

Press Release

UN Human Rights Office welcomes new agreement with Colombia

GENEVA (30 October 2019) – The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet and Colombia’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Carlos Holmes Trujillo on Wednesday signed a Host Country Agreement enabling the continuation of the UN Human Rights Office presence and activities in Colombia over the next three years.

“I warmly welcome the fact that we have finalized this new agreement, and thank the Government of Colombia for the goodwill and cooperation it has shown during the process leading up to the signing,” Bachelet said.

“This is one of the oldest, largest and most effective presences my Office has anywhere in the world, and the conclusion of this agreement is a mutual recognition of the important role the UN Human Rights Office in Colombia has played in the protection and promotion of human rights in the country over the past 22 years,” Bachelet said. “It will also enable us to continue implementation of the specific responsibilities attributed to my Office in the 2016 Final Peace Accord between the Government and the FARC.”

The new Agreement reflects and builds upon the significant changes that have taken place in Colombia since the original Host Country Agreement was reached in 1996, and the Office officially began operating in April 1997. In addition to the main office in Bogota, it now has an additional 15 sub-offices across the country.

The Agreement signed today enables the UN Human Rights Office to continue to engage equally in all the main elements of its global mandate, namely technical cooperation and assistance as well as monitoring, reporting and advocacy.

“We will continue to count on close collaboration with all parts of the Government, as well as with Colombia’s vibrant and courageous civil society, the various regional protection mechanisms and the international community at large,” the High Commissioner said.

“Over the years, the Office has received strong support from successive Governments and all the other main national and international actors working to improve the human rights of all Colombians,” Bachelet said. “This agreement enables us to continue to be a full and very active partner to Colombia in its efforts to consolidate peace, justice and sustainable development, and find solutions to the many human rights challenges facing the country.”

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