Democratization after 1984 peace negotiations led to political cleansing with the "expulsion of UP sympathizers from their communities" by paramilitary groups, which successfully severed FARC and its supporters' ties to formal politics<sup>23</sup>. In the context of immense civil violence, opening up elections to far-left and previously excluded parties led to far-right violence to continue excluding these same groups, which demonstrates the anti-democratic behavior practiced throughout the conflict. Democratic decentralization in the 1980s, which allowed for direct election of municipal mayors, "increased disputes over local power," which "gave violent groups an incentive to exert influence"<sup>24</sup>. 30% of Congress members had ties with paramilitary groups as a consequence, and subversive political groups continued to be effectively excluded from Colombian democracy<sup>25</sup>. Democratization in the 1980s ultimately failed to

---

<sup>22</sup> Acemoglu, Robinson, and Santos, "The Monopoly of Violence: Evidence from Colombia," 31-33.

<sup>23</sup> Steele and Schubiger, "Democracy and civil war: the case of Colombia," 590.

<sup>24</sup> Nieto-Matiz, "Democracy in the countryside: The rural sources of violence against voters in Colombia," 269.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 269.

achieve long term progress, for politicians and non-state actors were encouraged to forcefully perpetuate the political exclusion that has historically marked its politics. Further democratization in 1991 with Colombia's new constitution yielded similar results as local level elections "provided an opportunity for armed groups to capture local and even national state institutions", for paramilitaries engaged in extensive cooptation by "offer[ing] to support a politician's campaign in exchange for future benefits"<sup>26</sup>. While democratization was intended to reduce political violence, its implementation produced the reverse effect as the Colombian state lacked the monopoly on violence required to keep democratization peaceful.

Episodic violence following democratization efforts was found to be systematic in response to previously-excluded groups' electoral victory. A "narrow left-wing victory," where electoral competition is highly competitive between traditional parties and newly introduced ones, was found to lead to "up to 7.3 additional yearly violent events per 100,000 inhabitants" by right-wing groups during the subsequent government term<sup>27</sup>. In areas where political competition is highest, the results demonstrate a profoundly anti-democratic response to democratization efforts by paramilitary groups and conservative political interests, and this aspect of Colombia's conflict has been found in other countries that have attempted to further democratize following civil conflict. In Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, military coups took place "in response to the electoral victories of the left," and in Haiti as well, where there has long been civil strife, the US and France deposed President Jean-Bertrand Aristide for demanding the redistribution of colonial wealth<sup>28</sup>. Fergusson illustrates that increased violence following democratization occurs when "the policy stance of the incomers is threatening" elites' interests and elites "have a

---

<sup>26</sup> Steele and Schubiger, "Democracy and civil war: the case of Colombia," 592.

<sup>27</sup> Fergusson, Querubin, Ruiz, and Vargas, "The Real Winner's Curse," 53.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 53.

comparative advantage in the use of violence”<sup>29</sup>. Paramilitary and elite groups, including state politicians and narcotraffickers, thus had a vested interest in continuing to violently repress left-wing groups, and the state lacked the capability to effectively maintain electoral security in highly competitive areas. Guerrilla groups like the FARC and the ELN employed electoral violence to a “more limited” degree than groups like the AUC due to their opposition to government and lack of state links, but they still managed to affect elections and make limited political gains<sup>30</sup>. The Colombian state then benefited from subnational authoritarianism where the state could not assert itself as the dominant authority and indirectly supported authoritarian responses to left-wing inclusion. Vasquez claims that this relates to the Colombian state’s failure to live up to its many promises, for while the state endorsed democratization, it lacked the ability and will to protect its implementation and allowed for the proliferation of anti-democratic influences<sup>31</sup>.

Despite persistent attacks on Colombian democracy, Colombia has managed to strengthen its commitment to democratic governance and processes thanks to its astonishing durability. Much of the violence in Colombia is a result of the public goods trap, which asserts that citizens will privately replace goods that the government cannot provide such as security and rule of law, for landowners have replaced state security services with paramilitaries and private militias. But one public good that the Colombian state has consistently provided is some sense of macroeconomic stability. Powerful groups rely on the state for economic services, which can partly explain why Colombia’s government has been able to resist collapse and even enhance its democracy over the course of its conflict. Because of groups’ reliance on the state for legal property protections and economic benefits, Colombia’s democratic durability is partly due to the

---

<sup>29</sup> Fergusson, Querubin, Ruiz, and Vargas, “The Real Winner’s Curse,” 54.

<sup>30</sup> Acemoglu, Robinson, and Santos, “The Monopoly of Violence: Evidence from Colombia,” 22.

<sup>31</sup> Vasquez, Nicolas. Zoom Presentation.

state's "symbiotic relationship between the parties controlling the central state and non-state actors exercising power in the peripheries of the country," for non-state groups like the AUC derived economic advantages and protection from their collusion with state actors<sup>32</sup>. Though much violence has taken place as a result of the state's relations with armed groups, Colombia's ability to dole out resources to state supporters has been an important factor in maintaining its democratic governance and ensuring that continued democratization can take place.

Once armed groups have agreed to disarm, democratization efforts have more effectively taken place and produced positive results. In areas of guerrilla group control, Community Action Committees (JACs) administered by groups like the FARC "were not entirely independent of the state" and could "solicit public works," which could show rebel supporters that active engagement with politics can yield desirable progress<sup>33</sup>. Rebel intervention in elections thus "may have encouraged more formal participation" in politics by showing that the state could provide economic benefits through democratic means<sup>34</sup>. Following the 2016 peace agreement, former FARC members could then more easily make use of democratic processes to make legal claims and integrate with formal society. In addition, while democratization did initially become violent, "elections were not fully ineffective" as "after 2006" there was no observed "violent reaction," which illustrates that sustained violence may not be possible following the introduction of excluded groups<sup>35</sup>. This may also be due to the decreased paramilitary presence, for after the AUC agreed to disarm, violent events in response to democratization fell. Democratization did work in some ways following continued peace efforts then, but it still took years for there to be any readily apparent decreases in political hostility. Nonetheless, this is a

---

<sup>32</sup> Acemoglu, Robinson, and Santos, "The Monopoly of Violence: Evidence from Colombia," 40.

<sup>33</sup> Steele and Weintraub, "Rebel governance and political participation," 18.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>35</sup> Fergusson, Querubin, Ruiz, and Vargas, "The Real Winner's Curse," 66.

good development that displays how Colombian democracy can still improve and overcome anti-democratic violence.

### **Discussion**

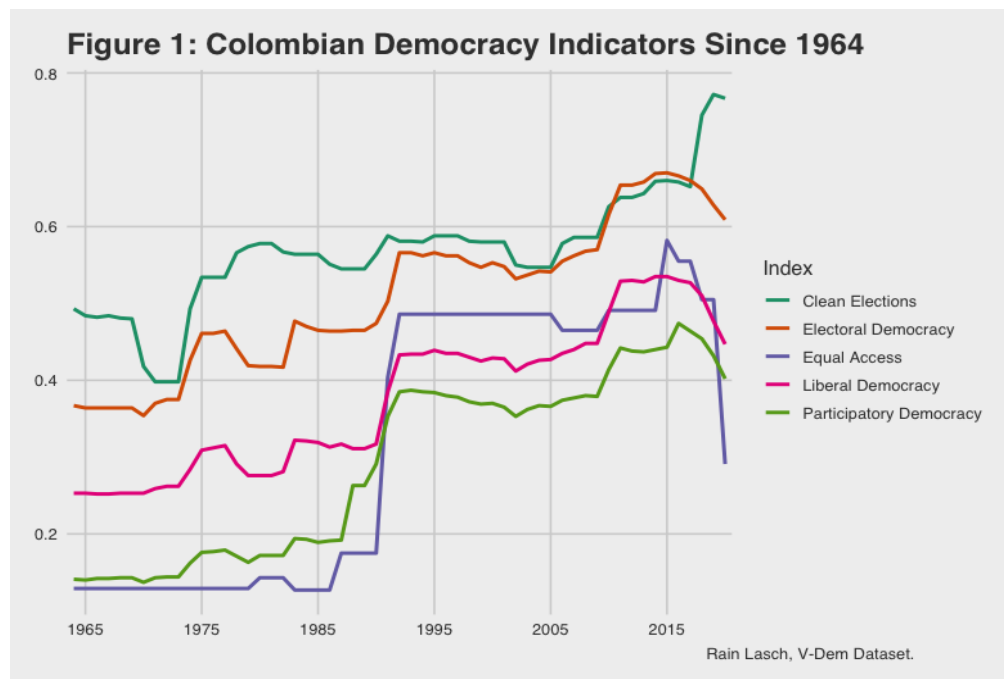
Colombia's experience with conflict demonstrates the complicated nature of the relationship between conflict and democracy. Though democracy existed in name, the necessary participation, accountability, and competition to support democratic institutions was greatly absent from Colombia's political system for most of the conflict. Elite politicians and narcotraffickers have evidently conspired with paramilitaries to guarantee that their interests are principally represented, and much of their anti-democratic activity took place with relative impunity as a consequence of state collaboration. Rebel groups and their supporters have been legally excluded from opportunities to engage with formal politics, which has necessarily made Colombia a semi-democracy for most of the conflict. It was only after the US provided greater resources to Colombia under Plan Colombia that substantial gains in strengthening democracy began to come about, for paramilitary disarmament allowed elections to eventually become more peaceful. Whether or not US aid was the sole determinant of Colombia's ability to begin democratizing, the plan has given Colombia "more than \$10 billion" since its start, and this is a considerable amount of resources that has gone toward improving the state's ability to provide security and maintain order<sup>36</sup>. Further efforts are certainly needed in this regard, but Colombia has made inroads toward achieving a more peaceful political environment that can facilitate democratic processes.

As seen in class, the conflict is still ongoing, and violent groups are still a serious threat to democratic government. The ELN is a significant non-state actor and still practices violent

---

<sup>36</sup> Klobucista and Renwick, "Colombia's Civil Conflict."

methods to exert influence in the peripheries of the country, and the average citizen is still “unwilling to endorse the [FARC]’s participation in politics”<sup>37</sup>. There have recently been armed threats to political candidates, and drug trafficking continues to undermine government authority. The picture for future democratization is uncertain as indicators for democracy show that there has been decline in electoral democracy, equal access, participation, and civil liberties but an increase in clean elections since the agreement with FARC in 2016<sup>38</sup>. These recent drops in



democratic quality are equivalent to levels not experienced since around the early 1990s. Around 1991, Colombian democratic quality seemed to generally improve as a result of democratic reforms under the 1991 Constitution. Then, indicators show stagnation under the most active time period of paramilitaries between around 1995 and 2006. Democratic improvements were made leading up to the 2016 negotiations with FARC, which may have enticed the rebel group into agreeing to political integration by signaling the new safety in politics. None of these

<sup>37</sup> Nieto-Matiz, “Democracy in the countryside: The rural sources of violence against voters in Colombia,” 269.

<sup>38</sup> Figure 1.

conclusions are absolutely causal, but V-Dem indicator data show that Colombia's democratic quality may be worsening even as its elections become fairer. There is no telling whether or not Colombia is on a completely upward democratic trend, for this reveals a mixed image of how the country's democratic system is faring. There may be promise for future democracy in the fact that Colombia will be under its most progressive leadership yet, but it is hard to say for certain whether Colombia can quickly make progress toward advancing democratization.

### **Conclusion**

Colombia has come a long way from the political hostility that was once nearly ubiquitous in its society. The FARC was "militarily dissolved" in 2017 and made into the Common Alternative Revolutionary Force, and the Special Jurisdiction for Peace "is a transitional court system which has been put in place for 10 years to try all participants in the Colombian Civil War"<sup>39</sup>. Transitional justice and acts of demilitarization are essential steps for achieving an inclusive and accountable democracy, and although these are only recent developments, they are hopeful signs that Colombia is moving toward a sustainable democracy that can possibly come to terms with its history of civil conflict. Though there were threats of political violence in recent elections, Colombians successfully elected "the first left-wing president of the traditionally conservative country" with President Gustavo Petro<sup>40</sup>. Petro "wants to implement the recommendations for structural reforms" presented by the President of Colombia's Truth Commission and is sympathetic to rebel groups' interests as he was a former M-19 member<sup>41</sup>. President Petro has proclaimed his desire to enact land, tax, healthcare,

---

<sup>39</sup> "Colombian Civil War," The Organization for World Peace, accessed December 11, 2022, [https://theowp.org/crisis\\_index/colombian-civil-war-2/](https://theowp.org/crisis_index/colombian-civil-war-2/).

<sup>40</sup> Katharina Kroll, "Colombia hopes for peace, reforms under new president," *DW*, August 23, 2022, <https://www.dw.com/en/colombia-hopes-for-peace-reforms-under-new-president/a-62892609>.

<sup>41</sup> Kroll, "Colombia hopes for peace, reforms under new president."

economic, and security reforms as well, which is an encouraging sign for Colombia's democratic institutions. Only time will tell whether or not Petro's promises will come to fruition in a country that is notorious for not fulfilling promises.



## Bibliography

- Acemoglu, Daron, James Robinson, and Rafael Santos. "The Monopoly of Violence: Evidence from Colombia." *Journal of the European Economic Association* 11, no. 1 (January 2013): 5-44. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1542-4774.2012.01099.x>.
- Coppedge, Michael, John Gerring, Carl Henrik Knutsen, Staffan I. Lindberg, Jan Teorell, Nazifa Alizada, David Altman, Michael Bernhard, Agnes Cornell, M. Steven Fish, Lisa Gastaldi, Haakon Gjerløw, Adam Glynn, Allen Hicken, Garry Hindle, Nina Ilchenko, Joshua Krusell, Anna Luhrmann, Seraphine F. Maerz, Kyle L. Marquardt, Kelly McMann, Valeriya Mechkova, Juraj Medzihorsky, Pamela Paxton, Daniel Pemstein, Josefine Pernes, Johannes von Rømer, Brigitte Seim, Rachel Sigman, Svend-Erik Skaaning, Jeffrey Staton, Aksel Sundström, Eitan Tzelgov, Yi-ting Wang, Tore Wig, Steven Wilson and Daniel Ziblatt. 2021. "V-Dem [Country–Year/Country–Date] Dataset v11.1" Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project. <https://doi.org/10.23696/vdemds21>.
- Fergusson, Leopoldo, Pablo Querubin, Nelson Ruiz, and Juan Vargas. "The Real Winner's Curse." *American Journal of Political Science* 65, no. 1 (January 2021): 52-68. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12508>.
- Fergusson, Leopoldo. "Who Wants Violence? The Political Economy of Conflict and State Building in Colombia." *Cuadernos de Economía* 38, no. 78 (2019): 671-700. <https://doi.org/10.15446/cuad.econ.v38n78.71224>.
- Kline, Harvey. *Colombia: Democracy Under Assault*. New York: Routledge, 1983. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429033827>.
- Klobucista, Claire and Danielle Renwick. "Colombia's Civil Conflict." Council on Foreign Relations, last modified January 11, 2017. <https://www.cfr.org/background/colombias-civil-conflict>.
- Kroll, Katharina. "Colombia hopes for peace, reforms under new president." *DW*, August 23, 2022. <https://www.dw.com/en/colombia-hopes-for-peace-reforms-under-new-president/a-62892609>.
- Nieto-Matiz, Camilo. "Democracy in the countryside: The rural sources of violence against voters in Colombia." *Journal of Peace Research* 56, no. 2 (December 2018): 264-278. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343318802986>.
- Pemstein, Daniel, Kyle L. Marquardt, Eitan Tzelgov, Yi-ting Wang, Juraj Medzihorsky, Joshua Krusell, Farhad Miri, and Johannes von Rømer. 2021. "The V-Dem Measurement Model: Latent Variable Analysis for Cross-National and Cross-Temporal Expert-Coded Data". V-Dem Working Paper No. 21. 6th edition. University of Gothenburg: Varieties of Democracy Institute.

Steele, Abbey and Livia Schubiger. "Democracy and civil war: the case of Colombia." *Conflict Management and Peace Studies* 35, no. 6 (2018): 587-600.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0738894218787780>.

Steele, Abbey and Michael Weintraub. "Rebel governance and political participation." *United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics Research* 98, (September 2022). <https://doi.org/10.35188/UNU-WIDER/2022/232-4>.

The Organization for World Peace. "Colombian Civil War." accessed December 11, 2022.  
[https://theowp.org/crisis\\_index/colombian-civil-war-2/](https://theowp.org/crisis_index/colombian-civil-war-2/).

Vasquez, Nicolas. Zoom Presentation, University of Colorado Boulder, 2022.