

Pilot project with ex-combatants will collect information on the location of anti-personnel mines in Colombia

- Colombia currently holds the world presidency of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.
- During this administration, 194 municipalities in the Colombian territory have been cleared of suspected mines.

Bogota, Colombia, March 16, 2022. The Tripartite Mechanism about mines - made up of the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace (OACP, in Spanish) of the Government of Colombia, the Comunes Party component of the National Council for Reintegration (CNR Comunes) and the United Nations through the UN Verification Mission in Colombia and the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) - announced the start of a pilot project for the provision of information through which ex-combatants of the former FARC-EP guerrilla, with technical support from UNMAS, to will collect information on areas with possible contamination with anti-personnel mines and other explosive devices that have been installed during the conflict.

This project began on March 1 through a grant provided by the United Nations to the ex-combatants, thanks to financial support from the Kingdom of Norway. A team of ex-combatants is expected to visit six regions of Colombia to interview other ex-combatants in the reintegration and gather information they know about the location of explosive devices. This exercise is evidence of the commitment to work together to comply with the Peace Agreement.

"We ratify the commitment that the government of President Iván Duque has in the fulfillment of the Peace Agreement. To this end, it is important to highlight the figure of the Tripartite Mechanism, which we will continue to strengthen," said the High Commissioner for Peace, Juan Camilo Restrepo Gómez.

"Thanks to the Mechanism we worked last year on a pre-pilot, of which the information was already delivered last December 30, 2021 to the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace, as a sign of our commitment to the peace process", added the representative of the CNR Comunes, Pastor Alape.

This information corresponds to the results of the information gathering exercises carried out in the second semester of 2021 in Barrancabermeja (Santander) and Chaparral (Tolima), which counted with the participation of 22 ex-combatants signatories of the Peace Agreement.

It is important to highlight that the information that has already been delivered to the mine action component of the OACP, and that which is collected during the four months of the pilot project, will serve as input for the humanitarian demining activities carried out in the Colombian territory.

"Advancing in the decontamination of Colombian territory of anti-personnel mines and explosive devices installed during the conflict is key to reparation and reconciliation in Colombia", said Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General and Head of the UN Verification Mission in Colombia.

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