

Peacebuilding in Colombia: Challenges in the post-agreement

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Rico, D., & Medina-Arboleda, I. F. (2020). *Construcción de paz en el posacuerdo: avances, tensiones y desafíos*. [Peacebuilding in the post-agreement: progress, tensions and challenges] Universidad del Norte, Universidad Católica de Colombia.

On August 24, 2016, from Havana, Cuba, the historic announcement of the culmination of peace dialogues between the Colombian government and the former FARC-EP guerrilla took place to end more than fifty years of armed conflict in Colombia.

Almost four years have passed since that date, but the early implementation of the final agreement has faced several challenges that have not only hindered the process but also constituted a barrier to the path of building peace in the country.

Given this context, it is imperative to provide tools that promote the construction of sustainable and democratic environments of peace. In this order of ideas, the book *Building peace in the post-agreement*, by Rico Revelo and Medina-Arboleda, comprising eight chapters and published in Colombia, offers -from definitions, concepts, theories and methodologies- significant contributions that seek to uncover some of the barriers that most affect the transition towards a culture of peace and non-violence.

Specifically, the first chapter of this book describes the context of the country's political polarization during the process of popular endorsement of the peace agreement. It puts forward the study of the linguistic style used by some political groups on the social network Twitter in the eve of the popular submission of the agreement's ratification as well as the content of the publications. In particular, this chapter is a benchmark of the climate of polarization that Colombia lives even today, and which becomes a fundamental cultural barrier to the implementation of the agreements and the search for peaceful solutions to the confrontation with other armed groups, such as the National Liberation Army (ELN).

Subsequently, the second chapter outlines a regional overview of the challenges and prospects for peacebuilding in the Colombian Caribbean, presented through a study that gives an account of the differential dynamics of commitment to development and is based on a territorial peace approach in rural areas, where actors and mechanisms related to the internal armed conflict and organized crime have historically remained.

Then, in the third chapter, the contributions to the higher educational level, compared to training in citizen competences, are evaluated through a study that is in line with the global commitment to training in citizenship as one of the bases for building peaceful, fair and equitable societies.

Following this line, the fourth chapter explores, also within the educational context, and as a strategy of pedagogy for peace, the contribution of active didactics in evaluating the contribution to developing competences in the social sciences. Here, the research accounts for the challenges of the educational system to transform how citizens approach the curriculum.

At the end of this part, the fifth chapter describes a study of political micro-sociology that highlights the importance of strengthening skills for deliberation in terms of a culture of peace. Content is analyzed from a gender perspective, reflecting the tendency of women ex-combatants to prioritize the satisfaction of present basic needs - where they face the construction of their life projects - and to experience tensions between gender equality and the role of women within a patriarchal framework.

Then, in the sixth chapter, an important reflection is presented on how to move towards a culture of peace amid the transition scenario that Colombia is experiencing, although now is getting acquainted with the experiences of former combatants under the Justice and Peace Law, identifying lessons learned in the search for social reconciliation with ex-combatants of the FARC-EP and comparing the approaches of social reconciliation with the particular case. All

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this, to lay the foundations for the formulation of public policies in the post-agreement.

And finally, in the seventh and eighth chapters, different investigations are presented on the role of civilian groups organized to move from a culture of war to a culture of peace, in line with the United Nations Charter on the construction of a world different from war and the militarization of existence for generations to come.

In conclusion, each of the works that make up the book *Peacebuilding in the post-agreement* shows accurate results and constitutes a relevant contribution to achieving a holistic vision of the panorama of peacebuilding in Colombia. In general, this work is pertinent and calls upon its readers to

cooperate in overcoming each challenge it mentions, as well as to consider the construction of the historical memory as a process transcending the nefarious effects of war.

References

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