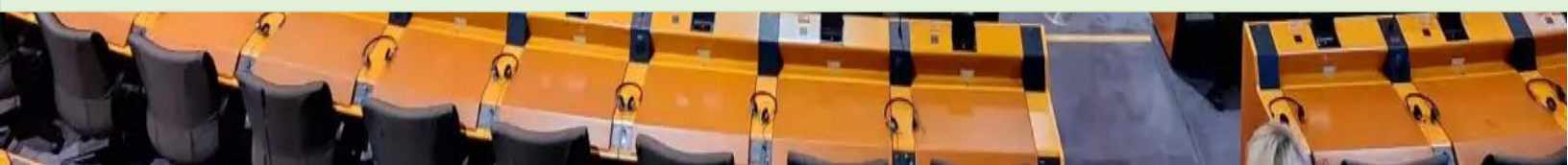




General Assembly 1

Topic 2: Consolidating the Disarmament of Paramilitary Groups in Post-Civil War Colombia.

President: Amro Abu-Libbeh



President's Letter

Dear Delegates of The First General Assembly,

I am honoured to welcome you to our committee,

This committee serves as a platform for delegates to discuss urgent international issues and topics that require immediate attention. The General Assembly is one of the six main organs of the United Nations and plays a vital role in addressing urgent issues. Each one of you will represent member states of this esteemed committee, and you will also be the voice of the millions of people who don't have their own.

Throughout these three days, whether you are a first timer or an experienced MUN participant, I expect that you will demonstrate your debating, critical thinking, and collaboration skills with your fellow delegates. You will learn how to critique proposed resolutions, enhance your debating, and ultimately challenge yourself to become political enthusiasts and excellent debaters.

Delegates, I want you to step out of your comfort zones, explore the MUN world, seize this opportunity, and indulge in heated and meaningful debate and discussion. What we discuss in this committee can be the next step to a better tomorrow, a better world where no one is labelled by race, colour, or status, one step closer to equality. Seize this opportunity and become true citizens of the world who contribute to global peace.

With that being said, my name is Amro Abu Libbeh, President of The First General Assembly at The Modern Montessori Model United Nations, and I am honoured to be your president for this year. I wish you all the best of luck.

Sincerely,

Amro Abu-Libbeh

President of The First General Assembly



Introduction to the Committee

As the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, the First General Assembly is the primary body responsible for addressing issues of disarmament and international peace and security. This committee is unique as it deals directly with disarmament, global security challenges, and the regulation of weapons at both regional and international levels. It lays the foundation for peace and stability and strives for inclusivity and fairness.

The importance of General Assembly 1 lies in its role as a forum; it addresses pressing security concerns on an equal footing. This committee is not merely about preventing the escalation of armed conflict, but also about building trust, reducing tensions, and fostering cooperation between nations.

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Terminology

- **Paramilitary Groups:** Armed organizations that operate outside the official military structure but use military-style tactics and organization. In Colombia, these groups were often connected to illegal activities such as drug trafficking, extortion, and land control.
- **Demobilization:** The formal process of disbanding armed groups and removing their weapons from circulation.
- **Reintegration:** The process of assisting former combatants in returning to civilian life through education, employment opportunities, and social support. Reintegration is crucial to prevent ex-combatants from rejoining armed groups.
- **Illicit Economies:** Illegal economic activities (drug trafficking, illegal mining, etc.) that finance and sustain armed groups. These activities undermine state authority and complicate efforts toward long-term peace.
- **Land Restitution:** The process of returning land to victims who were forcibly displaced during the conflict. Land restitution remains a critical component of peacebuilding in Columbia, as land ownership disputes fuel social and political tensions.

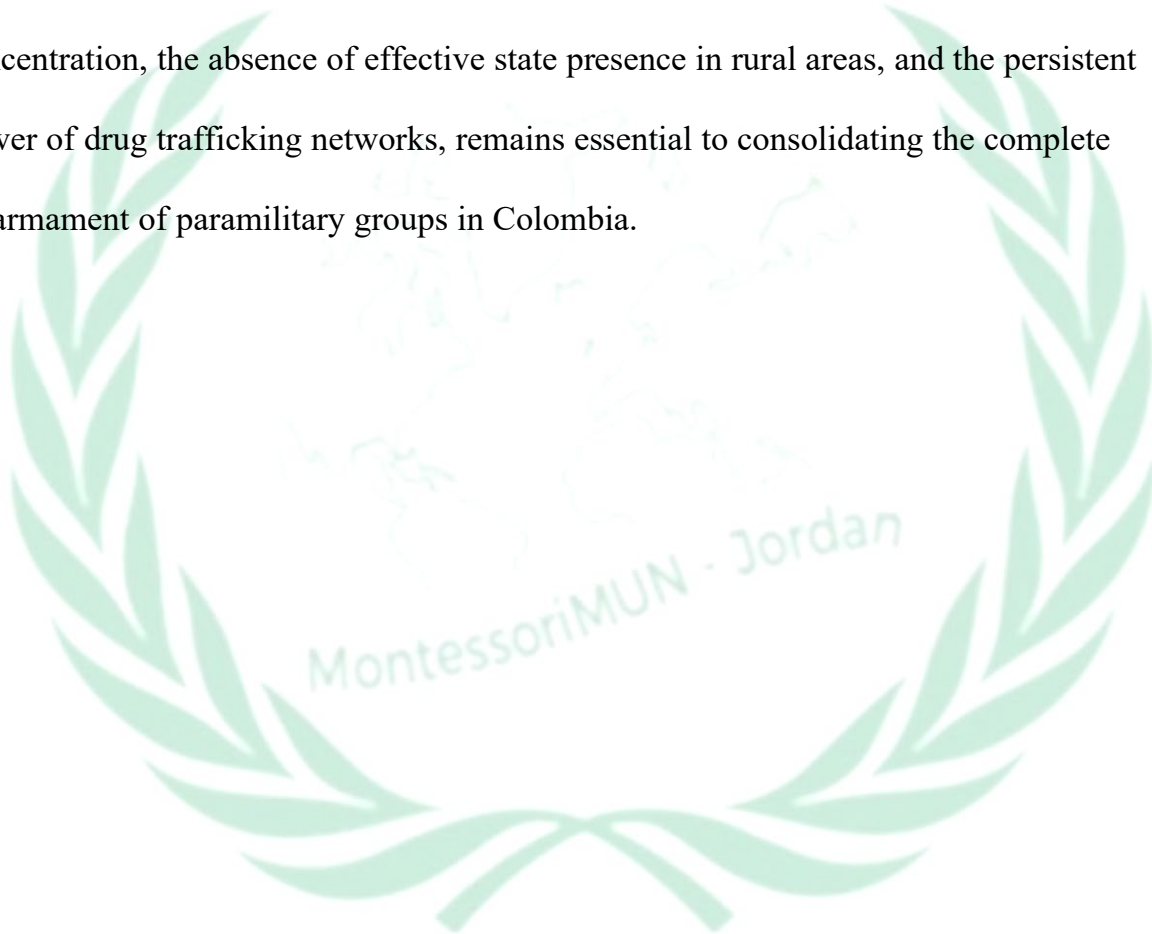
History

For over five decades, Colombia was engulfed in a protracted civil war rooted in deep ideological, political, and socioeconomic divisions. The main actors in this conflict include the Colombian state, right-wing paramilitary groups such as the United Self-Defense Forces of Columbia (AUC), and leftist insurgent organizations including the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN).

Paramilitary groups emerged in the 1980s as self-defense forces aimed at countering guerrilla activity, often backed by landowners, drug traffickers, and corporate leaders. Over time, these groups expanded their influence within organized crime and drug trade, responsible for widespread human rights violations, including assassinations, forced displacements, and massacres.

Between 2003 and 2006, approximately 30,000 AUC members demobilized under the “Justice and Peace Law,” marking one of the Colombian government’s earliest large-scale disarmament efforts. Yet, the process was only partially successful, as many ex-paramilitary members continued their criminal activities, reconstituting themselves into new armed groups known as Bandas Criminales (BACRIM).

A major milestone came in 2016 with the signing of the Peace Agreement between the Colombian government and the FARC, monitored by the United Nations Mission in Colombia. This agreement represented a significant achievement in disarmament and peacebuilding. Nonetheless, its implementation remains unstable. Challenges such as reintegration, the emergence of new armed factions and targeted assassinations continue to threaten long-term stability. Addressing structural issues, particularly land concentration, the absence of effective state presence in rural areas, and the persistent power of drug trafficking networks, remains essential to consolidating the complete disarmament of paramilitary groups in Colombia.



Current Situation

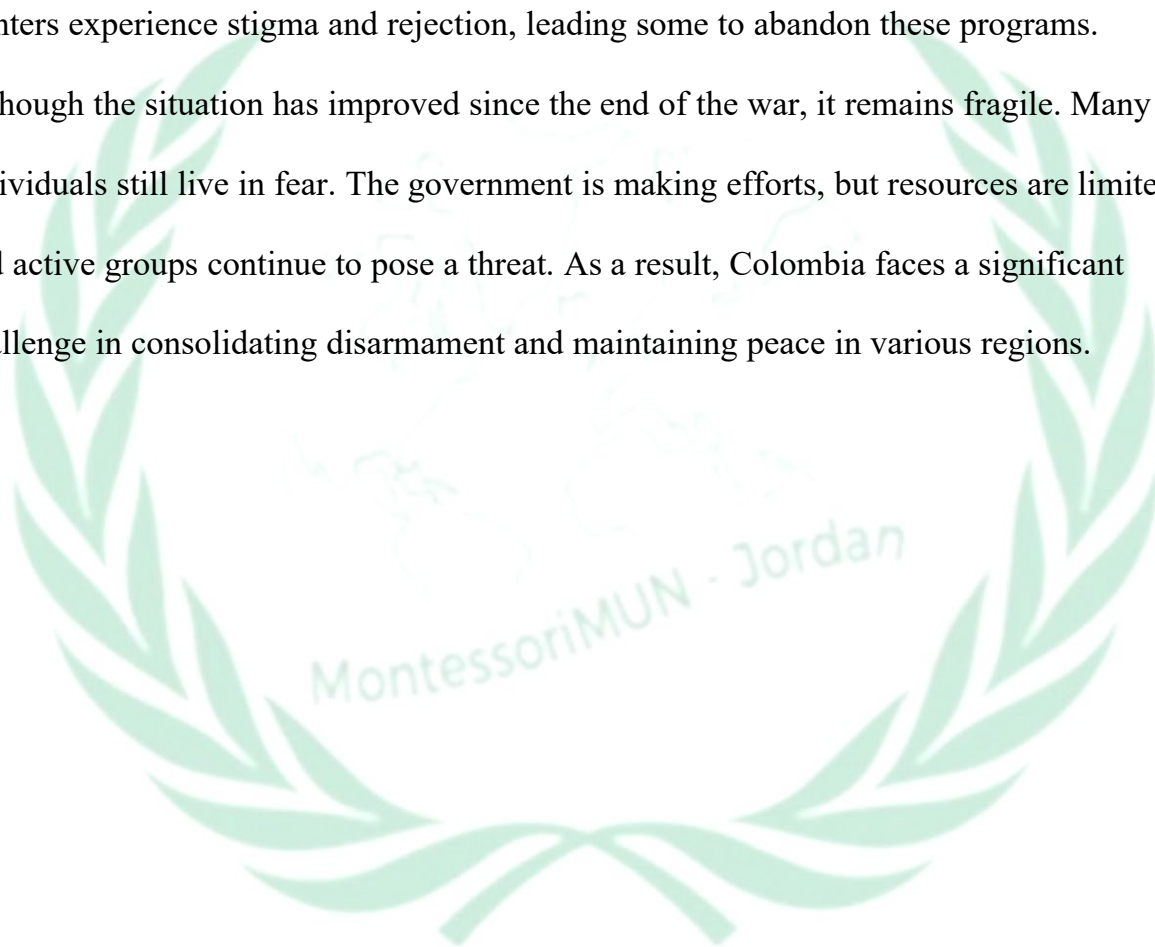
Colombia continues to grapple with the legacy of paramilitary groups, even years after the official end of its civil war. While a number of former combatants have surrendered their weapons and entered reintegration programs, many others have retained their arms or joined criminal organizations in search of income, protection, or a sense of belonging. In rural areas, the situation remains particularly severe: illegal armed groups continue to exert control over numerous communities, sustaining networks of weapon, drug, and human trafficking that leave civilians in a constant state of insecurity.

In response, the Colombian government has established programs aimed at disarmament and reintegration, offering ex-combatants access to employment opportunities, education, and social support. However, these initiatives often progress slowly and fail to reach all affected individuals. Corruption, bureaucratic inefficiency, and limited local resources frequently hinder effective implementation from local authorities. Consequently, some former fighters relapse into violence or rejoin criminal networks when faced with unemployment, social exclusion, or unresolved conflicts with rival groups.

Local communities, particularly in conflict-affected areas, often remain distrustful of state authorities and law enforcement. In some instances, residents even conceal weapons as a means of self-protection against armed groups. International organizations such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United Nations Office for

Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), and various NGOs continue to monitor disarmament efforts and provide support for vulnerable communities. Yet, the prevalence of illegal firearms, the persistence of drug trafficking, and the widespread presence of landmines threaten civilian safety.

Reintegration programs encounter cultural and social challenges; many former fighters experience stigma and rejection, leading some to abandon these programs. Although the situation has improved since the end of the war, it remains fragile. Many individuals still live in fear. The government is making efforts, but resources are limited, and active groups continue to pose a threat. As a result, Colombia faces a significant challenge in consolidating disarmament and maintaining peace in various regions.



Parties involved

- **Government of Colombia:** The primary authority responsible for leading disarmament and reintegration initiatives.
- **The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC):** Formerly the largest guerrilla movement in Colombia, the FARC officially demobilized under the 2016 Peace Accord.
- **The National Liberation Army (ELN):** As the most prominent remaining guerrilla organization in Colombia, the ELN has been partially engaged in peace negotiations with the government.
- **Criminal Bands (BACRIM):** Successor groups that emerged from the remnants of demobilized paramilitary organizations. These groups remain active in narcotrafficking, extortion, and illegal mining.
- **The United Nations (UN):** Through its verification mission in Colombia, the UN plays a vital role in monitoring the implementation of peace agreements, overseeing weapons collection and destruction, and supporting community reintegration.
- **United States:** Provides financial assistance, technical expertise, and peacebuilding support to strengthen Colombia's security institutions and reinforce peacebuilding and reintegration programs.

- **Cuba and Norway:** Served as guarantor states during the 2012–2016 peace negotiations between the Colombian government and the FARC, facilitating dialogue and ensuring adherence to negotiation protocols.
- **European Union (EU):** Funds reintegration programs, rural development initiatives, and community resilience projects in an effort to consolidate peace and reduce the likelihood of rearmament.



Helpful Resources

<https://colombia.unmissions.org/en>

<https://www.crisisgroup.org/latin-america-caribbean/andes/colombia/recycling-violence-colombia-case-paramilitary-successors>

<https://www.hrw.org/report/2003/09/23/youll-learn-not-cry/child-combatants-colombia>

<https://www.peaceagreements.org/masterdocument/1846>

<http://www.smallarmssurvey.org>

<https://www.usip.org/publications/2021/10/colombias-peace-agreement-state-implementation-after-five-years>

<https://www.oas.org/en/mapp/>



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