



CANCILLERÍA



Embassy of Colombia in the United States

## Colombia's Plebiscite for Peace

Yesterday, October 2, the people of Colombia cast their votes in a plebiscite, or referendum, on the Final Agreement for the End of Conflict and the Construction of a Lasting and Stable Peace between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). By a narrow margin of 0.5 percent, the “no” vote prevailed.

Despite the result, this is the closest Colombia has ever come to securing peace. The government is committed to building on the progress that has been made and will look for ways to adjust the negotiations and the peace agreement so it reflects the decision made by the people of Colombia in the referendum and crystallizes the end of conflict. It will take more time, effort and political will, but the efforts to achieve a stable and lasting peace will continue.

### President Santos Addresses the Nation

At 8:00 p.m. local time in Bogotá yesterday, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos delivered remarks on the results of the vote on the Plebiscite for Peace.



President Santos said:

*“Today, I speak to the country as president of all Colombians: both those who voted ‘no’ and those who voted ‘yes’ – all Colombians.*”

*"I summoned us to decide whether or not to support the agreement ending the conflict with the FARC, and the majority, by a narrow margin, has said 'no.'*

*"I am the first to recognize this result. The other half of the country has said 'yes.'*

*"As Head of State, I am the guarantor of the stability of the nation, and this democratic decision should not affect that stability, which I will guarantee.*

*"As President, I keep intact my ability and my obligation to maintain public order and to seek and negotiate peace.*

*"The bilateral ceasefire and the end of hostilities remain in force and will remain in force.*

*"I listen to those who said 'no' and listen to those who said 'yes.'*

*"Everyone, everyone without exception, wants peace. This has been expressly said.*

*"Tomorrow morning, I will call on all political forces, in particular those that demonstrated today for the 'no,' to hear them, to encourage dialogue and determine the way forward.*

*"I have always believed in the wise Chinese principle to seek opportunities in any situation. And here we have an opportunity that has opened with the new political reality that has manifested itself through plebiscite.*

*"Finding points of agreement and unity is now more important than ever. And it's what we will do.*

*"I have instructed the chief negotiator for the government and the High Commissioner for Peace to travel tomorrow to Havana to keep FARC negotiators informed on the outcome of this political dialogue.*

*"Now we will decide together the path we must take to peace – the peace that we all want. Peace should come out stronger from this situation.*

*"I will not surrender. I will continue seeking peace until the last minute of my term because that is the way to leave a better country to our children."*

#### **Statement by Colombian Ambassador to the United States Juan Carlos Pinzón**

*"It is clear that the Colombian democracy is strong, and in the end there is an important opportunity for the Colombian people.*

*"The peace agreement is a national agreement involving all sectors of government, the opposition and the counter party – in this case the FARC.*

*"President Santos delivered an important message, which guarantees institutional stability and*

*encourages further progress toward a peace agreement for all of the Colombian people.*

*“Also important is the opposition’s message, which includes an intention to seek peace, as well as the message from the FARC that they will not return to arms.*

*“We have an opportunity to raise awareness among the public that a stable and lasting peace can be created with the peace agreement.*

*“As Colombia continues on the path to securing sustainable peace, we are grateful for strong bipartisan support from our closest ally – the United States. We look forward to continuing to work with the U.S. Administration and Congress as we determine the next steps on peace.”*

### **Statement by the U.S. State Department**

*“The United States commends the Government and people of Colombia for the democratic process held yesterday and recognizes that difficult decisions are going to have to be taken in the days ahead.*

*“President Santos, FARC leader Rodrigo Londoño, and opposition leader Alvaro Uribe have all indicated their commitment to achieve peace, and to work together in an inclusive manner to do so. Colombians have expressed their commitment to settle their differences through institutions and dialogue rather than violence.*

*“Colombia can count on the continued support of the United States as it continues to seek democratic peace and prosperity for all Colombians. We support President Santos’ proposal for unity of effort in support of a broad dialogue as the next step towards achieving a just and lasting peace.”*

The statement is also available [here](#).

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