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LONDON | MAY 2, 2019

Between 23 and 25 April 2019, academics from German, British, Swiss, Spanish and Colombian universities met in the Willy Brandt School of Public Policy at the University of Erfurt, to discuss the peace process in Colombia. There, the second meeting of Embrace Dialogue Academia (EDA) was held, centred on the reincorporation of members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP).

This is a decisive time for the sustainability of reincorporation, which benefits all of society. We recognise many strengths in the reincorporation process. In several of the Local Training and Reincorporation Spaces (ETCR) and New Resettlement Points (NPR), there are inspirational local processes of coexistence and cooperation between ex-combatants and communities. Today, they share projects and knowledge, and some have developed processes of forgiveness and reconciliation. We recommend that the media, universities and institutions make visible these local examples of peacebuilding.

We note with hope the commitment of most ex-combatants to honour their decision to reincorporate into civilian life despite many difficulties; as well as the work of the National Reincorporation Council and the Commission for Monitoring, Promoting and Verifying the Implementation of the Agreement, innovative spaces of dialogue between the government and FARC. However, we propose that the outcomes of their work be widely disseminated.

We also note that many students, businesses, academics, journalists, organisations and citizens are visiting and supporting ex-combatants. This process has allowed a broad spectrum of Colombian society to rethink the country, thanks also to the opening of previously inaccessible areas, the discovery of new species of flora and fauna, and the acknowledgement of the skills of other human beings. Like the majority of Colombians and the international community, they defend reincorporation.



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We do however have serious concerns about the future of reincorporation. Firstly, the insecurity of ex-combatants and their families. Secondly, the uncertainty over the end of the ETCRs in August. Both of these have impacts also on surrounding communities. We call on the government to invigorate the National Commission of Security Guarantees and the Comprehensive Security System for the Exercise of Politics, prioritise the solving of the future of the ETCRs, and to accelerate the approval of productive projects, to achieve a sustainable economy for reincorporation.

We consider unacceptable the stigmatisation of people undergoing the reincorporation process from the Congress of the Republic and other places. We call for self-criticism and co-responsibility. It is time to recognise that reincorporation does not depend solely on ex-combatants, nor the government: it involves all of society.

The success of reincorporation depends on the implementation of the comprehensive rural reform and the Comprehensive National Plan for Crop Substitution, on the political party the Common Alternative Revolutionary Force being able to exercise their right to political participation, and on the Special Jurisdiction for Peace being able to ensure legal security. We underline the responsibility of the Senate to advance these legislative processes without further delay.

We offer our support to the reincorporation process. We will continue to ask critical questions about peacebuilding, and offer ideas on how to overcome the challenges that arise.

Embrace Dialogue Academia (EDA) brings together academics working on different aspects of the peace process in Colombia, via itinerant dialogues to share knowledge and analysis, and working together to enable practical impact. Academics from the Universities of Bristol, Erfurt, Friedrich Alexander Erlangen-Nürnberg, Javeriana, London (UCL and the School of Advanced Studies), Salamanca, St. Gallen and the German Institute of Global Studies participated in the second seminar.

Disclaimer: The views expressed in this statement are product of a closed-door dialogue, and do not reflect the views of the institutions named.