

Opinion

What Awaits Colombia, a Firm and Lasting Peace?

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As a Guatemalan who experienced the signing of the Firm and Lasting Peace in my country, and have seen for the past 19 years the decline of the Peace Accords, I wonder: Will it be different in Colombia? Will those responsible be genuinely committed to the peace process?

Because in any socio-political and socio-cultural context peace is an integral part: What those involved in this new process of reconciliation are offering? Who are those who are really committed to this new dawn? What role do the media play in all this? After the signing of the Peace Accords, will the media cease to misinform, manipulate and to favor impunity?

How far will go the responsibility and professionalism of journalism that has to be independent and dignified and, what's more, committed to democracy of a country in chaos? In all this, the hardest hit are the marginalized and convalescing people from decades of internal war. They are the victim of a broken system that forces them to live in misery, to die from starvation and to suffer the ravages of neoliberalism. How the government will use the funds employed to fight against the FARC, will those funds be invested in social assistance? Politically and culturally, what is the FARC offering in this new process?

Will the international media stop meddling? What is the role of Uribism in all this? And what about the United States (and its embassy) that has dotted Colombia with military bases, and has financed the Colombian government to combat the FARC on the pretext of the war against drugs? Will they accept the FARC as a political party in the future? Does the signing of the Peace Accords means that Colombia will seek democratic winds or it will continue on the path of neoliberalism? There are many questions from the skeptics and above all from those of us who have already experienced the mockery of a peace process that was only on paper.

Will a patriarchal, misogynist, racist and classist system be prepared to talk about integration and unity? Who and how the signing of peace will bring benefits? We all know that a signature, a stamp, a bunch of documents and a handshake for the iconic photograph do not make peace. Peace is the effort of the people who are committed to democratic processes at all levels of society.

Who, henceforth, will stop being the enemy to seek the progress of a country with multiple wounds that will still need many decades to heal? ¿Will paramilitarism disappear in a country like Colombia hit by enforced disappearances, hunger, misery and exclusion? This is Colombia, a country forcing entire peoples to internal displacement to save their lives from the war's violence.

What awaits Colombia? Will it all be only on paper and then shelved or, the government, the FARC, the media and society will engage in the reconstruction of a social fabric destroyed by the Internal Armed Conflict?

We'll discuss this in 20 years' time, and hopefully this will not be an aspiration stated only on paper. Colombia deserves to live in peace and heal their wounds, walk out of the darkness of impunity in order to see the light of justice and progress.

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