

UK Statement

Thank you Mr President,

The UK welcomes the Colombian Government's efforts to address human rights concerns, particularly through the establishment of the National Human Rights System and the steps taken to implement the Land Restitution and Victims Reparations law. We commend the open dialogue between the government and civil society on human rights issues, particularly the National Guarantees Process, and plans for a national human rights policy.

We strongly welcome President Santos' decision to undertake peace negotiations with the FARC - which has significant potential to improve respect for human rights in Colombia. We support the Colombian government's announcement of a mechanism to allow civil society participation in the peace negotiations.

We have two recommendations:

- Increase efforts to investigate and prosecute those responsible for threats or violence against human rights defenders, trade unionists, community leaders and journalists.
- Ensure that Colombia's military justice system is fully compliant with international human rights law, and that all allegations of human rights abuses by military personnel are investigated promptly and effectively. The Government of Colombia should also ~~regularly~~ publish regular information and statistics on its efforts in this regard.

The work of the National Protection Unit in protecting the safety and security of vulnerable individuals is also vital. We encourage the Government of Colombia to respond promptly to all requests for protection and to ensure that related threats are investigated.

The UK is concerned by the lack of capacity and delays in the judicial system. We welcome the Prosecutor-General's commitment to reform his office to improve prosecutions of organised illegal groups. We urge him to ensure that investigations into allegations of extrajudicial killings are prioritised.

Thank you Mr President.