



“No-one feels safe”

With a rising death toll, violence on the streets threatens to undermine Guinea's election

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INSIDE STORY AMERICAS

Is the war in Colombia coming to an end?

We discuss the key issue of land reform, as government negotiators and FARC rebels strike a deal.

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Land distribution - and crucially, land redistribution - was a key factor in the decision by Colombia's FARC rebels to take up arms in the mid-1960s.

The ensuing conflict between leftist guerrillas, government forces, and right wing paramilitaries is thought to have claimed the lives of more than 100,000 people.

So the issuing of a joint communique by FARC and the government on a way forward in agrarian reform is a key moment in the peace process which began six months ago.

The FARC has been fighting in the mountains of Colombia since 1964, so for half a century now. And when they were established, their point was really land

"We have agreed on the first point of the agenda contained in the 'General Accord for the End of the Conflict and the Construction of a Stable and Lasting Peace'," said Carlos Fernandez, The Cuban guarantor of peace talks.

According to the statement issued from Havana, where the peace talks are taking place, the agreement "seeks to reverse the causes of the conflict" and would be the "start of radical transformations in Colombia's rural and agrarian reality".

"We have advanced in constructing a deal that will be checked over before the completion of the final agreement," Ivan Marquez, FARC

reform. The first founding document of July 20, 1964, was called Revolutionary Land Reform That's why land reform is the first point in the agenda ... and this is why the announcement where the agreement was found and signed between the two parties is extremely important, and extremely positive.

Aldo Civico, an anthropologist and director of the International Institute for Peace at Rutgers University

negotiator declared.

Specific details as to what this means in practice are still scarce. But the government is to create a land bank - into which illegally held or underused land would be placed and eventually redistributed to the landless and displaced.

Farmers are to receive loans, technical and marketing assistance as well as legal and political protection, but precisely which land will be made available for redistribution has not been made public.

Colombia has one of the most unequal land distributions in the world - with 52 percent of farms in the hands of just over one percent of landowners, according to the UN Development Programme

The framework released last year for the talks goes into more detail about the issues that were to be discussed as part of agricultural development policy. It includes: access and the use of land, wastelands, formalisation of property, agricultural border and protection of reserve zones, programmes of development with a territorial focus, infrastructure and land improvement, social development, health, education, housing and the eradication of poverty, stimulus to agricultural production, technical assistance, subsidies, credit, generation of income, marketing, labour formalisation, and food security.

So, will these new plans bring a new solution? And what does the

future hold for FARC?

To discuss this, *Inside Story Americas*, with presenter Shihab Rattansi, is joined by guests: Aldo Civico, an anthropologist and director of the International Institute for Peace at Rutgers University; Jorge Restrepo, a political analyst and head of CERAC, the Conflict Analysis Research Center - a think tank that documents the violence of the Colombian civil conflict; and Virginia Bouvier, a senior programme officer for Latin America at the US Institute of Peace.

"The agreement has not been released in full. There is a joint statement that provides very hazy details but, nevertheless, those details you can separate in two. One is the substantial one that includes closing the agricultural frontier which by the way is significantly important in terms of protecting the environmental wealth, in particular the Amazonian and the High Andes. And it also established several mechanisms, one is to provide access to land to those peasants which do not have land ... Second, a new cadastral regime to establish who is owning the land, third, a set of mechanism for the judicial resolution of potential conflicts of land, and for the protection of property rights ... And finally a continuation mechanism for the restitution of land and land rights, to those that have lost their land ... due to the conflict itself."

-Jorge Restrepo, political analyst.

Source: Al Jazeera



TOPICS IN THIS ARTICLE

People	Country	City	Organisation
Aldo Civico Jorge Restrepo Ivan Marquez Virginia Bouvier Carlos Fernandez Shihab Rattansi	Colombia	Havana	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia International Institute for Peace Rutgers University International Institute for Peace at Rutgers University Conflict Analysis Research Center

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Alois Saint-Martin • 3 days ago

FARC would be better off joining the SAG ! Between the Middle Class and the Right Wing Death Squads; Doe wee really believe the Pentagon will allow Latin America another viable Socialist Suffrage ?

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MrAlGebra — This is one "stupid prejudice" that I will be keeping. Sorry.