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**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner  
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the  
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

## Situation of human rights in Colombia

### Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights\*, \*\*

#### *Summary*

In the present report, the High Commissioner examines the human rights situation in Colombia in 2025 and the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace in relation to human rights. Policies on peace, security and the dismantling of criminal organizations, among others, are also examined.

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\* Agreement was reached to publish the present document after the standard publication date owing to circumstances beyond the submitter's control.

\*\* The summary of this report is being circulated in all official languages. The report itself is contained in the annex and is being circulated in the language of submission and English only.



## Annex

# Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Colombia

## I. Introduction

1. The present report is being submitted pursuant to the agreement between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Government of Colombia, signed in November 1996, and the nine-year agreement signed in January 2023. In 2025, OHCHR observed with deep concern that non-State armed groups and criminal organizations continued to strengthen their territorial presence and social control,<sup>1</sup> with a negative impact on human rights.

2. In several parts of the country, high levels of violence and hostilities in the context of the armed conflict seriously affect the civilian population, hinder the implementation of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace (the Peace Agreement) and may undermine the electoral process. Colombia faces the prospect of reverting to the serious human rights situation it experienced prior to the signing of the Peace Agreement, particularly at the territorial level.

3. In 2025, the budget of OHCHR was drastically reduced due to the suspension of voluntary contributions and the liquidity crisis in the regular budget of the United Nations Secretariat, leading to a staffing cut of approximately 50% and the closure of three field offices (in Medellín, Neiva and Villavicencio). This diminished the Office's monitoring, technical assistance and advocacy capacity in seven departments. Authorities and civil society organizations expressed concern about the impact this would have on the promotion and protection of human rights.

4. Violence and conflict, including the emergence of pre-electoral violence, have generated greater risks for the free and safe exercise of certain civil and political rights by political leaders, candidates and human rights defenders. The senator and presidential candidate Miguel Uribe Turbay died on 11 August 2025 after he was attacked at a political rally.

5. OHCHR recorded 18 cases of homicide and 126 cases of attacks and threats against political leaders. Most of those targeted were current or former municipal officials, councillors, youth activists or candidates for the special electoral districts for peace. In its Early Warning No. 013-2025,<sup>2</sup> the Ombudsman's Office identified 649 municipalities with risk levels requiring immediate, urgent or priority action.

6. Violence also shifted into the digital sphere, where there was an increase in hate speech and discriminatory discourse on social media.

7. In response to this violence, under the leadership of the Ombudsman's Office, OHCHR, the Mission to Support the Peace Process of the Organization of American States, the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia and the Catholic Church called on political parties and social movements to sign the Commitment to a Free and Peaceful Electoral Process.<sup>3</sup> The Ombudsman's Office, in partnership with the Electoral Observation Mission and other organizations, monitored key points of the Commitment, such as refraining from using hate speech or discriminatory language or encouraging political harassment in the digital sphere. The Office of the Attorney General of the Nation developed the "Electoral Peace" strategy.

<sup>1</sup> Strategies of intimidation, harassment, pressure and extortion and other actions used by non-State armed groups and criminal organizations to exert control over populations and territories.

<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.defensoria.gov.co/-/defensoria-del-pueblo-presenta-alerta-temprana-electoral-2025-2026-para-fortalecer-garantias-democraticas>.

<sup>3</sup> See <https://www.defensoria.gov.co/-/compromiso-con-un-proceso-electoral-libre-y-en-paz-en-colombia>.

8. The Government should adopt effective measures to prevent human rights violations and ensure political participation and the exercise of political rights. The protection of these rights is essential for holding peaceful elections and preserving the conditions necessary to consolidate the implementation of the Peace Agreement.

9. The Government maintained its openness and cooperation with Human Rights Council mechanisms and the human rights treaty bodies. Their recommendations constitute a clear road map for the promotion and protection of rights.

10. The Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants,<sup>4</sup> the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity<sup>5</sup> and the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities<sup>6</sup> all visited Colombia in 2025. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted its concluding observations<sup>7</sup> on the seventh periodic report<sup>8</sup> of Colombia.

## II. Security and human rights situation

11. Armed violence between non-State armed groups and criminal organizations, and between these groups and the security forces, severely affected regions such as Catatumbo, Magdalena Medio and Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta and the Departments of Antioquia, Arauca, Caquetá, Cauca, Chocó, Guaviare, Huila, Meta, Nariño, Putumayo and Valle del Cauca. In this context, non-State armed groups and criminal organizations are responsible for forced displacement and confinement, targeted homicides, arbitrary deprivation of liberty, damage caused by explosive devices, sexual violence and the recruitment and use of children, particularly among the ethnic population.

12. In other areas, where a single non-State armed group exercises control, such as in Atrato Chocoano, Córdoba, Sucre and Urabá, there have been fewer reports of human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law. However, the civilian population is subjected to social control measures and the undue imposition of rules of conduct that restrict the rights of communities, generating fear and forcing them to engage in illicit economic activities.

13. In its most recent early warnings, the Ombudsman's Office described social control measures by non-State armed actors as "illegal armed governance schemes".

14. These situations reveal the persistence of major challenges for State authorities in preventing human rights violations and abuses by criminal organizations and non-State armed groups and protecting the civilian population. The security, defence and citizen coexistence policy has not been effectively implemented at the territorial level, nor have its prevention and community protection indicators been integrated as benchmarks for measuring the performance of the security forces.

<sup>4</sup> See [A/HRC/59/49/Add.1](#).

<sup>5</sup> See the Independent Expert's end-of-mission statement following his visit to Colombia (19–30 May 2025), available at <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/lgbt/20250530-ie-sogi-stm-colombia-en.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/07/despite-legal-progress-full-inclusion-persons-disabilities-colombia-remains>.

<sup>7</sup> [E/C.12/COL/CO/7](#).

<sup>8</sup> [E/C.12/COL/7](#).

15. OHCHR received 87 allegations of massacres.<sup>9</sup> Of these, 53 were verified, 16 are in the process of verification and 18 were deemed inconclusive. In the verified cases, there were 174 victims (147 men, 20 women, 4 boys and 3 girls). Five of the victims belonged to ethnic communities (two Indigenous persons and three persons of African descent). The worst affected departments were Antioquia, Atlántico, Norte de Santander and Valle del Cauca. Criminal organizations and non-State armed groups were presumed responsible for 95% of verified massacres. In 75% of cases, the motive was thought to be related to disputes over control of illicit economic activities.

16. OHCHR observed an increase in attacks on the security forces by non-State armed groups, with serious consequences for the civilian population. These attacks can be described as indiscriminate and disproportionate. In Cauca and Valle del Cauca, for example, 44 attacks were recorded in 16 municipalities, killing 21 civilians and 8 uniformed personnel and injuring at least 206 people. The city of Cali was particularly affected, as it was struck by four bomb attacks in which 12 civilians (including a minor) and 2 uniformed personnel were killed and approximately 150 people were injured. On 17 April 2025, in La Plata, Huila, a motorcycle laden with explosives was used to attack a police station, killing 2 civilians and wounding 31. OHCHR also recorded an increase in the use of drones to attack the security forces. The use of drones in populated areas, with the addition of homemade explosives to increase their impact, has sowed fear among the civilian population.

17. Criminal organizations and non-State armed groups continued to resort to the so-called “Pistol Plan”<sup>10</sup> in departments such as Antioquia and the Caribbean region. According to the Ministry of Defence, in 2025, 173 members of the security forces were killed and 765 more were wounded.<sup>11</sup> In August, a non-State armed group launched an attack on a helicopter that killed 13 police officers and wounded four other people as they carried out the forced eradication of coca crops in Amalfi, Antioquia.

18. In the Departments of Cauca, Guaviare, Huila, Putumayo and Valle del Cauca, OHCHR observed the practice by non-State armed groups of coercing the civilian population to detain, assault or demand the departure of members of the security forces.

19. In June 2025, OHCHR published the briefing note “Atrapados en las redes del conflicto: aumento del reclutamiento de niñas y niños en Colombia” (Caught in the web of conflict: increased recruitment of children in Colombia)<sup>12</sup> which highlighted the deteriorating situation of children in the armed conflict and the gradual increase in the number of victims between 2022 and 2024. In 2025, OHCHR verified 150 cases of recruitment of children (98 boys and 52 girls) by non-State armed groups. These figures reflect only a fraction of the total number of cases, for reasons that include the fear of reporting and the normalization of the practice. OHCHR also verified the deaths of 17 boys and 13 girls who had been recruited in Amazonas, Arauca, Caquetá, Guaviare, Huila and Norte de Santander, including those of 8 boys and 7 girls who were killed in at least four strikes during military operations.

20. OHCHR recognizes the work of Indigenous and Afrodescendent authorities in the search for and protection of recruited children and in the development of victim support strategies with a differentiated ethnic perspective.

<sup>9</sup> For the purposes of this report, “massacre” means the extrajudicial execution of three or more persons in a single incident or during incidents related by responsibility, place and time. See [E/CN.4/2000/11](#), para. 27.

<sup>10</sup> A campaign to systematically gun down members of the security forces, whether or not they are on duty, over a specific time period and in a specific area; a bounty is offered for each police officer or soldier killed, with the amount increasing according to the victim’s rank.

<sup>11</sup> See <https://www.mindefensa.gov.co/defensa-y-seguridad/datos-y-cifras/informacion-estadistica>.

<sup>12</sup> See <https://colombia.un.org/es/297053-atrapados-en-las-redes-del-conflicto-aumento-del-reclutamiento-de-niñas-y-niños-en-colombia>.

21. OHCHR is concerned about the regular use of social media by non-State armed actors to contact children and recruit them by exalting the economic and social power that they can gain through violence and illicit economic activities. OHCHR conveyed these concerns to Meta and TikTok and called for them to strengthen due diligence in line with the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights to prevent their services from facilitating the violation and abuse of children's rights.

22. In Arauca, Cauca, Caquetá, Nariño, Norte de Santander and the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, cases were reported of the use of schools by non-State armed groups and of clashes between such groups that disrupted classes and endangered the educational community. In Arauca, Guaviare, Huila, Magdalena, Meta and Valle del Cauca, teachers were threatened and displaced; in Cauca and Putumayo, non-State armed groups used schools to recruit students from the Nasa and Murui-Muina Indigenous Peoples, who are at risk of physical and cultural extinction.

23. OHCHR, together with the United Nations Children's Fund, the Office of the Vice-President, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law and the Colombian Family Welfare Institute is carrying out a project, in line with the national strategy to prevent the recruitment and use of children and adolescents and sexual violence against them, to strengthen local efforts to prevent recruitment and provide support for child victims.

24. Non-State armed groups continued to perpetrate gender-based violence, including rape, sexual exploitation and forced pregnancies. OHCHR learned that these groups have controlled access to testing for sexually transmitted infections, prohibited the use of contraceptives and restricted access to health services, resulting in unreported cases of maternal mortality. Indigenous, Afrodescendent and migrant women faced specific forms of violence, with physical, psychological and social impacts, exacerbated by the absence of the State, the closure of health services and gaps in epidemiological reporting.

25. OHCHR documented cases in which members of armed groups established contact and formed emotional bonds with girls in community spaces, in order to recruit them. The girls were manipulated with promises of protection, affection or financial gain, before being subjugated, isolated and forced to relocate to areas under the group's armed control. Once recruited, they faced sexual coercion and were forced to carry out caregiving or logistical tasks.

26. OHCHR is concerned about sexual exploitation and trafficking perpetrated by members of non-State armed groups in Arauca, Nariño, Norte de Santander and Valle del Cauca, and in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, including against Wiwa, Arhuaco, Jiw and Nukak girls and women. Another concern relates to arbitrary deprivation of liberty, femicide and violence committed by non-State armed groups against women accused of having romantic relationships with members of rival groups. In Norte de Santander, it was reported that girls had been forced perform nursing duties for these groups.

27. OHCHR acknowledges the adoption of institutional initiatives such as the National System for the Recording, Management, Follow-up and Monitoring of Gender-Based Violence, the Comprehensive Programme of Safeguards for Women Leaders and Human Rights Defenders and the national action plan under Security Council resolution 1325/2000 on women and peace and security. However, challenges remain in their coordination and implementation at the territorial level. Victims still face barriers in access to justice due to stigmatization and gender and ethnic stereotypes. OHCHR, together with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, provides the State with technical assistance to overcome these barriers and eliminate these forms of violence.

28. OHCHR also identified cases of disappearance and arbitrary deprivation of liberty of civilians by non-State armed groups as a form of social control. In Buenaventura and the Bajo Calima rural area, there were 32 reported cases of enforced disappearance in 2024 and 21 cases in 2025. While an inter-agency committee to combat enforced disappearances has made efforts to improve access to justice, strengthen the search for victims and prevent new cases in this region, distrust of institutions persists owing to the lack of successful prosecutions.

29. OHCHR observed the persistence of cases in which citizens were deprived of liberty by non-State armed groups. In Arauca, the number of such cases rose from 163 in 2024 to 277 in 2025 (245 men and 32 women). Although sometimes extortion is the goal, in most cases the groups claim to be “investigating” the victims, who are deprived of liberty in the name of “revolutionary justice”. Persons deprived of their liberty often suffer cruel and inhuman treatment and in some cases have been murdered. Family members are generally threatened to deter them from reporting the deprivation of liberty, resulting in a high level of underreporting.

30. The civilian population is also subjected to extortion by non-State armed groups and criminal organizations. Extortion is so widespread and pervasive that in some regions it stifles local economies, impacting the economic and social rights of communities that already live in poverty and marginalization.

31. These situations have resulted in the displacement and confinement of the population. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, mass forced displacement increased by 85% in comparison with 2024, driven in particular by the crisis in Catatumbo since January 2025, following an offensive by a non-State armed group and its subsequent dispute with another group over territorial and social control and illicit economic activities. According to figures from the Unified Command Post, in 2025 a total of 89,013 people were displaced in the area, and there were 166 targeted homicides, including at least eight massacres, accompanied by an increase in reported cases of deprivation of liberty, sexual abuse, trafficking in persons and recruitment of children.

32. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported a 12% increase in confinement, with most cases recorded in the Departments of Chocó, Cauca and Bolívar and in Indigenous and Afrodescendent communities. In 2025, four armed strikes were declared in the Department of Chocó, while in Guaviare an armed strike confined 12,601 people and restricted the movement of another 32,000. By restricting the basic economic activities of communities, confinements result in violations of their economic, social and cultural rights.

33. The United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia confirmed the killing in 2025 of 45 former combatants of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (including one woman, five Indigenous persons and one person of African descent), compared with 33 killings in 2024 – an increase of 36%. Since the signing of the Peace Agreement in 2016, 486 former members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo have been killed.

### **III. Civic space**

#### **A. Situation of human rights defenders**

34. Despite the political will and efforts of the Government and other institutions, there has been no change in the high levels and patterns of violence against human rights defenders that OHCHR has observed since 2018.

35. OHCHR received 207 allegations of killings of human rights defenders. In 99 cases, it verified that the person killed was a human rights defender and that the motive for the murder was related to his or her work, while in 39 cases, the victim was a defender but no causal link could be established between the murder and the victim’s work. Sixty-nine cases were deemed inconclusive. The verified cases involved 81 men, 16 women, 1 transsexual woman and 1 gay man. Twenty of the victims were Indigenous defenders, 6 were persons of African descent and 36 were campesinos, which highlights the disproportionate impact on defenders of the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Afrodescendent and campesino communities. Non-State armed groups continued to be the presumed perpetrators of most verified killings (70% of cases).

## **B. Right of peaceful assembly**

36. OHCHR continued to observe greater restraint by the security forces in the use of force when dealing with social protests. The vast majority of protests were peaceful, with isolated incidents of violence. The security forces generally responded with respect for the principles of necessity and proportionality in the use of force. However, it is necessary to adopt a statutory law that fully guarantees the right of peaceful protest.

37. OHCHR recognizes that the adoption by the Ministry of Defence of a new manual on the use of less-lethal weapons<sup>13</sup> helps to establish a regulatory framework for the use of force during protests in accordance with international standards. It is essential for the manual to be properly implemented to prevent human rights violations in the context of protests. The drafting of the new manual included a dialogue process between the Ministry of Defence, the National Police and civil society organizations, facilitated by OHCHR.

38. The Attorney General's Office continued to enhance its working methodology and to strengthen the group of prosecutors responsible for investigating human rights violations committed during protests. It has brought criminal proceedings against the commanders of the Cali Metropolitan Police and the Special Operations Group in connection with 14 cases of arbitrary deprivation of life committed by members of the security forces in 2021 in Cali. With support from OHCHR and civil society organizations, the Attorney General's Office identified 113 cases of eye injuries sustained during protests between 2018 and 2022 and conducted investigations to demonstrate patterns of conduct and the responsibility of the security forces in cases of unnecessary, disproportionate and improper use of less-lethal weapons.

39. The Ministry of the Interior set up an ad hoc committee of experts to uncover the truth about the protests that took place between 2019 and 2021.

40. OHCHR highlights the efforts that have been undertaken to foster dialogue for the resolution of social conflicts. The Northern Cauca Discussion Forum, promoted by the Government to prevent violence and settle disputes over land access, successfully defused tense situations in the municipalities of Caloto and Guachené. The Forum helped to implement an agreement between the public and private sectors and Indigenous, Afrodescendent and campesino organizations that contributes to the effective advancement of communities' economic, social and cultural rights. This process should be adopted as a long-term State policy and used as a model in other regions.

41. OHCHR notes limited progress in the implementation of agreements resulting from the 2017 Buenaventura civil strike. Only 16.5% of the more than 130 commitments that were due to be fulfilled in 2019 were actually implemented, owing to factors such as insufficient and delayed resource allocation and high staff turnover.

## **IV. Human rights and policies on total peace, security, dismantling of criminal organizations and drugs**

### **A. Total peace policy**

42. The total peace policy has taken the form of negotiation processes with non-State armed groups and criminal organizations in specific regions and cities. During the period covered by this report, these processes mostly failed to prevent violations and abuses, such as the killing of human rights defenders and the recruitment of children, to generate dialogue with the free and safe participation of the communities involved, or to place the rights of victims at the centre of negotiations.

<sup>13</sup> See <https://www.studocu.com/co/document/universidad-pedagogica-nacional-colombia/derecho-administrativo/resolucion-n0-01840-del-20-jun-2025-manual-de-empleo-de-armas-menos-letales/134650107>.

43. In the processes that are under way in Nariño and Putumayo, OHCHR observes a decrease in cases of displacement and confinement committed by non-State armed groups. The destruction of weapons and humanitarian demining commenced, and mechanisms to search for disappeared persons were established. However, OHCHR has observed a reconfiguration of the violence that includes the emergence of new armed groups, new dynamics of community control that weaken the autonomy of ethnic authorities, the increased recruitment of children, restrictions on freedom of movement, the instrumentalization of the special Indigenous jurisdiction and threats against and pressure on local leaders in an attempt to impose a “law of silence” to prevent reporting.

44. Regarding the possible establishment of mining districts in Nariño, dialogue processes revealed concerns about limitations on community participation and the full exercise of the right to free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples and communities of African descent. There is a need for measures to forestall the risk of an increase in illegal mining, the forced sale of land and pressure on ethnic authorities, leading to forced displacement and the dispossession and forced abandonment of land.

45. Regarding the dialogue with the Estado Mayor de los Bloques y Frentes, OHCHR received allegations of threats against and pressure on social leaders who disagree with the social control strategies used by the group against community action committees and campesino organizations. The complaints also call attention to the lack of pluralistic and safe spaces for participation in the decision-making of the discussion forum on territorial development and environmental protection and for presenting cases of violations of international humanitarian law and human rights. Communities continue to face heightened uncertainty over the implications of the creation of “temporary assembly zones” in Catatumbo, Nariño and Putumayo and the State’s ability to guarantee protection.

46. OHCHR regards dialogue as the essential path to a lasting peace, beginning at the territorial level. One of the major challenges in achieving this goal is to create the conditions for development through social investment and the transition from illicit to formal, equitable and environmentally sustainable economic activities in line with the country’s territorial development plans. However, such processes must be developed and implemented specifically with local communities, authorities and other social actors that historically have defended territories, and not directly with armed actors as the main local interlocutors.

## **B. Security policy**

47. The security, defence and citizen coexistence policy and the policy on human rights and international humanitarian law of the Ministry of Defence, and the review of the operational doctrine of the National Police, which drew on technical assistance from OHCHR, contributed to positive changes in the conduct of the security forces.

48. In 2025, the number of allegations of arbitrary deprivation of life committed by members of the security forces fell for the third year in a row. In 2025, OHCHR received 20 such allegations, 6 of which were verified (concerning three men, two women and one girl), 8 are in the process of verification and 6 were deemed inconclusive. This means that the number of allegations fell by 41 per cent compared with 2024. The allegations were transmitted to the Ministry of Defence so that it could identify preventive actions and to the Attorney General’s Office for it to initiate the appropriate criminal investigations.

49. Nevertheless, growing violence perpetrated by criminal organizations and non-State armed groups against the civilian population continues to pose a challenge for the security forces in their duty to prevent violence and protect the population in line with the goals outlined in the policy. OHCHR informed the Ministry of Defence of 15 situations of concern related to activities of non-State armed groups and criminal organizations that involved human rights violations in the Departments of Antioquia, Arauca, Bolívar, Caquetá, Cauca, Chocó, Guaviare, Huila, La Guajira, Nariño and Sucre. In its response, the Ministry described the actions taken to protect the population; however, it was noted that, in most cases, the measures adopted were too little or too late to protect the communities concerned.

50. OHCHR highlights the measures taken by the security forces to strengthen command and control mechanisms and to prevent gender-based violence, including sexual violence, committed by members of the security forces against girls in Bolívar. OHCHR notes that these preventive measures have had positive results in terms of ending these human rights violations. It is important for these measures to be replicated at the national level to prevent the occurrence of such conduct in other areas.

51. OHCHR welcomes the publication and calls for the implementation of the institutional human rights policy of the National Intelligence Directorate,<sup>14</sup> drafted with technical assistance from OHCHR, which incorporates the international human rights norms and standards applicable at each stage of the intelligence cycle.

### **C. Policy on dismantling criminal organizations**

52. OHCHR acknowledges the measures taken by various State entities to advance the implementation of the public policy on dismantling criminal organizations in the three pilot areas of northern Cauca, Catatumbo and Magdalena Medio. However, the persistence of significant limitations in inter-institutional and territorial coordination has resulted in fragmented responses with limited impact in terms of improving communities' enjoyment of their rights, and situations of risk remain.

53. An implementation strategy that is more closely aligned with the goals of the public policy, and with the Peace Agreement, is necessary to achieve sustainable improvements in the security conditions in prioritized territories. The main focus should be on the principle of simultaneous action to effectively safeguard the rights foreseen in international best practices.

54. The public policy on dismantling criminal organizations is necessary not only for neutralizing armed actors, but for transforming conditions that are conducive to violence. Civil society participation in the implementation of the policy is fundamental. The National Commission on Security Guarantees and its technical subcommittee should perform their coordinating role to strengthen State action.

### **D. Drug policy**

55. Within the framework of the national drug policy for the period 2023–2033,<sup>15</sup> the authorities announced the development of a comprehensive intervention model for the transition of campesino coca-leaf growers to legal economic activities. However, insufficient funding for the policy and its projects and weak coordination with local governments has resulted in low implementation. Communities involved in the National Comprehensive Programme for the Substitution of Illicit Crops informed OHCHR of a lack of funding for productive projects in the south-east of the country.

56. In 2024, the area under coca leaf cultivation increased by 3% to 262,000 ha.<sup>16</sup> Slower growth of the area under coca leaf cultivation was reported for a third consecutive year.

## **V. Implementation of the Peace Agreement**

### **A. Comprehensive rural reform**

57. The Constitutional Court declared the draft statutory law establishing the agrarian and rural jurisdiction<sup>17</sup> to be constitutional and recognized that those who aspire to work in the

<sup>14</sup> See <https://dni.gov.co/2025/09/09/politica-derechos-humanos-2025>.

<sup>15</sup> See <https://www.minjusticia.gov.co/programas-co/ODC/Paginas/Politica-Nacional-Drogas-2023-2033.aspx>.

<sup>16</sup> See [https://x.com/petrogustavo/status/1970878767741423680?s=48&t=kcIqgv5RMIq-LH01b\\_0BqQ](https://x.com/petrogustavo/status/1970878767741423680?s=48&t=kcIqgv5RMIq-LH01b_0BqQ).

<sup>17</sup> See <https://www.presidencia.gov.co/prensa/Paginas/Corte-Constitucional-avala-creacion-de-la-Jurisdiccion-Agraria-y-Rural-250904.aspx>.

agrarian jurisdiction must be familiar with the fundamental rights of campesino and ethnic communities.

58. In 2025, 712,205 ha were added to the Land Fund, increasing the stock of land available to be handed over to campesinos and ethnic groups to 2,540,888 ha, or 84% of the amount promised in the Peace Agreement. In 2025, 17 campesino reserve zones and three campesino agrifood territories were established as mechanisms to ensure environmental sustainability and strengthen the campesino economy.<sup>18</sup>

59. OHCHR appreciates the State's effort in purchasing 445,470 ha to be allocated to ethnic and campesino communities, of which 286,645 ha were allocated in 2025, benefiting 72,786 families.<sup>19</sup> For this purpose, the Government adopted Decree No. 33 of 2025,<sup>20</sup> which streamlines the acquisition of rural land by facilitating direct negotiations between the National Land Agency and landowners.

60. OHCHR notes with concern that titles have been issued provisionally in Antioquia, Cauca, Córdoba, Guaviare, Meta and Nariño. The issuance of land titles is an essential prerequisite for access to rural development programmes and projects that will strengthen the rural economy.

61. There is concern about the case of the Nukak reservation, addressed in the ethnic chapter of the Peace Agreement through a commitment to return and regularize the lands of the Nukak Indigenous People, a nomadic community, in the light of the territorial conflict between them and campesinos. OHCHR is aware that there are more than 15 settlements in Nukak territory and that their growth is uncontained. It is concerned about the deterioration in the living conditions of the Nukak community due to violence perpetrated by non-State armed groups and criminal organizations, which hinders their enjoyment of human rights and threatens their physical and cultural survival.

62. The Comptroller General's Office stated that comprehensive rural reform is the area of the Peace Agreement in which implementation is lagging furthest behind. It reported that 8 of the 16 national sectoral plans showed insufficient progress and called for the engagement of the various actors responsible for their implementation. It also called for proper fiscal management, having found signs of inefficiency in the management of public resources.<sup>21</sup>

## B. Transitional justice

63. Persistent violence limits the participation of victims and other parties to the proceedings of the Comprehensive System for Peace. OHCHR highlights the first judgments in which restorative sentences were handed down by the Special Jurisdiction for Peace in proceedings for the acknowledgement the truth and responsibility in kidnapping cases (case No. 1) and cases of extrajudicial execution (case No. 3). These judgments, which are the result of judicial work and restorative justice forums with victims and persons subject to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, constitute unprecedented progress in the clarification and punishment of serious crimes committed during the armed conflict.

64. OHCHR reiterates the importance of having verification mechanisms and other necessary conditions in place for the fulfilment of restorative sentences. It highlights the progress made in cases of recruitment of children (case No. 7) and gender-based violence (case No. 11) with a view to strengthening victim participation and countering denialism.

65. OHCHR monitored the exchange of information between the Attorney General's Office and the Special Jurisdiction for Peace regarding challenges to the judicial closure of cases that occurred during the conflict. It recognizes the commitment of both entities to work in a coordinated manner and the progress achieved through technical meetings and the

<sup>18</sup> See <https://www.minagricultura.gov.co/Paginas/2023/ContadorReformaAgraria.aspx>.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> See <https://www.funcionpublica.gov.co/eva/gestornormativo/norma.php?i=259621>.

<sup>21</sup> See <https://www.procuraduria.gov.co/procuraduria/procuraduria-delegada-seguimiento-acuerdo-paz/procuraduria-delegada-seguimiento-acuerdo-paz/Pages/default.aspx>.

development of a methodology for filtering, identifying, providing access to and transferring investigations. This collaborative work should be prioritized.

66. OHCHR is concerned about the handling of cases of serious violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law in the context of the conflict that remain under the jurisdiction of the Attorney General's Office and are not prioritized under the Special Jurisdiction for Peace. It is also concerned that there are other cases in which persons subject to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace are being prosecuted by the Attorney General's Office for different acts or crimes that were not prioritized.

67. These cases require an effective response by the judicial authorities – both transitional and ordinary – in accordance with their powers and in line with international standards for the investigation of serious human rights violations. OHCHR emphasizes the importance of a consolidated institutional response that guarantees the rights of victims and legal certainty for persons subject to the Special Jurisdiction for Peace as a fundamental pillar of justice, guarantees of non-repetition and peacebuilding.

68. OHCHR appreciates the State's efforts in formulating a comprehensive public policy on enforced disappearance and other forms of disappearance in the context of the armed conflict. However, at the same time, immediate and differentiated measures should be taken to prevent disappearances due to the persistence of armed conflict and violence in several territories. OHCHR points out that the register of disappeared persons has been updated and that the Unit for the Search for Persons Deemed Disappeared has made progress in implementing territorial strategies to strengthen searches and the participation of victims.

69. The Follow-up and Monitoring Committee tasked with following up on the recommendations of the Commission for the Clarification of Truth, Coexistence and Non-Repetition (the Truth Commission) expressed concern about the persistence of violence in the country and reiterated the need for decisive progress in implementing the Truth Commission's recommendations on peacebuilding and the enhanced presence of the State at the territorial level.

### C. Victims and Land Restitution Act

70. OHCHR welcomes the decision by the Land Restitution Unit to issue 35 collective land restitution claims for campesino communities in 2025 with a view to improving the efficiency of the administrative and judicial restitution process and increasing the number of beneficiary families.

71. OHCHR received information on cases involving the revictimization of families whose returned land had again been seized by non-State armed actors. The presence of armed actors undermines the work of the Land Restitution Unit, which reported several attacks on its officials in 2025. There is also concern about the difficulty, due to the presence and activities of armed actors, of physically handing over returned land so that community members can rebuild their lives.

72. In 2025, the Comprehensive Victim Support and Reparation Unit<sup>22</sup> made progress on collective reparation plans, of which 42 were approved, 8 continued to be implemented and 3 were closed.<sup>23</sup> However, in several cases, such as those of the Hitnū people in the Department of Arauca and the community of Charras in the Department of Guaviare, implementation processes remain slow and subject to the availability of funds. Institutional coordination continues to be a decisive factor in determining the scope of collective redress.

<sup>22</sup> See [www.unidadvictimas.gov.co/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/InformeRendicionCuentasSectorial-2025\\_V1.pdf](http://www.unidadvictimas.gov.co/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/InformeRendicionCuentasSectorial-2025_V1.pdf).

<sup>23</sup> See <https://www.procuraduria.gov.co/Documents/2025/Septiembre/Se%CC%81ptimo%20Informe%20al%20Congreso%20de%20Seguimiento%20AFP%202025%20Versio%CC%81n%20Final%202.09.2025%20DIAGRAMADO%20PDF.pdf>.

## D. Ethnicity-related aspects of the Peace Agreement

73. Delays persist in the implementation of the ethnic chapter of the Peace Agreement. However, OHCHR considers that the State's acquisition of more than 93,536 ha of land for ethnic groups, the establishment of 123 Indigenous reservations, the expansion of 94 reservations and issuance of land titles for 65 territories to black communities are positive steps. These measures have benefited almost 271,000 people from ethnic groups in 136 municipalities.<sup>24</sup>

74. Violence and conflict disproportionately affect Indigenous Peoples and people of African descent. There is concern about allegations of human rights violations in the context of the carbon credit market, particularly affecting the Nukak people, which include a lack of transparency in reporting and potentially misleading practices during prior consultation to obtain the consent of Indigenous authorities. The absence of the State's institutional presence and the lack of regulation to protect the right to a healthy environment and the land rights of ethnic communities are also cause for concern.

75. OHCHR is concerned about the lack of security guarantees in the territories of Indigenous Peoples and people of African descent, particularly for the four Indigenous Peoples of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. A dispute between non-State armed groups for control of territory and illicit economic activities is leading to serious violations and abuses, such as displacement, confinement, threats against Indigenous leaders and authorities, recruitment of children and adolescents, sexual violence and targeted homicides in the Sierra and neighbouring areas. The Ombudsman's Office issued an early warning<sup>25</sup> in which the authorities were urged to take coordinated prevention and protection measures.

76. Also of concern is the situation of community councils and indigenous reservations in Chocó, owing to the presence of non-State armed groups and the social control they exercise. These groups seek to undermine organizational structures and become part of communities and their forms of self-government through intimidation, infiltration and violence. Added to this is the ongoing impact of illicit activities such as deforestation, illegal mining and coca cultivation on the environment, territories and natural resources that sustain the physical and cultural existence of Indigenous Peoples and communities of African descent in Chocó.

## VI. Conclusion

77. The persistence of violence and armed conflict in several territories, together with the consolidation of non-State armed groups and criminal organizations, continues to seriously affect the civilian population and to weaken the organizational processes and social fabric of Indigenous Peoples and Afrodescendent and campesino communities. The social and territorial control strategies employed by these actors, coupled with an increase in pre-election violence, polarization, disinformation and hate speech, endangers the civic space and the exercise of civil and political rights.

78. In this context, it is crucial to strengthen the State's response to prevent violence, protect the civilian population and ensure the autonomy and security of ethnic and territorial communities, as well as political leaders, candidates and human rights defenders. Significant challenges persist in improving coordination between national and regional institutions, which will be essential for effectively implementing the policies on peace, security, drugs and the dismantling of criminal organizations.

79. The election period and a new government offer a decisive opportunity to strengthen guarantees of political participation, protect candidates and voters and consolidate the conditions necessary for the comprehensive implementation of the Peace Agreement.

<sup>24</sup> See <https://www.minagricultura.gov.co/Paginas/2023/ContadorReformaAgraria.aspx>.

<sup>25</sup> See <https://alertasstg.blob.core.windows.net/alertas/010-25.pdf>.

## VII. Recommendations

80. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights recalls the recommendations made in previous annual reports and recommends that the competent authorities:

### Peace Agreement

- (a) Fully implement the Peace Agreement as a central policy of the State and ensure the functioning of its institutional structure;
- (b) Consider the public policy on dismantling criminal organizations as State policy, ensuring its long-term implementation in compliance with the Peace Agreement and the recommendations of the Truth Commission;
- (c) Strengthen the functioning of the National Commission on Security Guarantees and its technical subcommittee, directing their efforts towards dismantling criminal activity and ensuring their territorial and inter-institutional coordination;
- (d) Advance the discussion in Congress of the draft ordinary law on the agrarian jurisdiction, which will regulate its structure, functioning and powers.

### Civic space

- (a) Take timely and effective measures to prevent the deterioration of human rights, overseeing a peaceful and inclusive electoral process that contributes to building a sustainable peace;
- (b) Adopt the national policy on safeguards for human rights defenders and the national action plan on human rights and ensure their implementation and integration with the action plan of the Comprehensive Programme of Safeguards for Women Leaders and Human Rights Defenders;
- (c) Strengthen the functioning of the Northern Cauca Discussion Forum as a State policy for overcoming obstacles in the purchase, transfer and formalization of land, while continuing to implement the agreement between the public and private sectors and communities;
- (d) Implement the recommendations of the special electoral early warning issued by the Ombudsman's Office for 2025/26, taking specific measures to guarantee rights in the electoral process.

### Human rights and security and peace policies

- (a) Consolidate progress in the security, defence and citizen coexistence policy, including the adoption and application by the security forces of clear guidelines to strengthen protection of the population in accordance with international human rights standards;
- (b) Ensure that, in the design and conduct of operations, military forces take all precautionary measures to protect and ensure the safety of children who have been recruited by armed groups;
- (c) Place the obligation to cease the recruitment of and to release persons under the age of 18 years at the forefront of dialogue and negotiations with non-State armed actors;
- (d) Ensure that communities, ethnic authorities and human rights defenders participate in and can influence agreements reached in discussion forums, giving due consideration to proposals from communities and civil society.

### **Children's rights**

(a) Strengthen recovery and investigation strategies related to the recruitment and use of children, in cooperation with ethnic and community authorities, ensuring the application of protocols for the safe and differentiated participation of affected communities;

(b) Coordinate, under the leadership of the Intersectoral Commission for the Prevention of Forced Recruitment of Children, the development of the national action plan on youth, peace and security under Security Council resolution 2250, ensuring support and protective measures for authorities and families involved in tracing, recovery, prevention and reporting processes;

(c) Take human rights due diligence measures, with direct and sustained community participation, aimed at identifying risks and mitigating impacts associated with the use of digital platforms to recruit and use children;

(d) The High Commissioner recommends that non-State armed groups cease the recruitment and use in hostilities of persons under the age of 18 years, immediately release children in their power or under their influence, and refrain from using children as human shields.

### **Gender-based violence**

(a) Ensure the effective implementation at the territorial level of the National System for the Recording, Management, Follow-up and Monitoring of Gender-Based Violence and the national action plan under Security Council resolution 1325/2000 on women and peace and security;

(b) Ensure the conduct of prompt, impartial and thorough investigations in cases of sexual and reproductive violence and the adoption of a differentiated and victim-centred approach, with comprehensive support and adequate reparation measures.

### **Environment**

(a) Promote the regulation of the carbon credit market and compliance with the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, incorporating prior consultation processes and refraining from actions with a negative impact on Indigenous Peoples and Afrodescendent and campesino communities, and ensure effective reparation measures;

(b) Ensure that companies linked to social and environmental conflicts respect human rights and refrain from engaging in or encouraging activities, such as stigmatization and social protest, that could place environmental defenders at risk.

### **Transitional justice**

(a) Ensure the administrative, budgetary, legal and security conditions necessary to implement and sustain restorative justice projects and conditions for the restriction of liberty under the Special Jurisdiction for Peace, including with regard to the rights of victims, legal certainty for persons subject to the Special Jurisdiction and their reintegration into society;

(b) Complete the formulation of the comprehensive public policy on enforced disappearance, laying the foundations for its implementation with a human rights-based approach and mechanisms for the participation of victims and searchers.

### **Indigenous Peoples**

(a) Ensure the protection of Indigenous Peoples, in particular the Awá, Barí, Hitnü, Jiw, Nasa and Nukak peoples and the four peoples of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, and others who are at risk of physical and cultural extinction, their territories, and the Indigenous jurisdiction from the risks arising from conflict and violence;

(b) **Guarantee the right to free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples and black communities in relation to the establishment of mining districts and other projects that may affect their territories.**

81. **The High Commissioner also recommends that the international community:**

(a) **Maintain political, technical and financial support for the comprehensive implementation of the Peace Agreement, and retain such implementation as a priority on the international public agenda;**

(b) **Provide adequate support for human rights organizations and OHCHR, through sufficient financial contributions, so that they can continue to perform their unique and essential monitoring and technical advisory role in Colombia.**

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