

In the Midst of War:
Women's Contributions to Peace in Colombia

By Catalina Rojas

With Sanam Naraghi Anderlini
and Camille Pampell Conaway

Women Waging Peace Policy Commission
Sanam Naraghi Anderlini, Series Editor

WOMEN WAGING PEACE is a program of Hunt Alternatives Fund that advocates for the full participation of women in formal and informal peace processes around the world.

THE POLICY COMMISSION is conducting a series of case studies to document women's contributions to peace processes across conflict areas worldwide.

Policy Commission

Director

Sanam Naraghi Anderlini

Associate Director

Elizabeth Powley

Program Associate

Camille Pampell Conaway

Hunt Alternatives Fund

Chair

Ambassador Swanee Hunt

Executive Director

Sarah Gauger

Senior Vice President

Ambassador Hattie Babbitt

www.huntalternativesfund.org

www.womenwagingpeace.net

ISBN 1-932679-04-9

© Hunt Alternatives Fund. 2004. All rights reserved

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	iv
About the Author	iv
Project Background	v
Key Findings and Recommendations	vi
Executive Summary	vii
Introduction	1
Rationale	1
Assumptions	2
Research Methodology	2
Terminology	3
Part One: A Long History of Civil Strife	5
Twentieth Century: Continued Violence and Political Tensions	5
The Complexity of the Current Conflict	6
Civil Society in Colombia: Victims of War and Agents for Peace	9
Women's Leadership: A Place at the Table and a New Meaning of Peace	10
Part Two: Official Dialogues and Negotiations in Colombia	14
The Pastrana-FARC Dialogues	14
Women in the Pastrana-FARC Dialogues	18
The Breakdown of the Pastrana-FARC Dialogues	22
Part Three: Rising from the Ashes—Women's Contributions to Peace	24
One Day at a Time: Women's Local Resistance Efforts	25
Preparing for the Future: Creating a Unified Women's Agenda for Peace	27
Women's Tribunals: Calling for Justice and Reconciliation	30
Governmental Initiatives to Promote Women's Equality and Participation	30
Conclusion	32
Endnotes	33
Appendix 1: Map of Colombia	36
Appendix 2: List of Acronyms	37
Appendix 3: Glossary of Spanish Terms	38
Appendix 4: Selected Major Peace Organizations	39
Appendix 5: Methodological Note	40
Appendix 6: List of Interviewees	41
Appendix 7: Bibliography	42

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first like to express my gratitude to the Policy Commission team—Sanam Anderlini, Elizabeth Powley, and Camille Pampell Conaway—for their infinite patience, support, and encouragement throughout this research project. It has been a privilege to join this important initiative of documenting women’s contributions to peace building worldwide.

Thanks to my family and friends in Colombia, who provided me with incredible support and care while I conducted the interviews. The field research in Colombia would not have been possible without the outstanding work of Nolvira Soto, my field research assistant. Special thanks to María Lucía de Ordoñez for her flawless work in transcribing all the interviews and her wise accounting advice, and to Graciela Romero de Rojas for hosting me in Bogotá.

The men and women whom I interviewed are making history each and every day of their lives. They gave me their wisdom and their time. To all of them: Gloria Nieto, Jorge Rojas, Holman Morris, Luis Sandoval, Ana Teresa Bernal, Mauricio Uribe, Olga Amparo Sanchez-Gomez, Nelson Berrío, Martha López, Gloria Tobón, Patricia Ariza, Carlos Lozano, Daniel García-Peña, Alvaro Villarraga, Gloria Amparo Suárez, Patricia Buriticá, Gloria Cuartas, Governor Parmenio Cuéllar, Marta Segura, Piedad Morales, Olga Lucía Ramírez, Diana Gutiérrez, Marta Lucía Vazquez, Mario Gómez, Nancy Tapias, Antonio Sanguino, Magdala Velazquez, and Father Fabio Enrique Orozco. Thanks and stay safe!!

Many thanks to the following individuals who graciously shared their insight by reading and commenting on drafts of this report: Virginia Bouvier, Adam Isacson, Neil Jeffery, Alma Viviana Perez, and Mark Schneider.

I also want to thank Miki Jacevic of Women Waging Peace and the Morales-Jacevic family for encouraging me to do this project. I also have to express my gratitude to Felipe, my latest online research assistant, Diana Santana for her sound comments, and Luis, who assisted me with Colombian history. Thanks to Alma Viviana Perez and Adrian Ancil-Paul for their assistance with Resolution 1325. Thanks to Shelly and Linda Zelizer for their constant support. And many thanks to my dear husband, Craig M. Zelizer, who is also my editor-in-chief, my peace coworker, my best friend, and my inspiration.

Finally, the following individuals at Women Waging Peace and Hunt Alternatives Fund made possible the publication of this report: Hattie Babbitt, Cheryl Foley, Jessica Ratey, Mark Russell, Jolynn Shoemaker, Jan Smith, and Roxane Wilber. And special thanks are owed to the chair of Women Waging Peace, Swanee Hunt.

I dedicate this work to the women and men of Colombia; to the ones that have died believing in peace and justice and the ones who stubbornly remain alive, resisting, dreaming, and believing that there are ways—other than war—to deal with our differences.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Catalina Rojas is a Colombian political scientist and doctoral candidate at the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University. Her areas of research include intrastate conflict, refugees and internally displaced persons, civil society and women’s peace initiatives, and post-conflict reconstruction and development. Ms. Rojas has taught and conducted research in various Colombian universities, and she has over 10 years experience working with peace organizations. She holds a master’s degree in peace and development and has pursued post-graduate studies in Germany, Spain, Sweden, and the United States. Ms. Rojas currently resides in Alexandria, VA.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Wars and internal conflicts do not end simply with the signing of peace agreements. To avoid a resurgence of violence, it is necessary to develop and support measures for strengthening the governance, security, justice, and socio-economic capacities of a state. This is a complex task in any society, but daunting in post-conflict situations. While the international community can provide assistance and valuable resources, the local population, which has no “exit strategy,” has the greatest commitment to building sustainable peace. It is therefore essential to draw on the assets, experiences, and dedication at the local level and among all sectors of society. One sector often overlooked and underestimated is women. In most post-conflict societies women are more than 50 percent of the population and are actively engaged in peace building while addressing the basic survival needs of their families and communities. Yet they are often portrayed as passive victims, and little regard is given to their actual and potential roles in fostering security.

In October 2000, for the first time in its history, the United Nations Security Council acknowledged that women have a key role in promoting international stability by passing Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. It called on all parties to ensure women’s participation in peace processes, from the prevention of conflict to negotiations and post-war reconstruction. The Women Waging Peace Policy Commission was established to examine peace processes with a particular focus on the contributions of women.

This report assesses the importance of a gender perspective in peace negotiations and documents the critical work of women at local, regional, and national levels to mitigate the effects of continued violence on their communities, mobilize for renewed dialogues, and prepare for the next cycle of peace in Colombia.

KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Key Findings

- Pressure from women's groups and civil society prompted peace talks between President Andrés Pastrana and the guerrilla movement FARC (Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces) in 1999. Women in official capacities and civil society challenged leaders to consider gender issues for the first time.
- The 2002 collapse of the dialogues led to disillusionment within Colombia's peace movement; women's groups are leading new efforts, raising awareness of the human costs of conflict and calling for negotiations that include civil society.
- Women's organizations developed a process to build consensus and create an agenda for peace addressing the root causes of conflict such as political, social, and economic exclusion. Local authorities are replicating their consensus-building model in the *asambleas constituyentes* (constitutional assemblies) of Antioquia, Nariño, Cauca, and Huila.
- The conflict is regionalized as paramilitaries and guerrillas control parts of the country. Despite being targeted through violence and repression, women are leading local resistance efforts, establishing informal agreements with armed actors and forming "peace zones" to protect their communities.
- Women's groups are using UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) to demand inclusion in future negotiations. Government entities, also drawing on 1325, are initiating dialogue with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) regarding peace and security issues.

Recommendations

The international community, particularly the US government, should:

- acknowledge the socio-economic and political dimensions of the violence and prioritize humanitarian relief and peace building over military aid;
- promote a return to negotiations that is inclusive of civil society groups—with women's equal representation;
- provide technical and financial resources to women's organizations, elevating their voices and empowering them to participate in peace building; and
- implement Resolution 1325 and the Organization of American States Declaration on Hemispheric Security (2003), which explicitly call for equal participation in peace processes.

The Colombian government should:

- implement Resolution 1325 and include women in official peacemaking entities;
- utilize the "good offices" of the United Nations to mediate future negotiations;
- defend women peace activists who are increasingly targeted by armed actors;
- include women in the design and implementation of aid programs to displaced populations;
- work with women's regional groups to develop economic regeneration programs offering young people alternatives to joining armed factions; and
- penalize perpetrators of sexual assault and other forms of violence against civilians.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In 2004, Colombia remains entrenched in violence, with an estimated 200,000 refugees and 2.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs).¹ Eighty percent of the approximately 60,000 deaths since 1985 have been civilian casualties.² The government, led by President Alvaro Uribe, is currently pursuing a military solution to the ongoing conflict, framing the situation as a war against narco-terrorists and obscuring many of the complex socio-economic root causes and effects of the violence. In addition to left-wing guerrillas, right-wing paramilitaries, and government security forces, the presence of organized crime groups—particularly drug cartels—and private security firms complicates the situation and further fuels the conflict.

The country has endured many cycles of violence countered by cycles of peace. Women have been both victims and actors in Colombia's war and peace movement throughout its history. While they represent more than 50 percent of IDPs and head more than 30 percent of IDP households,³ they are also involved as armed combatants and supporters of the various groups. Women's civil society activism began in the 1940s and, as the conflict expanded, developed into humanitarian relief work. Their engagement in peacemaking increased in the early 1990s and has evolved into a complex network of national and local organizations. By 2002, 17 percent of assassinated and disappeared leaders and activists throughout Colombia were women.⁴

The government of President Andrés Pastrana led the most recent attempt to initiate dialogue with guerrillas—in this case, FARC—from 1999 to 2002. As the process collapsed, public opinion swung again in favor of a military solution, and the peace movement, which had provided the initial momentum for the talks, retreated. Since then, women's organizations have emerged as the leading advocates for a return to negotiations.

A Brief History

Colombia has been in a state of intermittent internal conflict since the nineteenth century, primarily due to its closed political system and socio-economic disparity. After decades of confrontation between supporters of the Liberal and Conservative political parties, the pattern of violent conflict shifted in the mid-twentieth century with the splintering off of peasants and workers from the political elites and the formation of guerrilla groups. Between 1946 and 1966—a period known as *la violencia* (the violence)—there were an estimated 200,000 casualties and two million IDPs. The main guerrilla groups, including ELN (National Liberation Army), EPL (Popular Liberation Army), and FARC, emerged at that time. Despite the efforts of successive governments to defeat these groups by force, social mobilization and guerrilla activity increased.

Pastrana-FARC Dialogues

During the 1980s and 1990s, the Colombian conflict underwent two major shifts: first, an increased level of complexity with the emergence of paramilitaries, a flourishing arms and drug-trafficking market, and territorial control by non-state actors; and second, the increased targeting of civilians by all armed actors. Responding to the heightened violence, the peace movement—with women's participation—initiated a campaign to demand negotiations. Ten million non-binding votes were obtained, contributing to President Andrés Pastrana's decision to initiate a formal dialogue with FARC in January 1999 in San Vicente del Caguán.

Widely regarded as “talks about talks” rather than official negotiations, the dialogues took place without a cease-fire agreement. Yet, while the talks were bilateral in essence, structures were established to receive input from non-governmental sectors of society. In addition to the pre-existing independent National Peace Council (Consejo Nacional de Paz), composed of government and civil society representatives, which could be convened by the president and could propose recommendations for a state policy of peace, structures put in place specifically for the negotiations included: the Thematic Commission (Comisión Temática), composed of FARC and government representatives, that acted as a bridge between civil society and the negotiating table by convening thematic public forums and presenting their findings to the official negotiators; and the public forums (*audiencias públicas*) themselves, where various groups came together to voice their opinions to both negotiating parties.

Women participated in official and civil society capacities and were members of the government and FARC negotiating teams, the National Peace Council, and the Thematic Commission. Ana Teresa Bernal, one of four women leaders among approximately 40 total participants in the official process, has been particularly heralded for her work. Journalist Holman Morris describes Bernal's work as a civil society peace activist and member of the Thematic Commission as follows:

[She is] an unconditional woman for peace, not of a romantic peace but the negotiated settlement type. . . . She was there full-time, dedicated hours and sacrificed [time with] her family. I believe that, as a woman, she wants a better future for her children. Her most important contribution was persistence. She was an example to the other members of the Commission.⁵

With pressure from women's groups and at the insistence of women leaders involved in the talks, parties agreed to hold a women's public forum under the auspices of the Thematic Commission. Three months of preparation culminated in a day-long event on June 25, 2000, when 600 women from all regions, backgrounds, ethnicities, and classes arrived in El Caguán to articulate their concerns. The event raised women's activism to a new level and challenged the government and FARC leadership for the first time to consider women's experiences of war, their apprehensions regarding the safety of their communities, and their motivations for peace. The event also confronted the two sides, forcing them to acknowledge that their own forces had committed atrocities against civilians, including the wide-scale rape and sexual assault of women. For example, Magdala Velázquez and the National Network of Women publicly denounced the sexual violence perpetrated by FARC members in southern Colombia. As a result, says Velázquez, "There was trouble inside FARC," and its leadership issued a "call to order" among the ranks.

Despite these events and the structures that were in place to support the talks, the government was not always willing to interact with civil society. Government representatives were markedly absent from the women's forum. As the talks faltered, President Pastrana chose not to convene the National Peace Council. Finally, Pastrana's government ignored a set of recommendations for action that had been agreed upon by FARC and government representatives in the Notables Commission.

Women's Ongoing Contributions to Peace

In February 2002, the Pastrana-FARC dialogues collapsed. The broader peace movement that had invested itself in the process also retreated. But women's groups stood firm. In July of the same year, 40,000 women from across the country marched in Bogotá, demanding an end to the violence and positioning themselves as national political actors. Says Gloria Tobón of the National Women's Network:

In the last year, women have been the main protagonists of war resistance processes. [The march] showed a spark of light that said, here people are doing things, while the rest of civil society was arms crossed, frightened, worried, and in crisis about the ruptured dialogues.

The women's networks have organized follow-up events, including a campaign to promote demilitarization and recovery of civilian life. In addition, women are leading vigils for kidnap victims, who are held for ransom or "disappeared," in towns across the country and continue to raise awareness of the toll of the conflict on the people of Colombia.

Building Consensus and an Agenda for Peace

A number of women's groups have also joined forces to develop a common agenda for peace, positioning themselves as participants in future talks. In particular, the Women's Emancipatory Constitution (WEC) has emerged as a model for promoting ownership, participatory decision making, and consensus building across divergent groups. The work of the WEC is largely funded by the women's wing of the Swedish trade union movement, which seeks to support the Colombian women's trade union movement. The WEC's goal is to produce a collective agenda for peace from a women's perspective.

Over eight months in 2002, 719 women delegates from 266 organizations across the country gathered for 14 local, regional, and national events. Starting with a 600-point agenda, the women ultimately prioritized 12 demands. While the participants had divergent views of conflict, they identified economic marginalization, exclusion from political and judicial processes, and cultural discrimination as the common underlying experiences of women and other large sectors of Colombia's multi-ethnic society. In doing so, they not only detailed the impact of conflict on society at large and on women in particular, but also challenged the dominant discourse of "terrorism" and "narco-trafficking" that defines the Colombian conflict to the outside world.

The process concluded with a four-day event in Bogotá, called the Constitutional Assembly, at which their twelve points were ratified and women delegates officially introduced their agenda for peace to the country. In the next round of negotiations, whenever that might be, the movement will not only seek a place at the table but will also have a concrete agenda formulated by an extensive constituency. The WEC's process for reaching consensus is being replicated by local and regional authorities in their efforts to develop common goals and priorities in the *asambleas constituyentes* (constitutional assemblies) in Antioquia, Nariño, Cauca, and Huila.

Making Peace—Community by Community

Conflict in Colombia is regional, with local populations often at the mercy of guerrillas or paramilitary forces. In areas outside of the government's control, local communities are increasingly developing their own mechanisms for survival. As documented in the 2003 UN Human Development Report and the 2004 US Institute of Peace (USIP) report,⁶ women, in addition to indigenous peoples and Afro-Colombians, are at the forefront of local resistance efforts. Their strategies include organizing a protective "guard" over indigenous communities; mediating disputes within the community to avoid escalation; symbolically naming their villages "peace communities" free of violence; and liaising with armed actors to establish informal humanitarian agreements. Speaking of the work of the Association of Organized Women of Eastern Antioquia (AMOR), peace activist Piedad Morales says:

They have talked directly with the paramilitaries, FARC, and ELN. They have achieved informal humanitarian agreements, so that the armed actors stop blocking the highway that goes from Medellín to Bogotá and allow families to sell their products on the main road. . . . AMOR is also requesting that the armed actors remove strict controls over the passage of food and medicine.

The significance of these types of initiatives is noted by USIP. "Such courageous acts may, over time, become the basis of confidence-building measures that could lead to region-wide or even country-wide cease-fires or negotiations."⁷ But their efforts come at a great cost. In 2004, the advocacy organization United States Office on Colombia reported, "Previously, women were primarily affected by the political violence through the deaths of their male relatives and partners; today they are becoming targets of political violence themselves." The study goes on to note that armed actors, the paramilitaries in particular, have threatened and assassinated leaders of women's organizations working on a variety of issues that include economic development, peace, and women's participation.⁸

Women are demonstrating their willingness and capacity, in this highly dangerous context, to address the needs of their communities, acting as intermediaries between civilians and fighting units. Although the post-conflict stage in Colombia seems to be a distant scenario, women are aware that negotiating peace is the first step in a long process of reconciliation. Responding to this challenge, women's organizations in Colombia are working on a proposal for post-conflict tribunals, to ensure that the voices and experiences of civilians are not lost.

Civil Society—Government Partnerships

Within the office of the president, the newly-created unit for women's equality is making inroads into promoting gender equality in all areas of governance and, for the first time, is officially acknowledging and supporting the role of women in peace building. "The magnitude of the conflict must be recognized," says Martha Lucía Vasquez, the presidential councilor for women's equality. "To a great extent, the work done by women's organizations has prevented an even greater fraying of the social fabric." Together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the councilor is leading efforts in Colombia to raise awareness of, and support for, UN Security Council

Resolution 1325, which calls for the full participation of women in all aspects of peacemaking. Though this awareness campaign is in the preliminary stages, Vasquez's office has already engaged directly with national women's peace organizations and international NGOs on this issue.

Conclusion

The conflict in Colombia is firmly entrenched, and some groups are working toward a military solution to end the violence. Yet women are many of the most resolute Colombians calling for a return to negotiations and a nonviolent resolution to the conflict. Their pressure on the warring factions—and that of civil society at large—brought about the Pastrana-FARC peace talks, where women were able to participate actively and articulate their vision for Colombia. Despite the breakdown of negotiations, women have remained the sector of society demanding a re-opening of the dialogues. Through national and regional organizations and networks, they continue to raise awareness of the human side of conflict. Despite daily threats, they are engaging fighting factions and building sufficient trust to develop practical arrangements that will bring some peace and security to communities in war zones. They are strengthening the peace constituency nationwide and creating common agendas that unite Colombians across racial, geographical, and class boundaries, and highlight the root causes of conflict. Women are not only demanding a place at the table and laying the groundwork for dialogue, they are also demonstrating the value they can add in the next cycle of peace.

Endnotes

¹Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children. *Colombia's War on Children*. New York: Women's Commission, 2004.

²Amnesty International. *Report 2003: Spiraling Political Violence in Colombia*. New York: AI, 2003.

³United States Office on Colombia. *The Impact of War on Women: Colombian Women's Struggle*. Washington, DC: USOC, 2004. 27 February 2004 <http://usofficeoncolombia.org/insidocolombia/women.htm>.

⁴USOC.

⁵All individual quotes are taken from interviews conducted in October 2003.

⁶United Nations Development Programme. *El Conflicto, Callejón con Salida: Informe Nacional de Desarrollo Humano para Colombia – 2003*. Bogotá, Colombia: UNDP, 2003; United States Institute of Peace. *Special Report 114: Civil Society Under Siege in Colombia*. Washington, DC: USIP, 2004.

⁷USIP.

⁸Jeffery, Neil. "The Impact of War on Women: Current Realities, Government Responses, and Recommendations for the Future." February 2004. Memo to US Policymakers. Washington, DC: United States Office on Colombia, 2004. 27 February 2004 <<http://www.usofficeoncolombia.org/documents/womenbrief.htm>>.

INTRODUCTION

In 2004, Colombia remains entrenched in violence, with an estimated 200,000 refugees and 2.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs).¹ The government, led by President Alvaro Uribe, is currently pursuing a military solution to the ongoing conflict, framing the situation as a war against narco-terrorists and obscuring many of the complex socio-economic root causes and effects of the violence. In addition to left-wing guerrillas, right-wing paramilitaries, and government security forces, the presence of organized crime groups, particularly drug cartels, and private security firms complicate the situation and further fuels the conflict.

The country has endured many cycles of violence followed by cycles of peace. The government of President Andrés Pastrana led the most recent attempt to initiate dialogue with guerrillas—in this case, FARC (Colombian

Revolutionary Armed Forces)—from 1999 to 2002. The dialogues, recognized as “talks about talks” rather than official negotiations, took place as the conflict continued. Throughout the two years, there were no ceasefire agreements, and despite attempts by civil society to broaden the nature of the dialogues, they remained largely bilateral between the government and FARC. As the process collapsed in 2002, public opinion swung again in favor of a military solution, and the peace movement, which had provided the initial momentum for the talks, retreated. Since then, women’s organizations have emerged as the leading advocates for a return to negotiations.

This report describes and analyzes the activities and projects undertaken by individual women peace activists and women’s peace organizations in Colombia during the talks between the former government and FARC from 1999 to 2002, and in the aftermath of the collapse of the process. The study does not detail the activities of the myriad local and national organizations in Colombia that address peace issues. Nor does this study address the efforts of the broader women’s move-

ment or the general peace movement. Rather, it seeks to highlight the nexus between peace and women’s activism, providing insight into the emerging trends and range of activities that women are undertaking. It is divided into three parts. Part I is a brief overview of the conflict from the nineteenth century forward. Part II focuses on peace negotiation processes with a review of the history of peace negotiations in Colombia followed by a description and analysis of the Pastrana-FARC dialogues. This section highlights the contributions of women to the negotiations, centering

on the role of women in collective processes and as individual leaders. Part III provides a brief review of models, processes, actions, and projects developed by women to promote peace during and after the rupture of the negotiations in 2002. It also reflects on how women’s initiatives for peace are perceived by government officials, trade industry leaders,

former guerrilla combatants, journalists, and female and male peace activists.

“There is a huge social movement and it is growing. They are women, youth, children, community mothers, the non-traditional social sectors—this is where the hope for a change in Colombia resides these days.”

*—Ana Teresa Bernal,
civil society leader, October 2003*

Rationale

Colombia offers fertile ground for a study on peace activism; it has been home to countless peace initiatives. Peacemaking (negotiating) efforts include the 40-month-long dialogue between the government of President Andrés Pastrana and FARC. Peace-building efforts include: 1) local indigenous and peasant (*campesinos*) resistance throughout the country; 2) an organized civil society that has been working for peace uninterruptedly for the past 10 years; and 3) an intricate network of local, regional, and national women’s peace groups. These efforts have rarely been documented.

There are many compelling reasons for conducting research on women’s organizations working for peace in Colombia today. While gender issues and women’s activism gained prominence and wider public awareness during the Pastrana-FARC process, women’s

peace efforts date back to the early years of the conflict. At national, regional, and local levels, women's organizations have been involved in activities ranging from providing humanitarian relief and organizing protest marches and vigils, to outright negotiations with guerrilla and paramilitary groups. Despite the violence that surrounds them and profoundly affects their lives, women remain active in peace efforts, struggling to highlight the human cost of the conflict.

Finally, there is a lack of knowledge of peace efforts within the country and abroad. The conflict is framed as a war against drug lords and "terrorists." If the social and humanitarian costs are not widely known, the actions and processes for resisting war conducted by civil society in general, and women's groups for peace in particular, are even less understood.

Assumptions

This report does not posit the notion that women are inherently pacifist. Assuming that women are innately "peaceful" limits our understanding of the manifold identities that women hold in a conflict-ridden society. In Colombia, women are victims of the conflict, as well as agents of resistance and reconstruction within civil society. They also serve in the armed forces, paramilitary groups, and guerrilla movements. As politicians, media personalities, and business professionals, women, like men, hold different views regarding the conflict. Their opinions and actions also vary according to social status, ethnicity, and other factors. In short, this study does not assume that women are a homogeneous or entirely pacifist sector.

Peace activism and the role of civil society in Colombia is often invisible to the eyes of the mass media or national leaders. As a result, they may discount its importance or impact. An underlying assumption of this work is that civil society has a critical role to play in making and building sustainable peace. The study highlights women's roles in peace negotiations and emphasizes women's activism in civil society. This creates bias in terms of the impact that is attributed to them.

Finally, while women peace activists are the subject of this study, they are simultaneously the prism through which the data is interpreted. This research seeks to enrich understandings of security, peace processes, and negotiations from a women's perspective, highlighting the experiences and views of women from the developing world living in conflict-affected societies.

Research Methodology

Research Questions

Within the context of the 1999–2002 Colombian peace talks and their aftermath, the following questions framed the research and were used to structure the interview questionnaires.

- *Why is the consideration of gender issues essential to foster success or prevent failure when negotiating peace settlements?*
- *How do women contribute to peace negotiations?*
- *What are the most effective models and examples of including women and gender issues in peace-building work?*

Data Collection

The main sources of data—primary and secondary sources—were obtained largely during a four-week field trip to Colombia in October 2003. Nearly 30 semi-structured interviews were conducted with men and women working for peace in Colombia, some of who had participated in negotiations; each interview lasted an average of 100 minutes. The sample of interviewees covered the following groups: union leaders, politicians from various parties, scholars, elected and appointed government officials, members of the international community, former guerrilla leaders, industry representatives, journalists, artists, indigenous leaders, a priest, civil society leaders, human rights advocates, and feminist scholars and activists. Although the majority of the interviews were conducted in the capital, Santafé de Bogotá, additional interviews were conducted in the cities of Barrancabermeja, Bucaramanga (Santander), and Medellín (Antioquia). The interviews were transcribed verbatim in their entirety. The qualitative data software program Atlas.ti was used to analyze the data and helped in the creation of codes that further assisted in the identification of patterns and trends, which were necessary to ground responses to the above-mentioned research questions.²

Secondary sources included magazines, newspapers, booklets, texts, and publications from various Colombian organizations. Special attention was given to written material from Colombian scholars and experts in the fields of peace building, negotiations, peace processes, and gender studies.

While the researcher was in Colombia, she was invited to participate in the following events: a women's event in support of a political candidate; observation of the

local and regional elections; a civil society event in support of southern Colombian governors; conferences related to women and peace; the funeral of a woman activist who had been assassinated; and the public launch of a national women's campaign against the militarization of society. The researcher had additional opportunities to talk to key women and men at those events as well as measure the general social and political tensions in Colombian society.

Terminology

Peace Processes, Negotiations, and Dialogues

Just as scholars have identified the “lifecycle” of conflict, current thinking in the field recognizes a lifecycle of peace.³ The establishment of peace is not a single event but rather a process characterized by progress and setbacks, successes and failures. Observers of peace processes, including those who live in societies with protracted conflict, are all too familiar with premature celebration of ceasefires and peace accords that are later violated. Even if a settlement holds, the transition to a state of peace is a long-term operation. It requires extensive logistical and financial measures to create or reestablish the physical, social, economic, and political infrastructures necessary for the country to transition toward a culture of peace.

Regarding the conflict in Colombia, Latin America expert Cynthia Arnson distinguishes peace processes from ceasefires and demobilizations in that the former deals with issues of disarmament together with political, economic, and structural reforms.⁴ Arnson suggests that peace processes in Latin America are intrinsically linked with processes of democratization and an opening of political space. This definition is useful for understanding the debate in Colombia regarding the scope of the negotiations agenda. While historically the government has suggested limiting discussions to demobilization and reintegration processes, the guerrillas tend to propose broader agendas that comprise socio-economic redistribution, political reform, and illicit crop cultivation, among other issues.⁵ In any future peace process, the challenge will be for the parties to agree on an agenda that is neither too broad nor so narrow that it fails to meet the needs of all sides.

Moreover, nearly all the interviewees agreed that the term “negotiations” should not be used to define the Pastrana-FARC talks, primarily because of the absence of substantive discussions in the 40-month-long process that could have eventually led to agreements. Instead, both parties focused the discussions on mutually acceptable procedures without entering into formal negotiations. In effect, the Pastrana-FARC process was “talks about talks.” Throughout this report the terms “dialogues” and “talks” will be used interchangeably to describe the Pastrana-FARC initiative.

Civil Society Movements for Peace

Because not all members of civil society have a commitment to peace and/or non-violent methods, it is important to define a “civil society movement for peace” as:

... [those] circles, networks, and circuits working for peace either in the form of associations that attempt to foster non-violent processes of conflict resolution; or because the group self-defines itself as “neutrally active”^a and wishes to change its insecurity, displacement, and generalized crisis, and thus should and could become influential in the conditions and terms of an eventual negotiated settlement.⁶

In 1999, the late Colombian civil society expert Jesús Antonio Bejarano stated that only the presence and representation of civilians directly affected by the conflict could produce sustainable dialogues and negotiations, as they have the most to gain if peace is reached and the most to lose if war continues.⁷

Gender

The term “gender” refers to the socially constructed—as opposed to biologically determined—identities of men and women. Gender is not the same as “sex,” and gender differences are not the same as sex differences. For instance, the ability of women to bear children is a sex (or biologically determined) difference from men; that women in many societies are responsible for food preparation and household chores is a gender (or socially constructed) difference.

^aThe notion of being “neutrally active” stems from various Colombian peace organizations that insist on not being affiliated with any armed actor, including the government. Some organizations defend their right to be neutral at the same time as they are active in the resolution of the conflict.

Gender roles are assigned to men and women early in socialization. They cut across public and private spheres; are specific to a given culture at a given time; are affected by other forms of differentiation such as race, ethnicity, and class; and can change in different socio-political and economic contexts. World Bank literature notes that in any given society, gender shapes the definitions of acceptable responsibilities and func-

tions for men and women in terms of “social and economic activities, access to resources, and decision-making authority.”⁸

This study primarily focuses on the contributions of Colombian women to peace. It also addresses notions of gender, particularly in terms of how women are perceived and how they draw on their social identities—for example, as mothers of kidnap victims or soldiers—to engage in peace efforts.

PART ONE: A LONG HISTORY OF CIVIL STRIFE

Following its independence from Spain on July 20, 1810, Colombia was in a state of “permanent endemic warfare,” wrote historian Gonzalo Sanchez.

There were no fewer than 14 national-level civil conflicts and two international wars between 1828 and 1902. Innumerable local and regional conflicts also occurred, including 40 rebellions to seize departmental government during the era of the federal constitution (1863–1886); intra-elite wars; land struggles, which took on a partisan identity; and urban riots in the 1930s and 40s.⁹

The extreme levels of political violence were largely due to the closed nature of the political system and the significant socio-economic and cultural inequalities in society. For almost 150 years, two political parties, the Liberals and Conservatives, dominated the Colombian political system. During the nineteenth century, the Liberal party was supportive of regional demands of politicians requesting more commercial openness and secular ideas in education, while the Conservatives promoted centralized power, order, tradition, and Christian morality. The parties were divided on not only government policies but also differing concepts of private and public life, education, and social values.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, women participated in post-independence wars in various ways, depending on the social stratum to which they belonged.¹⁰ Elite women created improvised hospitals in their homes to aid the wounded. Grassroots women marched with men to the battlefield, “died like the troops, cooked food for the troops, carried munitions, rescued and aided the wounded, and fought as hard as the regular soldiers.”¹¹

As the violence decreased, women withdrew to the private sphere. By and large, women in the nineteenth century lacked an independent legal status and the means for collective organization. The main places for women were the family and the home, where they had a central role in the education of their offspring and the dissemination of Catholic values.¹²

Twentieth Century:

Continued Violence and Political Tensions

At the turn of the century, another cycle of conflict emerged known as the 1000 Days War. Beginning in 1899 and ending in 1902, the violence was spurred by

Liberal opposition to the Conservative government’s program policies of *regeneración*. According to historian Margarita Garrido, “*la regeneración*” was a political project developed in 1878 by then-President Rafael Núñez, opposing “federalism and parliamentarianism.”¹³ Núñez imposed a constitution that put power in the hands of a central government and president. It espoused Conservative values of authoritarianism and societal conformity rather than individualism and freedom, prompting a violent rebellion by the Liberals and the beginning of the 1000 Days War.

Early in the twentieth century, Colombia experienced economic growth with the export of products such as tobacco, coffee, and bananas. As industrialization gained momentum, organized labor movements emerged, as did the Communist Party. Despite attempts to modernize the centers of economic production in Colombia, the political system remained closed and socio-economic disparity continued. As a result, by mid-century the pattern of violent conflict shifted. From 1946 to 1966, Colombia experienced the period known as *la violencia* (the violence). As Eva Tufts illustrates, *la violencia* was:

... the moment in Colombian history when the axis of political conflict shifted from inter-party competition to a new conflict dynamic ... The old bipartisan hegemony collided with the demands of new challengers in civil society who assumed an independent political identity outside the traditional political order.¹⁴

The period of *la violencia* resulted in more than 200,000 casualties and an estimated two million displaced, mainly from rural areas.¹⁵ Although the war maintained a partisan component, the peasants no longer channeled their demands and violent acts through their Liberal or Conservative leaders. Forms of revolutionary violence emerged, with traditional elites no longer able to control or manipulate workers and peasants. Threatened by the emerging voice of the underclass, the Liberal and Conservative oligarchy established a mechanism for power sharing, known as the National Front, which began in 1958 following the dictatorship of General Rojas Pinilla and lasted for 16 years. In effect, it enabled them to “take turns” in government, while preventing other movements from participating.

Throughout this period, the Catholic Church had a strong influence on women's activities and beliefs. As a result, many women's organizations in the mid-twentieth century were affiliated with Catholic charities. At the same time, women were affected by the demographic, social, and cultural changes underway in Colombia. Women's civil and political rights expanded, and by the 1940s, they were active in the defense of labor laws, allied with the Communist and Social Democrat parties.¹⁶

The second half of the twentieth century witnessed the inception of the women's rights movement and the arrival of French and other Western ideas of feminism. With the support of the Conservative party and the Catholic Church, women gained the right to vote in 1954. However, it was not until 1957—when the dictatorship of General Pinilla ended—that women exercised that right for the first time.¹⁷ As in the nineteenth century, a woman's social stratum determined her situation. Middle and upper-middle class women with educational opportunities were able to participate in the public sphere—at the theater, social events, and tea clubs, which had traditionally been male spaces. While some lower-class women migrated to the cities and found jobs as domestic maids, others entered the factory work force, particularly the textile industry.

Beginning in the 1960s, women increasingly pursued their own education, leading to changes in the traditional roles of women. From the 1960s onward, the

participation of women in various political, labor, and cultural spaces gave birth to a wide range of groups and organizations, propelling women into the public sphere.¹⁸ In 2002, women won 12.6 percent of seats in the House of Representatives and nearly 10 percent in the Senate. They held 6 out of 13 ministerial posts in 2002 (46 percent), nearly double the figure from 2000.

The Complexity of the Current Conflict

The creation of the National Front—in effect an elite bipartisan pact—was interpreted by left-wing organizations as an attempt to once again exclude the general populace from participating in Colombia's political system. It was one among a number of factors that led to the emergence of key guerrilla groups, such as FARC, ELN (National Liberation Army), and EPL (Popular Liberation Army), which comprised many of the peasant rebels and veterans of *la violencia*.¹⁹ Despite the efforts of successive governments, including that of President Julio Cesar Turbay (1978–1982), to defeat guerrillas and social activists via repression and torture, social mobilization and guerrilla activity increased. The first attempt to dialogue with insurgent groups took place during the presidency of Belisario Betancourt in the early 1980s. On May 28, 1984, FARC agreed to a ceasefire with the government. While the truce was in place for seven years, no lasting agreements emerged, as the government did not implement the proposed changes and FARC did not give up its weapons.²⁰

Demographics of Colombia

According to 2002 UN human development indicators, Colombia has a total population of 42.1 million.¹ Of that number, 58 percent are *mestizo*, 20 percent are white, 14 percent are mulatto, 4 percent are Afro-Colombian, 3 percent are of mixed ancestry, and 1 percent are Amerindian.²

Seventy-five percent of Colombians reside in urban areas, and 32 percent are under the age of 15. Only two percent of all men are employed in agriculture, compared with one percent of women. Women and men have the same literacy rate of 91.7 percent.

¹United Nations Development Programme. *Human Development Indicators 2002*. New York: UNDP, 2002. 16 March 2004 <http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2002/en/indicator/indicator.cfm?File=cty_f_COL.html>.

²Abacci Atlas. "Demographics of Colombia." 16 March 2004 <<http://www.abacci.com/atlas/demography.asp?countryID=173>>.

During the 1980s and throughout the 1990s, the Colombian conflict underwent two major shifts: first, the level of complexity increased (i.e., there were changes in the nature of the conflict); and second, civilians were increasingly targeted by all armed actors. The following factors contributed to these changes:

- *The emergence of multiple actors and sources of violence:* While the existing left-wing guerrilla organizations continued to operate, right-wing paramilitaries began to appear as well.²¹ In part, this was a reaction to guerrilla attacks. While some paramilitaries complied or collaborated with sectors of the Colombian army in an effort to eliminate guerrillas and regain guerrilla-controlled territory, these groups were not controlled by the army.
- *The increase in criminal economy and growing links to violent actors:* This refers, in part, to the explosion in black markets for arms and drug trafficking. Armed groups, paramilitaries, and guerrillas have profited from various drug-trafficking activities, allowing these armed actors to gain unprecedented financial resources to pursue their objectives.²² FARC and ELN originated as security guards for coca cultivation areas and have continued to profit through these activities. The Center for International Policy affirms, "The Colombian Armed Forces estimate that the FARC gets about half its income from involvement in narcotics trafficking, an amount that is probably between \$200 million and \$400 million per year (estimates range from \$100 million to \$1 billion)."²³ Increasingly, the paramilitary group AUC (United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia) is funding its activities in this way as well. According to a recent US Institute of Peace (USIP) report, "the AUC controls at least 40 percent of the drug trade in Colombia and receives 80 percent of its funding from drug profits."²⁴
- *The "dirty wars":* This refers to a series of violent acts committed from the 1980s onward by various armed organizations. First, drug cartels sponsored the *sicariato*, an operation in which young individuals were hired to selectively assassinate notable political leaders who were fighting against drug cartels. Second, the cartels used bombings and terrorism to spread fear among Colombians; this tactic was in retaliation to extradition laws, mainly those of the United States. Third, state-sponsored crimes became typical; for example, almost 4,000 members of the Patriotic Union, the legal political party affiliated with FARC, were annihilated.^b Finally the guerrillas conducted attacks on key points of infrastructure as a way to spread terror and isolate the population. They have bombed bridges, electric towers, and oil pipelines and refineries.²⁵
- *Diminishing state control of national territories:* Paramilitaries are challenging guerrillas' control over key regions, causing mass displacement in the process. Drug cartels have become the largest landowners in the country as civilians have been forced to move from their traditional land. The majority have joined the poverty belts that surround the major cities in Colombia.
- *Internationalization of the conflict:* The international community's increased interest in the Colombian conflict in the last decade is exhibited by the 1999 \$2 billion US aid package to Colombia, termed "Plan Colombia." This package made the country the third largest recipient of US military aid worldwide after Israel and Egypt between 1999 and 2002—and again in 2004 and 2005, according to budget predictions.²⁶ US military support was originally designed for counter-narcotic operations, but after September 11, 2001, was expanded to include aid for non-narcotic counterinsurgency operations, responding to, among other issues, the threat of guerrilla attacks against multinational economic interests including oil refineries.²⁷ The spillover of the conflict into neighboring countries has given it a regional dimension as well. Funds from Plan Colombia were allocated to Ecuador, Panama, and Venezuela to help contain the effects of combatants entering these countries and Colombian civilians seeking refuge. US authorities see the "drug war" as a regional problem, and most Andean countries have suffered the effects.²⁸ Finally, although many countries have been major donors for humanitarian and peace-building efforts, the Pastrana-FARC process marked the first significant and overt involvement of the international community in supporting negotiations in Colombia. Despite the failure of the process, the international community's

^b Leaders and individuals affiliated with the Patriotic Union (UP) were selectively assassinated by "dark" forces associated with state interests. The UP was successfully dismantled after the deaths of nearly 4,000 of its members. For further information, see *Walking Ghosts: Murder and Guerrilla Politics in Colombia* by Steven Dudley, published in 2003 by Routledge Press.

presence has set a precedent, and there is increasing willingness on the part of the current government to engage with entities such as the United Nations.

Colombia's conflict today has a multitude of armed actors; they include left-wing guerrillas, right-wing paramilitaries, and government security forces. Another layer in the conflict is organized crime; drug cartels add to the complexity by operating in conjunction with the other groups. The common denominator among these actors is their propensity for committing human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law in repeated attacks against unarmed civilians.

FARC (Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces)

The birth, development, and growth of FARC correspond with the well-defined stages of the Colombian conflict. FARC's main leader, Manuel Marulanda Velez (alias "Tirofijo" or "Sureshot"), now an elderly man, began fighting as a peasant guerrilla in the period of *la violencia* in 1948. Soon after FARC was formed in 1964, the group adopted a Marxist ideology, thereby becoming a player in Cold War tensions. However, FARC's substantial expansion during the 1990s was not due to the practice of Marxist ideals or grassroots support but rather to profits from activities such as kidnapping, extortion, and involvement in Colombia's drug trade. According to the Center for International Policy,

The FARC now has about 18,000 members in almost 70 fronts plus mobile columns and urban militias. The group controls or operates freely in 40 to 60 percent of the country, much of it sparsely populated jungles and plains east and south of the Andes. Its leadership has declared that it expects to grow to 30,000 within the next few years.²⁹

Forced recruitment of young people, including minors, has been common practice. But poverty and the state's abandonment of remote areas of the country have contributed to growing impoverishment. As a result,

many young people have also joined the guerrillas or the paramilitaries as a means of receiving a minimal salary, food, and shelter.

Recent estimates indicate that women make up at least one third of FARC's 18,000 fighters. The British newspaper *The Guardian* reported in 2002 that, as the conflict intensified, FARC increasingly relied on female combatants, training girls as young as 13. "The women wear regulation uniforms, carry AK-47 machine guns and machetes, and must march long distances like the men, carrying their own equipment."³⁰ Although the leadership of FARC is all male, women continue to rise through the ranks, some now holding the title of *comandante*. A 2002 BBC report concludes: "Without the women, the FARC would not be able to maintain such territorial domination or mount such frequent operations."³¹

Recent estimates indicate that women make up at least one third of FARC's 18,000 fighters. The British newspaper The Guardian reported in 2002 that, as the conflict intensified, FARC increasingly relied on female combatants, training girls as young as 13. Although the leadership of FARC is all male, women continue to rise through the ranks.

Despite its claims of gaining strength, FARC has recently experienced a period of relative withdrawal. This is due both to President Alvaro Uribe's goal to defeat the guerrillas militarily and to US counterinsurgency aid, among other factors. FARC has lost "key battles to the army and some territory to paramilitaries."³²

ELN (National Liberation Army)

While FARC has roots as a peasant-based organization with a Marxist ideology, ELN was founded in 1964 with a more urban base. Greatly inspired by the Cuban revolution, ELN "grew slowly but attracted many radical students and priests."³³ Its membership has declined in recent years, but ELN still has an estimated 3,500 members. Like FARC, it profits mainly from kidnapping and extortion. The guerrilla organization is known for its attacks on oil refineries and energy infrastructure. ELN's historic, traditional stronghold is the Magdalena Medio region, where Colombia's main oil refinery (ECOPETROL) is located. In recent years, ELN has lost territories it previously controlled to paramilitary groups.

Other significantly smaller guerrilla organizations in Colombia include EPL—now a splinter group of the larger Popular Liberation Army that demobilized in 1991—ERG (Guevarist Revolutionary Army), and ERP (Popular Revolutionary Army).

AUC (United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia)

The AUC is a right-wing paramilitary group with connections to the Colombian army. Both the abuses committed by the guerrillas and the state's inability to protect its citizens contributed to its formation. Like other paramilitary units, its emergence in the early 1980s coincided with the growth of the illicit drug industry. "[Through] funding from drug traffickers and other large landholders and close and open collaboration with Colombia's armed forces," notes the Center for International Policy, "the paramilitaries gained strength throughout the 1980s."³⁴ This is further elucidated in a 2004 *New York Times* article that draws attention to the plight of poor farmers who find themselves on the front lines of a war that pits paramilitaries and drug traffickers against the government and landowners:

As the [Colombian] government negotiates demobilization with the 15,000-member paramilitary force, its leaders are quietly laundering accumulated drug money by taking control of huge tracts, often at the point of a gun. Most of the victims are poor, voiceless farmers, but the officials say even some big landowners have lost their prized farms.³⁵

The paramilitaries currently commit about 80 percent of the killings associated with Colombia's conflict.³⁶ Massacres, forced displacement of entire communities, selective assassinations, and forced disappearances are among the most common tactics used by these groups. Yet, with increasing military and financial resources, they are the fastest growing insurgency movement in the country, expanding about five times as fast as FARC. The paramilitaries have grown ninefold since 1992 and have more than doubled in size since 1998, now counting more than 8,000 members. Although figures cannot be confirmed regarding the existence of women fighters, Human Rights Watch suggests that their numbers in the AUC are "relatively low."³⁷

In 2003, President Uribe initiated a demobilization program with the AUC and other smaller self-defense groups. It is a complex process that has been questioned by national and international civil society organizations. The government's failure to address victim

reparations and accountability for atrocities committed by the paramilitaries, among other issues, has caused concern.³⁸

Colombian Armed Forces

Colombia's official armed forces include the army with 146,000 members, the police with approximately 120,000 members, the air force with 10,000, and the navy with 5,000.³⁹ In contrast to other Latin American countries in the twentieth century, Colombia has not experienced the same pattern of extended periods of military-led dictatorship. However, like other Central and South American militaries, Colombia's armed forces have a poor reputation, are often considered corrupt, and are known to have perpetrated human rights violations.

Since 1991, a civilian has been in charge of the Colombian defense ministry. The ministry's close collaboration with the United States has increased since 1999, when the bulk of US counter-drug aid was channeled to the army and away from the national police. Post–September 11, 2001, US counter-narcotic efforts have shifted to funding and training for counterterrorism, which, in the case of Colombia, translates as counterinsurgency.

Women perform a variety of operations in the Colombian armed forces and can advance to the highest levels in position and rank. Until October 2003, the civilian defense minister was a woman. In addition, the president of ASODEFENSA (Trade Union of Public Servants of the Ministry of Defense, Military Forces, and National Police) is a woman—Maria Clara Baquero Sarmiento, who was shot and left for dead by paramilitaries in 1999. Surviving the attack, she and her family have since been threatened numerous times in attempts to suppress her activism on labor and human rights.⁴⁰

Civil Society in Colombia:

Victims of War and Agents for Peace

The war has affected all sectors of society directly or indirectly. As the conflict and violence escalated in the 1980s and 1990s, civilians increasingly were targets and victims of the war. The huge number of internally displaced people (2.5 million), massacres, kidnapping industry (largely for profit and occasionally for political reasons), forced disappearances, and rape are among the many human rights violations inflicted upon the Colombian people.

In spite of this, or perhaps because of it, Colombia possesses a vibrant civil society working for peace and resisting war. Students, laborers, religious groups, peasants, women, children, Afro-Colombians, indigenous groups, and mothers and relatives of soldiers and the disappeared are involved. Civil society activism is not only broad and inclusive of people from all social strata but is also visible at local, regional, and national levels. There are local associations of communities that have been displaced and have few or no resources (such as the peace communities in the Urabá and Chocó regions) as well as externally-funded non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and think tanks based in Bogotá. Numerous entities supported by the church are active as well. Another phenomenon is the creation of umbrella organizations or networks. In the women's movement, for example, there are at least five major networks, each encompassing hundreds of women's associations and groups across the nation. Such networks are also prevalent in the mainstream peace movement (see box).

The organizations vary in their activities and ideologies. Some specialize in mobilizing mass support for demonstrations and public protests. Many run workshops and training programs for local communities or target populations (such as women, indigenous people, or Afro-Colombians) to build awareness and capacity regarding human rights, conflict resolution, and peace. Others are advocacy and research organizations, working for those who have been kidnapped or forcibly displaced by armed actors, for example. The organizations' demands range from pressing all armed actors to abide by international human rights laws to calling for the inclusion of civil society in the social, economic, and political decisions of the country.

Many of the peace networks and their member organizations have played leadership roles at the national level in activities such as the National Constitutional Assembly in 1991.⁴¹ Between February 9 and July 5, 1991, during the presidency of César Gaviria, civil society groups came together to draft a new constitution. Participants included ethnic and religious minorities; students; women; and recently demobilized guerrilla leaders from Movement April 19 (M-19), PRT (Workers Revolutionary Party), and MAQL (Armed Movement Quintín Lame), an indigenous-based guerrilla group. As a result of this inclusiveness, Colombia addressed issues of cultural, political, and

economic exclusion at the national institutional level. While much of the constitution has not been implemented effectively, it helped inscribe the rights of minorities into the laws of the land and open political space for religious minorities, Afro-Colombians, and indigenous groups.⁴²

Women's Leadership: A Place at the Table and a New Meaning of Peace

The 1991 Constitutional Process catalyzed more extensive engagement by women on issues pertaining to peace and security.⁴³ Following that process, the RNM (National Network of Women) began to work explicitly on negotiations and reconciliation. Likewise, peace organizations that emerged during the 1990s included many women, not only at the base but also in leadership positions.⁴⁴ Women were key leaders in the mass campaign Mandate for Peace, Life, and Freedom that led to 10 million votes on a non-binding ballot accompanying the 1997 local elections. Women's organizations were among the movement's staunchest supporters. According to scholar María Emma Wills, at the end of the twentieth century in Colombia,

Women are organizing themselves in networks, corporations, associations, and informal gatherings, working for the personal and social well-being of their communities . . . generating a series of collective actions, not necessarily feminist, but reaffirming life, questioning violence and de-linking themselves from political parties and left-wing movements. . . . In the realm of popular mobilization, women are starting to mobilize against war in their condition as mothers.⁴⁵

The complexity, variety, and intricate nature of women's groups are hard to capture in a concise manner.⁴⁶ They range from local women's groups in villages to the National Confluence of Networks, an umbrella organization that brings together 10 national women's networks. They operate based on differing ideologies, with some groups rejecting all forms of militarism and refusing to engage in political processes, and others seeking to influence the behavior of the government and armed actors. Like civil society groups in other sectors and nations, tensions exist between urban elites and rural grassroots organizations, and between those that define themselves as "strictly feminist" and others that embrace the multiple identities of women; competition for scarce resources and interna-

Selected Women's Peace Organizations

OFP—Organización Femenina Popular (Popular Feminine Organization): OFP is a women's grassroots organization, working in municipalities throughout Colombia. It provides health and social services to victims of violence and internally displaced people. OFP also runs micro-finance projects and awareness-raising programs denouncing military violence and promoting human rights. Its members include workers, community leaders, small entrepreneurs, youth, and women heads-of-household. OFP's headquarters are located in Barrancabermeja, which is a highly conflicted zone in Magdalena Medio, the birthplace of ELN and center of ECOPETROL, the country's major oil refinery. In recent years, members of OFP have become targets of paramilitaries.

RNM—Red Nacional de Mujeres (National Network of Women): Formed in 1991, RNM has a dozen national sites that enable grassroots organizations and NGOs to participate. It has published extensively on women's rights, women's political history, and the women's agenda for peace, particularly addressing legal issues and the importance of a gender perspective in humanitarian laws. RNM is demanding a space for women at the negotiating table. During the Pastrana-FARC process, RNM was a leading group behind the preparation and implementation of the women's public forum, where women were given a space to articulate their concerns about conflict and their visions of peace. Magdala Velázquez from RNM was nominated to represent the women's movement on the National Peace Council.

La Ruta Pacífica de las Mujeres (The Women's Pacifist Route): The Pacifist Route was founded in 1995 by a group of women from La Casa de la Mujer (The Women's House) to protest the massacre in Urabá, support the families of victims, and express their fatigue and frustration with the war. Headquartered in Medellín, it encompasses approximately 300 social organizations and affiliated NGOs in Antioquia, Valle, Putumayo, Bogotá, Santander, Chocó, Cauca, and soon in Bolívar and Guajira. The Pacifist Route's agenda consists of three main arguments: 1) no war is justified; 2) political negotiations must include elements that transform both private and public conflicts and address the root causes of conflict, including issues related to ethnicity, gender, and class discrimination; and 3) symbols and the language of peace must be used to counter those of war.

IMP—Iniciativa de Mujeres por la Paz (Women's Peace Initiative): IMP was created in 2001. Its political demands include the participation of women in all processes of negotiation and dialogue. In addition, IMP advocates for the incorporation of women's interests and needs into the agenda of negotiations, including reparations for victims of violent acts and the reintegration of women former combatants.

tional attention can hinder their effectiveness. Nonetheless, their existence and activism, and their ability to form strategic coalitions is a testament to their commitment to promoting peace. But their impact does not come without a cost. In 2002, 17 percent of assassinated and disappeared leaders and activists throughout Colombia were women.⁴⁷

In addition to forming organizations, individual women have emerged as leaders on peace and security issues. Several have become well known throughout the country and internationally for their efforts. Piedad

Córdoba, for example, was the first woman and Afro-Colombian to enter the Senate. Chair of the Senate Human Rights Committee and member of the Congressional Peace Commission and the National Council for Peace, Córdoba has firmly placed herself in the line of fire through her human rights activism; as a result, she was kidnapped by the AUC for 16 days in 1999.⁴⁸ Gloria Cuartas, former mayor of conflict-ridden Apartadó, was among the first women to address peace and security issues publicly, bringing to light the trauma experienced by victims of violence.

Negotiations with ELN:

A Lesson in How to Bring Civil Society to the Peace Table

Although smaller in size and armed capacity, ELN is the second largest guerrilla organization in Colombia. FARC and ELN share a left-wing ideology; however, they hold different views of the role of civil society in negotiation processes. Many of the interviewees affirmed that while FARC tends to follow a bilateral model in which government and insurgents are the main actors, ELN believes civil society is a critical actor in negotiations. This is reflected in their documented statements:

The negotiations shall be trilateral. Although it is true that there are two actors in the armed conflict—the state and the insurgency—the so-called “civilian society” plays an important role as a third voice in the conflict. It has enormous potential as a mobilizing force due to its intellectual capacity and political adherence to one or the other of the actors in the conflict. This makes the participation of this “civilian society” indispensable in the deliberations, especially those carried out in the various regions. It is also essential for the “civilian society” to recognize all agreements once they have been reached.¹

A trade industry representative who has participated in numerous dialogues with the group stated, “[With ELN] in order to achieve peace, the political solution ought to be developed in a sort of tripod between insurgency, government, and civil society.”²

The history of ELN negotiations with various Colombian governments dates from 1991. The first negotiations took place in Caracas, Venezuela, between César Gaviria’s government and the Simón Bolívar Guerrilla Coordination (which included ELN at the time), an alliance of insurgent groups that has ceased to exist. Subsequently, in Eastern Antioquia, the Río Verde Agreement was reached in 1998. According to Alvaro Villaraga, this agreement was a significant step for ELN negotiations for three reasons:

First, [it established] the possibility of holding the National Convention; second, a deliberation zone to conduct the National Convention was suggested; and third, the [agreement] defined five main topics: the first one is about human rights and international humanitarian law; the other topics refer to social and environmental issues, ethnic minorities, and development.

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

The concept of a National Convention that would include civil society, government, and ELN representatives was modeled on the 1991 National Constitutional Assembly. In 1998, at a meeting in Mainz, Germany, ELN and representatives of some civil society sectors initiated discussions along the lines of the National Convention. They formed a series of working groups ("commissions"), a thematic agenda, and a working methodology. In spite of the momentum gained, the Pastrana government focused on the dialogues with FARC and only reached out to the ELN when the process with FARC reached an impasse. Nelson Berrio explains the rationale behind Pastrana's decision to focus on FARC:

[It was an attempt to] negotiate with the strongest group [FARC] which will eventually attract the weaker [ELN]. That was the logic, so the ELN process was left alone. At the end of his term, the Pastrana government reached out to ELN, but there was not enough time to produce a dynamic dialogue. . . . Even then, the ELN process went beyond the FARC dialogues. For example, with respect to suggesting international mediation, ELN went far beyond. FARC never even touched upon that. ELN even suggested a list of countries to help establish the mediation process.

Despite ELN's stance, no administration has completed a successful settlement with the movement. When Alvaro Uribe began his term as president, Luis Carlos Restrepo, currently Colombia's peace commissioner, offered ELN the possibility of reinitiating conversations with the government. However, for a variety of reasons, perhaps including pressure from FARC, ELN decided to suspend all peace conversations, arguing that they had no interest in talking with the current government (Alvaro Uribe's administration).³

Many Colombian peace activists observe that ELN's eventual peace process will contribute to the refinement of models and structures—such as the National Convention—that actively integrate civil society groups not only as "observers," but as key actors in the peace equation together with the warring parties.

¹ Center for International Policy. *Peace on the Table*. Washington, DC: CIP, 2001. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.ciponline.org/colombia/pot-eln.htm>>.

² Gómez, Mario. Personal Interview. October 2003.

³ Ibid.

She is renowned for assisting her constituents whose relatives were killed, even helping them dig graves. As mayor, she directed funds from her municipal budget to improve education and social services.

Leonora Castaño, president of ANMUCIC (National Association of Peasant, Black, and Indigenous Women of Colombia), has faced death threats as a result of her activism for peace and human rights for rural women.⁴⁹ After two other members of ANMUCIC were abducted in the summer of 2003, Castaño was forced

to leave the country. Ingrid Betancourt, a leading advocate for an end to violence and corruption, won a House of Representatives seat in 1994 and a Senate seat in 1998, which she resigned in 2001 to form a new political party and run for president in the 2002 elections. While campaigning in San Vicente del Caguán, the area ceded to guerrillas during the recently ended Pastrana-FARC peace talks, she was kidnapped by FARC and remains missing today.

PART TWO: OFFICIAL DIALOGUES AND NEGOTIATIONS IN COLOMBIA

Periods of violent conflict in Colombia are far more prevalent than phases in which parties have attempted to reach political settlements. However, the country has a 20-year history of attempting to negotiate with armed actors; in fact, Colombia has a president-appointed Peace Commissioner, an individual in charge of the government's peace policy and negotiations with various groups. Daniel García-Peña, a former Peace Commissioner, explained the history of negotiations in Colombia as "a pendulant process between attempts to seek peace and end the armed conflict with a negotiated settlement and cycles where that option is abandoned and war intensifies." In this context, the recent Pastrana-FARC talks were not the first attempt to achieve peace—nor will they be the last.

In the early 1990s, prior to the Pastrana-FARC dialogues, several guerrilla organizations signed peace agreements, disarmed, and demobilized. Various factors account for this *détente*, including the socio-political changes of the early 1990s

in Colombia and worldwide. In Colombia, in the immediate post-Cold War years, groups such as M-19, EPL (Popular Liberation Army), MAQL, and Corriente de Renovación Socialista (an ELN splinter group) put down their guns and began to affect political change through the democratic process, including the 1991 Constitutional Assembly. Although the demobilization process was far from perfect, these groups have completely ceased their armed struggle, and some are participating in the political system as formal parties. Yet other groups, such as FARC, ELN, and AUC, have continued to wage war.

The Pastrana-FARC Dialogues

As a result of the escalation of military confrontations in 1996, civil society intensified their mobilization efforts for a return to negotiations. An alliance of REDEPAZ (National Network of Peace), País Libre (Free Country), and other organizations launched the successful campaign Mandate for Peace, Life, and Freedom, whereby ten million Colombians voted for a negotiated solution to the violence on a non-binding

ballot during the 1997 local elections. Ana Teresa Bernal, one of the campaign's leaders, says of the alliance's response to the heightened violence:

We decided to go from protesting to proposing. The Movement for Life was formed in 1985, and in 1992, we began organizing peace weeks. The Mandate for Peace began in 1996 when children voted for peace, which was broadened in 1997 to all the population, with 10 million people voting. It was so important that it legitimized the negotiation process with the [guerrilla organizations] FARC and ELN.⁵⁰

The campaign galvanized peace marches in 1998 and 1999 that were organized and supported by a wide

range of civil society actors. Women's groups, particularly RNM, participated in the Citizen's Working Groups for Building Peace convened by peace NGOs such as REDEPAZ and INDEPAZ (Institute for Development and Peace Studies). In the words of

*"I believe that women gained visibility as a sector, as political actors who decided to participate in the peace process."
—Jorge Rojas, civil society leader,
October 2003*

Gloria Nieto, a member of INDEPAZ: "The first big marches took place in 1998 and 1999. We were leading those processes. . . . Our mode was to resist by marching with one voice that represented all social sectors for peace."

Women were central to the process, both at the grassroots level and as leaders of the movement. For example, among others, Ana Teresa Bernal, president of REDEPAZ, and Gloria Nieto were key mobilizers. The success of the effort was largely due to their outreach and alliance with other sectors, and the commitment of some social classes in Colombia to resisting war and supporting peace.

Although these activities do not fully explain why former President Pastrana committed himself to dialogues with FARC in 1999, nearly all interviewees for this study agree that the massive marches and campaigns for peace encouraged the parties to come to the table. Leading peace activists, such as Luis Sandoval, consider the late 1990s as the peak of the peace movement in Colombia.

From the outset, it was clear that the process into which the parties entered was not formal negotiations; rather it was “talks about talks.” The discussions were not centered on the production of a peace accord but focused on identifying issues that could be on an eventual agenda, and procedural and logistical processes that were of importance to both sides. In effect, nothing was negotiated. As Jorge Rojas, director of CODHES (Human Rights and Displacement Bureau), journalist, and national peace leader, lucidly explains:

First, there wasn't any negotiation; there was dialogue. Second, one can explain the absence of a negotiation by saying that the government wanted to talk but not to negotiate, whereas FARC wanted to negotiate but not to yield. That generated a bad atmosphere from the start.

The dialogues began on January 7, 1999, in San Vicente del Caguán, a demilitarized zone handed over by the Pastrana's government to FARC. It was fundamentally a bilateral process, although a series of commissions were established to channel input from civil society to the formal negotiating teams. While there were flaws in these structures, it was nonetheless an important milestone in the history of Colombian civil society's engagement with formal peace processes. The dialogues between FARC, the government, and the committees worked in the following manner (see diagram):

Both FARC and the government agreed on a topic to start the dialogues. Next, they imparted instructions to the Thematic Commission to initiate the *audiencias públicas* [public forums] in order to discuss the chosen theme with citizens and social groups. Those groups were transported by the government to Los Pozos, within the demilitarized zone, and were heard by the Thematic Commission. Their demands were documented and put forth for consideration by the negotiating team.⁵¹

The National Negotiation Table

President Pastrana had four negotiating teams and appointed two Peace Commissioners over the course of the dialogues. Pastrana directly chose the commissioners—Victor G. Ricardo and Camilo Gómez, who were part of his inner circle of political allies and close friends.⁵² The first team, which included Liberal party leader María Emma Mejía, businessman Nicanor Restrepo, Senator Fabio Valencia Cosso, and Atlántico Governor Rodolgo Espinosa, was tasked with designing the agenda. The second team, which included businessman Pedro Gómez, Conservative party legislator Juan Gabriel Uribe, and General José Gonzalo Forero of the Colombian army, organized FARC's European tour and had the task of advancing concrete negotiation topics. According to scholar León Valencia, Pastrana was criticized for many reasons, one of which was the closed nature of his first negotiating teams.⁵³ In response to this criticism, the third negoti-



ating team included Liberal Party leaders and church members. The fourth and last team formed when FARC was forced by the Pastrana negotiating team to work on a ceasefire and an end to hostilities.⁵⁴

Several interviewees mentioned the lack of basic negotiating skills among government representatives, as well as their limited knowledge of the conflict in general and FARC insurgencies in particular. Pastrana and his teams were often criticized for their “absence of strategy”; a 2002 report in the national journal *Semana* explains: “It is important to clarify that what has been criticized by several sectors as the government’s “total absence of strategy” is, in reality, an extremely simple strategy: avoid FARC walking away from the table.”⁵⁵

FARC had one negotiation team throughout the dialogues that included most of its senior political leaders—Simón Trinidad, Ivan Ríos, Felipe Rincón, Marco León Calarcá, and Pedro Aldana. With one exception on the Thematic Commission (described below), FARC’s negotiation team consisted exclusively of top male guerrilla leaders.

The Notables Commission

The Notables Commission was created as a direct personal agreement between Pastrana and FARC’s top leader Manuel Marulanda Velez, and it consisted of four members: Carlos Lozano and Alberto Pinzón, suggested by FARC, and Vladimiro Naranjo and Ana Mercedes Gómez as the government’s representatives. “It was a commonly agreed-upon commission formed to make recommendations for a sustainable peace.”⁵⁶ Its mission was to produce a document for putting a ceasefire in place that, in the words of one of its members,

was a great effort. It’s a consensus document, in which people from left- and right-wing ideologies worked together. . . . The entire text, as well as the recommendations, was endorsed by the three members regardless of whether or not some of the suggestions were unpalatable to one member. But in order to build unity and reach a consensus, we all made a great effort.⁵⁷

The document touched upon key topics never agreed upon or discussed before by FARC, such as international humanitarian law and the importance of negotiating during a truce. As most interviewees noted, the paramount reason for the failure of the peace process was that dialogues were conducted without a ceasefire,

now considered a crucial starting point for any future negotiations between the Colombian government and FARC.

Unfortunately, the document arrived too late in the process. Carlos Lozano explains: “While we were working, so many things occurred so quickly that when the document was submitted, the peace process was rapidly going downhill.”

The Thematic Commission (TC)

The Thematic Commission was “a bridge between the negotiating table and Colombian society.”⁵⁸ Its main objective was to “call for public forums to gather and synthesize opinions of participants and communicate them to the negotiators.”⁵⁹ The negotiators agreed on a topic and then instructed TC members to initiate the public forums where civil society representatives were given an opportunity to voice their concerns. The Colombians who were invited to the public forums arrived at Los Pozos, 25 kilometers from San Vicente del Caguán; their demands were summarized and then delivered to the negotiators by the TC. In the words of Ana Teresa Bernal:

The TC started working on the topic that both government and guerrilla considered the most important: employment. People from different sectors started participating in a significant way in this process; workers, peasants, women, and region[al groups] participated.

The TC members were selected by the government and the guerrillas, and included elected officials and leaders from civil society, one of whom was Ana Teresa Bernal of the National Peace Council.⁶⁰

FARC’s Mariana Páez, the only woman representative in the entire official negotiations process, also served on this commission.⁶¹

When evaluating the role of the TC during the dialogues, the general consensus among the interviewees was that the TC was an innovative initiative, “a step forward in suggesting transmission channels for citizen participation.”⁶² However, it was, as Daniel García-Peña later explains, “a very small step in the right direction.” Many reasons account for its limitations. First, there was a lack of enthusiasm and attendance by government representatives, especially at the end of the process. In contrast, FARC maintained interest throughout the sessions of the Thematic Commission. Luis Sandoval explains, “On the occasions that I went

to visit [Los Pozos], I always saw how, after a TC session, FARC appointed young guerrillas to transcribe everything that happened during the session.”⁶³

Second, and more importantly, the ability of the TC to influence negotiations was inadequate. In fact, as Bernal describes, there was no clarity among the members on the role of the TC—on whether it had real decision-making power and influence or simply served as a bridge. “The question was: Is the TC allowed to provide opinions? That was a constant question all the time, [for] three years.”

The Public Forums (Audiencias Públicas)

Various social groups—including students, artists, women, workers, and peasants—traveled to the demilitarized zone to share their opinions with members of the Thematic Commission. In total, during the Pastrana-FARC dialogues, approximately 22 public forums were conducted with some 25,000 people participating. Each forum was transmitted live via national public television across the entire country. Discussion topics included culture, youth, women, illicit crops, and the role of the international community in Colombia.⁶⁴

The idea for the public forums was initiated by FARC, says Jorge Rojas. “FARC suggested the public forum as a way to bring ‘the common people’ into this process.” The public forums were an innovative method, particularly given the bilateral nature of the dialogues.

The majority of the interviewees—many of whom attended the public forums—agreed that although they were an interesting exercise for “collective catharsis,” as Mario Gomez labels them, they had minimal impact on the dialogue process. Says Luis Sandoval:

However interesting the public forums were, it was a closed scheme and [therefore] insufficient. It was received with great enthusiasm and optimism; nearly 25,000 people went to El Caguán. . . . But it definitely didn’t position society’s participation at a higher level and didn’t achieve the proper role of citizen participation required to solve the armed conflict through a political settlement.

The National Peace Council (NPC)

Although not a part of the official negotiations process, the NPC is relevant as one of the first mixed bodies of civil society and government created in Colombia for the sole purpose of promoting peace policies. It was created during the Ernesto Samper

administration (1994–1998) as a forum for consensus building on a state policy for peace. The NPC is composed of 60 members representing the government, legislature, political parties, Catholic and Protestant churches, trade industry groups, students, women, ethnic minorities, and other civil society groups.

During the Pastrana-FARC dialogues, several members of the NPC were elected to participate in certain aspects of the negotiations. Of the 60 individuals that make up the NPC, 7 were elected to be on its National Steering Committee—considered the NPC’s leadership. When the dialogues began,

it was established that one person from the National Steering Committee would represent the NPC; that person was Ana Teresa Bernal. Elected by the NPC, she not only represented REDEPAZ—or civil society, for that matter—she was representing the threefold institution [the NPC], which includes national and regional public authorities and civil society. This is how she entered the Thematic Commission of the [Pastrana-FARC] dialogues.⁶⁵

Only 2 out of 60 NPC members are women. Ana Teresa Bernal was nominated because of her long experience in the peace movement and particularly for her leadership in the campaign to collect 10 million votes for peace, and Magdala Velázquez was nominated by many women’s organizations and endorsed by then-Peace Commissioner Daniel García-Peña to represent women at the NPC. After the 1991 National Constitutional Assembly, the nomination of a woman to the NPC was one of the first examples of women’s participation in a national peace initiative. Legally, for the NPC to hold a session, the Colombian president must convene it.⁶⁶ Unfortunately, during the Pastrana-FARC “dialogues,” the NPC was convened on only a few occasions, thus lessening its ability to effectively influence the negotiations. As Jorge Rojas notes:

The National Peace Council only met twice—or maybe three times. It was an instrument of very little use for the [Pastrana] government and of little interest to FARC. This is a white elephant that we have created with great intentions, but with limited ability to gather the parties involved in conflict.

The International Community

The international community participated in the dialogues in three different ways. First, through the UN’s offices, the Secretary-General’s Special Representative James Lemoyne was in constant communication with

the parties, despite the fact that the United Nations had no official mediation capacity. Second, the ambassadors of Canada, Cuba, Spain, France, Italy, Mexico, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland formed the “Group of Friends of Colombia and Peace Facilitators”; the role of the “Friends” was especially significant in attempts to revive the process at the end of the dialogues. Ambassadors representing member countries visited the demilitarized zone and tried to facilitate the talks between government and guerrilla representatives. Finally, the international community prepared and participated in one of the public forums devoted to the topic of illicit crops.

Women in the Pastrana-FARC Dialogues

Women played a limited but crucial role in the formal dialogues; of the approximately 40 people in official negotiating capacities during the dialogues, 4 were women. María Emma Mejía was a member of the first negotiation team of President Andrés Pastrana. She was the only woman member, and was present only briefly, as the team’s makeup was changed early in the process. Mejía is a politician originally affiliated with the traditional Liberal party, was the minister of foreign relations during the administration of President Ernesto Samper Pizano, and belonged to the movement *Firmes por Bogotá* (Firmly for Bogotá).

Mariana Páez⁶⁷ was FARC’s representative at the Thematic Commission and the only official female representative of the guerrilla movement for the entire process. Interviewees who commented on Páez describe her as “a well-behaved person, very coherent [with FARC’s official discourse]. . . . She would not move an inch from FARC’s military discourse.”⁶⁸ Another perception of Páez was that “she would maintain her position as a FARC guerrilla more than her condition as a female.”⁶⁹ She refuted any discussion of gender-based discrimination within the movement but was initially willing to engage in discussion of gender issues, and she officially co-coordinated a women’s forum as part of an effort to engage different sectors of the public.

Ana Mercedes Gómez was one of four members of the Notables Commission, whose main objective was to draft recommendations for a ceasefire endorsed by both parties.⁷⁰ She directs the main newspaper of Antioquia, *El Colombiano*, and one of the principal national daily papers. Gómez has been an active member of civil society, supporting a peaceful resolu-

tion to the conflict. For personal and political reasons, she resigned from the Commission before the consensus document was completed.

Ana Teresa Bernal was involved in the process as a member of the Thematic Commission, representing the National Peace Council. Reflecting on her initial experience in the Commission, Bernal says:

When I arrived to the TC, I was feeling like a “bug in a glass of milk.” The guerrillas looked at me with mistrust. I was told many times that I was part of the establishment. . . . [But] the government saw me in alliance with the guerrillas. It was a very annoying thing. Later on, I gained some trust. . . . I limited myself to the tasks that were imposed by the TC. The negotiation teams assigned us something, and we did it, which was very limiting in our opinion. . . .

Regarding the gender differences, Bernal—who spends much of her time in traditionally male spaces, such as negotiation teams and peace commissions—admits:

I had strength and thought that [being a woman] would not affect me. Today there are scenarios where I feel that being a woman affects me a lot and that men really listen and pay much more attention to each other than to women. . . . Being a woman is quite difficult, and when nominations are made, men are often preferred. Even if there are very competent women, a man is chosen. The struggle to gain a political space [for women] is very hard.

Nonetheless, Bernal established rapport with the female FARC representative, Mariana Páez, and was instrumental in initiating the women’s forum during the dialogues. She is also widely perceived as a woman committed to achieving peace in Colombia, a pioneer in the civil society movement for a peaceful resolution to Colombia’s conflict. Journalist Holman Morris describes Bernal as:

an unconditional woman for peace, not of a romantic peace but the negotiated settlement type of peace. She was [there] full-time; she dedicated hours that she sacrificed from her family to be at the negotiations. I believe that, as a woman, she wants a better future for her children, and that is why she gave so many hours [to the negotiations]. Her most important contribution was persistence. . . . she was an example to other members of the Thematic Commission. . . . she is devoted to achieving a political settlement of the Colombian conflict.

Magdala Velázquez, a leading feminist scholar and peace activist, was not part of the official process but is mentioned here because she was very active as a member of the National Peace Council. She traveled several times with other civil society members to El Caguán (the demilitarized zone) and met with FARC members to discuss gender issues. She was also one of the main organizers of the women's public forum.

In sum, these women primarily represented the government or FARC in the various structures. Their individual impact on the talks is difficult to assess, since the process was flawed; as formal delegates, they had little opportunity to move beyond their official positions. However, without the presence of these women in the formal negotiating structures, there would not have been a women's public forum. Although they did not enter the process with a "gender agenda," these women leaders were instrumental in bringing women's voices to the national arena.

**Collective Processes at the Dialogues:
Women's Special and Public Forum**

Historically, neither the FARC nor the government considered the demands of civil society as important to negotiation processes, nor had an event ever been designed to give voice to women's demands and perspectives on peace. Therefore, the women's public forum held in the demilitarized zone on June 25, 2000, is considered the first point at which a women's agenda for peace was articulated and prioritized in the official process.

Gloria Tobón from RNM explains the reasons for organizing a women's forum:

First, we were not simply reacting. We had a political discourse, and we had important things to say. Moreover, the audience showed that we questioned the patriarchal war. I mean, women were very critical of the warlike positions; a pacifist position was underscored, and it was stated that we were in favor of a political negotiation and that women had to be involved—not only in the audience, but also at the

negotiating table—and that women should have a role in the decision-making process of the peace negotiation. . . .

Patricia Ariza, a nationally known actor, artist, and peace activist, explains how the Women's Special and Public Forum came about: "Ana Teresa suggested the forum at the Thematic Commission, and there it gained its character [as a public and special forum]." According to journalist Florance Thomas, the women's *audiencia pública* was an invitation from the National Peace Council, REDEPAZ, FARC, and the government to all Colombian women and women's groups to

participate in the dialogues.⁷¹ Mariana Páez and Ana Teresa Bernal coordinated the event, which was supported by RNM (National Network of Women) and other women's organizations.

The overall theme of the women's forum was "economy and employment," as agreed on by the official negotiators. According to those interviewed, one of the key

elements that contributed to the success of the women's forum was the deliberate choice to combine traditional forms of dialogue with artistic expression. As Patricia Ariza comments:

We decided to do a polyphonic forum. In every political intervention [at the women's forum], we used artistic and creative language as well—say a fragment of theater, or a song. There was a painter, for instance, who went there, and so we called a guerrilla woman also, and the two women painted a mural throughout the whole forum. . . . It is not easy for people to accept the importance of other languages, that is to say, a perspective a bit more polyphonic about life. We wanted to do a different thing, drawing on human emotions and feelings—much more complex."

Martha Lucía Vasquez, currently the Presidential Councilor for Women's Equality, was a businesswoman at that time. She became involved in organizing the women's forum, seeking funding from the private sector for the event. Vasquez remarks:

"One of the first forums, at least the first one that was not convened by the government or FARC but as a result of external demands, was the women's [forum]. I believe that in recent years, we have seen the women's movement appear with its own voice; this is a fact."

—Daniel García-Peña, former Peace Commissioner, October 2003

I believe that the credibility I had within the business sector allowed me to obtain the financial resources to fund the costs of doing the forum. . . . There was some skepticism regarding the process, but the fact that they knew me and the professional women's network that was also involved motivated the funders to support us.

Perhaps one of the most interesting aspects of the women's forum, says Vasquez, was the three-month preparation:

The preparation process of the forum was very important; I would say more than the forum itself. It lasted three or four months. Every week [on Tuesdays] we would meet with women from all sectors—peasants, indigenous women, mothers of kidnapped soldiers, academic women—with huge cultural differences and sometimes even strong antagonism between them.

Vasquez describes the procedures they put in place to enable these diverse groups to carry out the discussions and reach a consensus, so that the forum itself reflected their coherence and unity:

We would advance every week; a methodology was being established. We had work tables to discuss the various topics, and when a delicate theme arose and we saw that there was no agreement, we would clearly state the disagreement and the points of agreement as well. That is how we finally wrote our documents. Additionally, each organization had the freedom to produce their papers as a group. . . . We issued a series of regulations, and all women had to abide by them in order to participate, for we could not risk that any women would not come back from El Caguán.

During the week preceding the event, the forum was featured on the national news, demonstrating that women were being heard on a new platform and a much larger scale. "From Bogotá, three airplanes and around 10 buses full of women journeyed to El Caguán," remembers Vasquez. In the end, some 600 women from different regions, ethnic backgrounds, and educational levels attended the forum.⁷² From the formal structures, Ana Teresa Bernal and painter David Manzur, both members of the Thematic Commission, were present during the forum. Government officials were markedly absent, but FARC members were present; some even joined in the dancing. From the outset, the women's event was dif-

ferent from other *audiencias públicas*. Forum participants asked that FARC representatives remove their weapons from the tabletops, as they were intimidating. The guerrillas complied and placed the weapons under the table. Although it was a symbolic gesture, it nonetheless helped transform the atmosphere of the forum.

The participants had agreed on six different presentations to deliver at the women's forum. The first was given by peasant women who posited rural reconstruction as a pillar to rebuilding Colombia. The next presentation explained why women were in El Caguán for the forum. It focused on a document, signed by 85 organizations, that addressed women's perspectives on the economy, growth, employment, equity, and peace—all relating to the suggested theme for the Public Forum. The third presentation was the jointly delivered Central Consensus Paper, which had been drafted by the women's groups participating in the public forum and emphasized the importance of sustained dialogues, women's approaches to peace, and their vision of a country with social justice, democracy, and peace. The fourth was a series of papers presented by the various groups attending the event that wanted space to express their issues individually. For example, the peasant women's groups came forward with their statements. The fifth was a cultural presentation, where a drama was enacted and guerilla women and peace activists painted a mural together. The last was a presentation by Thematic Commission members and official co-coordinators of the women's forum, Ana Teresa Bernal and Mariana Páez, discussing the rationale and motivation for the forum.⁷³

Colombia's main newspapers, *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, reported on the women's forum, vividly describing the event and the statements presented by the women.⁷⁴ The presentations at the women's forum emphasized that peace is the only viable solution in Colombia and that women play a central role in building and preserving peace. By transcending their ethnic, class, regional, and political origins to join together at the forum, the women were further claiming that peace is also a women's project: Women not only have a stake in peace, but they can offer solutions to resolve existing conflicts. Drawing on their own experiences and perspectives, they succeeded in shedding light on the human face of conflict. They spoke of the deepening economic, social, political, and cultural divisions, and the need to address the ethnic, gender, and generational dimensions of the conflict. The women at the

forum also addressed the fragility of the dialogue process; they urged the parties not to leave the negotiating table, particularly at times of impasse. Finally, the women showed their determination to play a role in the dialogue process and their willingness to facilitate better communication between the various parties, armed actors, and the rest of the population.⁷⁵ Unlike other forums, women followed up with an evaluation session and produced a publication based on the various presentations.

***Women's Participation in the
Pastrana-FARC Dialogues: An Analysis***

On July 5, 2000, 37 organizations involved in the preparation of the women's forum gathered to evaluate its results. The following achievements and weaknesses were identified.

Achievements

- The Women's Special and Public Forum was the first political event of its kind.
- The visibility of women's organizations had increased among the public.
- Women had consolidated their position as a political force in Colombia.
- The production of a consensus document by women's organizations was a first step toward strengthening ties between disparate groups.
- The event was the first time that rituals, drama, songs, and paintings had been used in a public forum to address issues relating to the conflict.

Weaknesses

- Forum participants presented too many papers for consideration by the Thematic Commission.
- Senior government officials were absent from this and other public forums, signaling the government's lack of motivation to listen to citizens' proposals.
- The women's groups did not have a media strategy and thus were unable to make effective use of the international press that was present for the events.
- Despite their cooperation for this event, there is still some competition within the women's peace movement that detracts from the larger mission.

Although women excelled in the execution of the women's forum and, as Magdala Velázquez indicates, gained important prestige and visibility, "[the forum] did not change the way the conflict affects women."

It was the bilateral nature of the negotiations that most impeded civil society in general and the women's movement in particular from influencing the dialogues. As Mauricio Uribe explains, "civil society played a role designed by the government." Despite these limitations, women's participation in the various negotiation structures did result in changes within the women's movement for peace, FARC, and Colombian public opinion in general.

The participation of women at the public forum helped make the women's movement more cohesive and brought vastly different groups of women together to start a consensus-building process. Although not a causal relationship, the fact that it was the women's sector that organized the major mobilization for peace following the collapse of the dialogues in July 2002 shows how women understood their organizing capacity and positioned themselves as political actors. Moreover, Luis Sandoval, scholar and peace activist from the Mario Cano Institute, states that the women's forum helped articulate women's contributions to peace, which can be very diverse: "For me, the forum brought together all the papers with women's positions, including the common document. . . . These processes are almost underground, unheard."

Regarding women's impact on FARC, the public forums provided a space for the average Colombian to interact one-on-one with guerrilla leaders. Beyond the excitement and mixed feelings that the encounter might have produced in civil society, women in particular were able to communicate some key messages to the FARC leadership. As Patricia Ariza describes:

[At the forum] there was criticism against the "machismo" within FARC, which was a newly opened debate, particularly [with regard to] the fact that women do not participate in the process. Even more, [FARC] ended up appointing a woman to the Thematic Commission [Mariana Páez] as a consequence of the pressure applied by women's organizations. . . .

One of the greatest achievements of women during the three years of dialogues was that all actors (principally FARC and the government) were challenged—some for the first time—to think about women, gender

issues, and their importance in the conflict. Magdala Velázquez best describes how this was achieved after she delivered a letter to FARC's leadership denouncing cases of women being raped by its members in southern Colombia:

So I went to this meeting and delivered the letter. I signed Magdala Velázquez from the National Network of Women. . . . I gave it to FARC's leadership. . . . Time passed, and there was another meeting that I could not attend. I heard that they were really angry that a "blond" had arrived with a letter and that they had no control over its contents. . . . Apparently, from what I have heard, something happened within FARC. There was a "call to order". . . . There was trouble inside [FARC] because of this.

On her return to El Caguán, a FARC leader aggressively confronted Velázquez, and she was subjected to a series of misogynist jokes while receiving no support from her male civil society partners. "It was a very difficult episode for women," says Velázquez, "and only then did I understand the magnitude of how alone we are in this process to talk about this issue."

The incident itself and the reactions Magdala observed reflect many of the challenges women face. But they also show that by highlighting gender issues—and challenging the conduct of armed actors—women can effect change gradually. Finally, a major result of the women's forum was that it began to reveal women's political demands on a national level, which meant that women's demonstrations, processes, and demands gained some recognition—not only from the small circle of people concerned with peace, but also by the public at large.

The Breakdown of the Pastrana-FARC Dialogues

On the evening of February 20, 2002, President Pastrana appeared publicly, stating, "I have decided to terminate the peace process with FARC."⁷⁶ This led to

an outcry by many civil society representatives who took action immediately. They protested for days and nights in front of UN headquarters in Bogotá. The "Groups of Friends of Colombia" and concerned NGOs, both Colombian and international, sent countless letters. Numerous meetings were held between ambassadors in El Caguán and the armed actors. All fruitlessly tried to save the process. The country entered a new cycle of war, this time massively supported by the embittered public. Hence, the presidential candidate who promised a military solution to Colombia's conflict with a slogan of "strong hand, soft heart"—former Antioquia governor Alvaro Uribe Velez—was elected with an ample victory margin (52 percent) and began his term on August 7, 2002.⁷⁷

Almost all interviewees noted the closed nature of the negotiation model was an impediment to peace. One of the many reasons this process failed was the reluctance of both players (FARC and the Pastrana administration) to include civil society as active members at the official negotiation table. For example, President Pastrana rarely convened the National Peace Council during the talks. Many interviewees

"Women are not only making demands on issues related to gender, they are thinking about all aspects of life in Colombia. There has been no other actor that has thought [about Colombia] so comprehensively; this is why women's contributions are of utmost importance."
—Luis Sandoval, peace activist and member of the Maria Cano Institute and REDEPAZ, October 2003

interpreted this as a sign that the government was not interested in actively integrating "other" players into the decision-making component of peace negotiations.⁷⁸

Another commonly cited cause of failure was the design of the committees and commissions in the negotiations process. The Thematic Commission and the public forums were certainly a step toward broadening participation; nevertheless, the government showed little interest in attending many of the sessions as the process unfolded. Perhaps the most fundamental flaw within these structures was that the Thematic Commission, public forums, and even the Notables Commission were conceived within a bilateral framework. In other words, the members of these deliberating bodies were endorsed by either the government or FARC, eliminating the possibility for civil society

organizations to freely nominate and chose their own representatives.

However imperfect the negotiations model was, the lack of a ceasefire was ultimately the biggest impediment to successfully completing the negotiation process. The attacks that interrupted the dialogues included a series of human rights abuses by the guerrillas and a series of massacres conducted by the paramilitaries.

Alvaro Villarraga recalls how the event of the “collar-bomb” (the image of a woman with a bomb that was wrapped around her neck and detonated was broadcast internationally) paralyzed the negotiations:

The “collar-bomb” incident broke the negotiations. [The perpetrators] were common criminals, as was established by the investigation. . . . Pastrana accused FARC and interrupted the dialogues and the participation of the international community. . . . FARC did similar things, helping FARC prisoners escape from [government] jails, and using the demilitarized zone irresponsibly.

In addition, FARC took advantage of the situation by using the demilitarized zone, which had been turned over to them as a confidence-building measure by the government, to hold kidnap victims and stolen cattle, as well as for drug production.

In sum, the main reasons the Pastrana-FARC dialogues collapsed, according to many interviewed, include:

- The reluctance of both the government and FARC to permit active participation and grant decision-making power to civil society groups
- The improvised nature of the government’s peace policy
- The misuse and abuse of the demilitarized zone by FARC
- The lack of negotiation of substantial issues beyond formalities

- The absence of a ceasefire prior to the start of the dialogues
- Plan Colombia—as the talks were taking place, President Pastrana was also accepting \$1.2 billion in mostly military aid to intensify the war and professionalize the Colombian army
- The strengthening of military capacity by both sides and the continued human rights abuses during the dialogues
- Isolated violent incidents performed as “spoiler events”
- The lack of monitoring and accountability from civil society organizations

Not all aspects of the Pastrana-FARC dialogues were flawed, however. For example, Daniel-García and other interviewees mentioned the following factors as positive legacies:

- Participation of the international community
- The prisoner exchange accord, in which the parties agreed to exchange imprisoned guerrillas for citizens kidnapped by FARC
- “San Francisco de las Sombras,” the belated but nonetheless seminal document signed by government and FARC negotiators, in which they agreed to consider the recommendations of the Notables Commission for a ceasefire

Nonetheless, the termination of the dialogues was a step back for the civil society movement that had struggled to gain some space and recognition in the peacemaking process in Colombia, especially during the late 1990s. In May 2002, an attempt to reconvene civil society groups as a collective voice against the escalation of war failed, signifying the magnitude of the disillusionment that had descended on mainstream activists.

PART THREE: RISING FROM THE ASHES—WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO PEACE

The months following the collapse of the Pastrana-FARC dialogues left the peace movement frustrated and powerless, with public opinion demanding effective solutions to end the violence even if it required increased militarization. But as the broader movement went into decline, the women's peace movement—fresh from its experiences at the forum—found new energy.

Soon after the collapse of the talks, members of the newly formed Pacifist Route and OFP (Popular Feminine Organization)—which have a permanent alliance—planned a large march in Bogotá. They called on other organizations to join the process so that women's rejection of war would be effectively heard. That the groups—including IMP (Women's Peace Initiative), RNM, Pacifist Route, Women's National Consensus Table, and OFP—with often differing ideologies were able to unite and mobilize their constituencies was a key to their ultimate success. It also reflected the fact that, despite differences, the majority of women's peace networks and coalitions agreed that attention to gender issues and the inclusion of women and other traditionally excluded groups in peace negotiations are essential to building sustainable peace. As Patricia Buriticá describes:

We gathered together and agreed [to stage] a protest. The main objective was to show that women are against the war; [women support] a political negotiated settlement for women's rights, for their lives, their integrity, their bodies and ideas; and [they support] autonomous participation of women in the peace process and the demilitarization of civilian life.

The march was organized over a four-month period by five different networks that gathered hundreds of local, regional, and national women's groups. "We produced a basic joint document," recalls Buriticá. "All the organizations could include their proposals."

On July 25, 2002, 40,000 women and men gathered for the march. The event signaled the new leading role of women's organizations for peace.⁷⁹ "I don't think women have ever done something like this before," says Patricia Buriticá. "It was the most significant mobilization of the year." The demonstration also had a positive effect on the broader peace movement and

was covered by national and international media outlets.⁸⁰ Says Gloria Tobón, member of RNM and director of Humanizar, a women's think tank and NGO:

I believe that the event was a sort of salvation for Colombian civil society because in the last year, for instance, women have been the main proponents of peace actions and war resistance processes. [The march] showed a spark of light that said, here people are doing things, while

"I believe that the event was a sort of salvation for Colombian civil society because in the last year, for instance, women have been the main proponents of peace actions and war resistance processes. [The march] showed a spark of light that said, here people are doing things, while the rest of civil society was arms-crossed, frightened, worried, and in crisis about the ruptured dialogues."
—Gloria Tobón, woman peace activist,
October 2003

the rest of civil society was arms-crossed, frightened, worried, and in crisis about the ruptured dialogues.

The march was an invitation to both men and women in Colombia to demilitarize their lives by:

- opposing recruitment for war;
- choosing not to dress children in military attire;
- supporting conscientious objectors and all youth that do not wish to perform military service or wage war; and
- opposing war taxes and demanding that taxpayers' money be invested in social welfare to help the more than 26 million impoverished people in Colombia.

Finally, a declaration signed by the five major national women's networks in Colombia—Pacifist Route, Women's Peace Initiative, Women's National Consensus Table, National Women's Network, and Popular Feminine Organization—concluded with the following words:

We exhort all men and women in Colombia to use their creativity, dreams, imagination, utopias, solidarity, intelligence, and political ability; their unwavering commitment to life; and the social surplus that progressively and slowly we have weaved to build a pluralist, democratic, and autonomous country.⁸¹

Reflecting on the impact of women's efforts for peace in Colombia, Luis Sandoval says:

It is not hard for me to express my admiration for women regarding their political actions within the peace process. For me, they are the actors making the most impact—through their associative groups, networks, and various forms of associations that turn out to be involved in the process.

Thus, despite the fact that the peace march came at a time when public opinion had swung in favor of military solutions, it was nevertheless a key turning point. Within the women's peace movement, the creation of the Women's Movement Against War—a loose coalition that enables organizations to work together despite their differences in the name of peace—has been very important. There have been follow-up marches, and additional activities were planned by the coalition of networks. They included a 3,000-woman protest rally in Putumayo on November 25, 2003, to support women in southern Colombia affected by the conflict.⁸² On July 25, 2004, the coalition plans to hold an international protest march of women against war. This is a critical part of their new campaign for demilitarization and the recovery of civilian life.

The July 25 march and the Women's Movement Against War are by no means the only women-sponsored activities for peace in Colombia. Others include 24-hour vigils organized by mothers and relatives of retained soldiers and kidnapped or disappeared persons. For example, the Madres de la Candelaria (Candelaria Mothers) have, since 1999, been gathering every Wednesday at the doors of the Candelaria Church in downtown Medellín. "This space is being shared now by the relatives of those kidnapped for money, and also of [kidnapped] soldiers, police offi-

cers, and many young men whose mothers seek their whereabouts."⁸³ Increasingly, women have become more involved in mediating agreements that lead to the release of kidnapped soldiers and civilians.

Other women's organizations are engaging with local authorities in their peace-building efforts. For example, in March 2004 in Cali, various women's groups came together for a Working Group on Women, Peace, and Reconciliation that invited several officials to participate, including the mayor of Cali, the current peace commissioner, and the presidential counselor for women's equality.⁸⁴ Recognizing the relative growth of women's groups working for peace, former Peace Commissioner Daniel García-Peña notes:

In the last years, there has been a peak, a very important trend in the creation of new organizations from various perspectives of the women's world. . . . In other words, I think without a doubt that the large number of organizations that have been created and networks that have appeared is a very positive sign, and [women's groups] are amongst the most active and creative.

One Day at a Time: Women's Local Resistance Efforts

Another phenomenon that has gained recognition in recent years is the daily effort of women in rural areas to resist and withstand the encroaching violence. Working within communities in rural areas, particularly those in conflict zones, women are leading efforts to safeguard the social integrity of their communities. To ensure that basic humanitarian needs are met, women are on the front lines, negotiating and reaching agreements with armed groups to establish peace zones for their communities. Says Magdala Velázquez:

The civil resistance of women is very strong here. . . . but Colombia doesn't have the eyes to see it or to value it. After Uribe won last year, the humanitarian struggle has been led by women. I mean, the only humanitarian agreements that have been accomplished in this country are made by women. . . . The vanguard of the humanitarian movement is in the hands of women.

The 2003 UN Human Development Report on Colombia reaffirms the leadership role of women in the mitigation of violence and in conflict resolution efforts.⁸⁵ The team of UN researchers spent a year and a half interviewing more than 4,000 people throughout the country. Reflecting on community-oriented

processes of suppressing violence, the report notes that in the regions most affected by guerrilla or paramilitary incursions, resistance and coexistence practices are becoming the “keys” to confronting violence and resolving conflict. Documenting some of these initiatives, *El Tiempo* reported:

[In order] to protect ethnic reservations in El Cauca, communities are conducting indigenous “guards.” Processes of civil resistance from armed actors in Micoahumado (Bolívar) were successful in that paramilitaries and ELN guerrillas respected their village. There have been constitutional assemblies in Mogotes (Santander) and Tarso (Antioquia) and in some parts of Tolima. . . . In the Valle region, land has been given to 10,000 internally displaced peoples, thanks to the humanitarian accords achieved between armed groups and communities.⁸⁶

Women’s leadership in these processes originated in the traditional role of women as caretakers in their communities; thus, when food or medical supplies are threatened, they are the first to address the problems. In addition, in many communities where men have been forced out or killed, or have joined the fighting, women have stepped into the leadership roles. Says Mauricio Uribe, a member of the UN research team:

[The fact that women play a relevant role in local resistance efforts] was a supposition that in the process of working on the report we were able to reinforce. In many cases, the humanitarian negotiations with certain [guerrilla or paramilitaries] commanders in many regions have been done by women.

Through local resistance processes, citizens are able to organize themselves in “peace communities.”⁸⁷ Alvaro Villaraga defines these as “. . . spaces that armed actors are not allowed to enter. The only protection is signs, but obviously this is symbolic and reduces the risk of the community as well as distances it from the violent actors.” In some cases, simply the will of unarmed people to isolate their communities from warring actors has ensured their survival.

Without the use of arms, entire communities have prevented the incursion of violent actors or partially negotiated with insurgents, with varying degrees of success. The significance of these types of initiatives is also noted in a 2004 USIP report, which states that “such courageous acts may, over time, become the basis

of confidence-building measures that could lead to region-wide or even country-wide cease-fires or negotiations.”⁸⁸

In some cases, the peace communities, such as Mogotes (Santander), have endured for years and have gained national recognition. However, neither local resistance practices nor the women who engage in them are exempt from danger. In 2004, the advocacy organization United States Office on Colombia reported, “Previously, women were primarily affected by the political violence through the deaths of their male relatives and partners; today they are becoming targets of political violence themselves.”⁸⁹ The study goes on to note that armed actors, the paramilitaries in particular, have threatened and assassinated leaders of women’s organizations working on issues such as economic development, peace, and women’s political participation.

An example where women are leading a resistance process and have engaged in dialogues with armed actors is a group in Eastern Antioquia. The organization is called Association of Organized Women of Eastern Antioquia (AMOR);

. . . [AMOR] gathers the majority of women’s groups of eastern Antioquia. They have played a relevant role in the design and negotiation of humanitarian accords. . . . They were the ones who wrote a letter to the armed actors. Also, they’ve been playing a crucial role in the peace laboratories; they were part of the departmental constitution process. They have gained visibility as political subjects.⁹⁰

Women from AMOR have reached partial agreements with some of the violent actors. As Piedad Morales, member of the Pacifist Route from Medellín, Antioquia, explains:

We have an alliance with them [AMOR], and they have directly talked with paramilitaries, FARC, and ELN. They have partially achieved humanitarian accords, persuading the armed actors to stop blocking the highway that goes from Medellín to Bogotá to allow families to sell their products on the main road. It lasted about two or three months; it was a very weak agreement but quite significant. . . . Right now [AMOR] is working on a partial humanitarian agreement and are also requesting that the armed actors abstain from strict controls on the passage of food and medicine.

Gloria Tobón described another example of women leading regional processes. Based on her practice of conducting workshops in communities in Tolima, she found that throughout the sessions, participants constantly “made reference to how women would intervene whenever there were community-level conflicts [and that women] were also intervening in conflicts related to the armed situation.”

A person's perspective of the conflict in Colombia varies depending on whether he or she is in the capital, Bogotá, or lives in an area that is in dispute or controlled by armed actors. Regional resistance is being organized in places like Tolima, Antioquia, Cauca, Barranca, Urabá, Nariño, Caldas, and Atrato, among others. These initiatives are questioning the following two assumptions: first, that dialogues should only be held at the national level; and second, that negotiations should be exclusively between armed actors and the government.

The local resistance processes also suggest that the peace process in Colombia must take into account how the conflict manifests itself differently across the nation's regions. For example, in areas where forced displacement has occurred, returnees have established several highly organized peace communities. Such was the case of the San Francisco de Asís Community, located in northeastern Colombia:

In 1999, [the community] ratified a document with a framework for defining individual membership in the peace community. [In the document, the community] stipulated what it meant to not provide any logistical, strategic, or tactical assistance to any of the warring factions.⁹¹

These processes also reflect how women who are victimized in a civil war can become a leading sector in the mobilization for peace. Interestingly, women define resistance as intrinsically connected to the physical experience of the effects of the conflict. Some women explain that engaging in these efforts gives them reason to recover from the physical and psychological trauma that has been inflicted on them. In

effect, by drawing on their inner strength and recognizing their own agency, they overcome the paralysis that victimhood can impose.

Women's leadership in local resistance efforts and social reconstruction processes is essential. As Magdala Velázquez expresses, “Women are building nests, life possibilities, and are improving the quality of life for their people virtually everywhere.”

Preparing for the Future: Creating a Unified Women's Agenda for Peace

In addition to addressing the immediate effects of war, women's organizations are also preparing for the next cycle of peace. A key goal for many is to assume a place at the negotiating table and put forward a concrete agenda from the perspective of Colombian women. This was the motivation behind the Women's Emancipatory Constitution (WEC), a project initiated by IMP (Women's Peace Initiative) through its

members' links to the Colombian trade union movement. It is one of the most significant efforts in Colombia to produce a collective agenda for peace from a women's perspective. It is also a groundbreaking model of cross-national collaboration, as the

“It is important to realize that at this particular juncture, the conflict demands from us to resist and to be creative.”
—Magdala Velázquez, feminist and peace activist, October 2003

funding and support for the process came through the women's arm of the Swedish Trade Union movement, following their exposure to the situation of women in Colombia. Funds for the project were channeled through the Swedish Development Agency. Caroline Moser, a distinguished Western feminist scholar who played an important role in developing a methodology for consensus building, initially guided the project.

At the beginning of the process, Moser and her team of Colombian experts (including a former female guerrilla) posed a series of questions to a leading group of women's peace activists. As recounted by Patricia Buriticá, the project director:

Caroline Moser stated that if she was asked “What were the women's proposals during the women's forum in El Caguán?” she wouldn't know what to respond because we presented about 34 papers, each with 20 proposals. She didn't know what the central objective of women was at that moment.

Therefore, the goal of the WEC, as it became known, was to create a participatory and unified process through which women could find common ground regardless of their ethnicity, class, or educational disparities, and reach consensus on a common agenda for peace. Moser recalls that the goals were to create a sense of local ownership of the process, strengthen partnerships and cohesion within the women's groups, and ultimately develop a common agenda. Patricia Buriticá describes the process:

First, women had cluster meetings; each sector analyzed the opportunities, threats, and expectations for a peace process. Second, the results were shared in regional meetings with other groups. . . . This is where the conflicts first started, as the interests of different women—e.g. peasants, Afro-Colombians, unionists—started to clash. [In total], we had 7 clustered and 7 regional meetings, with 266 local organizations participating, producing a total of 600 proposals.

Over an eight-month period, 719 women delegates mapped their proposals and demands and emerged with the 600-point document. One strategy to limit them, reflects Caroline Moser, was to urge them to find a set of common themes. The issue of exclusion, whether political, social, or economic, was one to which all the women could relate. Patricia Buriticá recalls identifying the most common and relevant proposals and highlighting the points that women would prioritize if called to the negotiation table. More than a year of activity led to a culling of the agenda down to 150 points, which were presented to a delegation of 300 women at an event labeled the constitutional assembly. Says Buriticá:

We [then] had a very interesting process to divide the 150 [points] not by themes but by [forms of] exclusion. We came up with five forms: economic, environmental, rural, political, and socio-cultural. The 150 proposals were categorized into the five exclusions. At the constitutional assembly, the two main priorities were selected from each exclusion category, thus forming the agenda. The agenda had only 12 points.

At the end of the four-day event in Bogotá, the agenda with its 12 demands categorized under 5 themes was ratified by the women delegates and officially introduced to the entire country (see box for summary of key points).

Reflecting on the process, Patricia Buriticá recalls the transformation among individual women as the group began to reach common ground. For example, white peasant women understood that if certain socio-economic issues were addressed, not only would the black and the indigenous women in the country benefit but they themselves would as well.

Undoubtedly, the Women's Emancipatory Constitution is a step forward in consolidating women's political position in future negotiations, as they have advanced in the process of defining an agenda for peace from a women's perspective. Furthermore, the WEC helped link women with other social, political, and governmental sectors of Colombian society. Says Buriticá: "The agenda was presented to the Capitol . . . , to the Colombian government via the vice president, and also to the president of the Colombian Congress. It was submitted to the Colombian ombudsman, [and] to the international community."

Lastly, it is important to mention that the WEC was one of the events that inspired the holding of regional constitutional assemblies. These assemblies occur where regional government authorities, together with leaders from NGOs and social movements, produce regional agendas for peace. In the words of the former governor of Nariño:

For us people from Nariño, the best scenario for a regional dialogue is the Nariño Constitutional Assembly. We held a different constitutional assembly compared to the ones held by our friends in Tolima. Here, we started with a dialogue with 64 municipalities. We didn't limit ourselves to electing delegates in a meeting. We had previously conducted community meetings in all municipalities, spending about a month in that process. Anyone who wanted could participate.⁹²

The methodologies that were originally designed for creating a women's agenda are thus being transferred to democratic exercises at the national and regional levels in the forms of the constitutional assemblies of Antioquia, Nariño, Cauca, and Huila. Moreover, a number of women who participated at the WEC are now being elected as regional constitutional participants. Patricia Buriticá describes the transfer of the process from the WEC to the regional constitutional assemblies as follows:

Summary: The WEC Twelve-Point Agenda for Peace

Economy

1. Formulate fiscal policy geared toward an income distribution with gender equality.
2. Create policies that will defend Colombia's strategic interests against multinational corporations.
3. Create a new developmental model of social and gender equality.

Justice and Security

4. Ensure that all actors involved in the armed conflict abide by the norms of international humanitarian law, respecting women of all ages, religions, sexual orientations, political ideologies, and socio-political and economic levels.
5. Investigate and place sanctions on all actors responsible for violating international humanitarian laws against women.

Politics and Public Life

6. Protect the democratic mechanisms of the 1991 constitution that allow for the full exercise of the fundamental rights of women and all Colombians.
7. Ensure the direct participation of women's organizations in the various national and local dialogue processes and political negotiations of the social and armed conflict.
8. Ensure the full participation of women's organizations in social, political, and economic spaces with quotas that will guarantee the inclusion of peasants and all ethnic groups.

Society and Culture

9. Establish effective public policies on women's rights that promote a nonviolent culture and respect for ethnic and cultural diversity.
10. Formulate cultural policies with gender, age, and ethnic perspectives.

Land, Territory, and the Environment

11. Institute democratic agrarian reform with an ethnic and gender perspective geared toward social justice; include women's organizations in decision-making positions to formulate, implement, and monitor the process.
12. Implement the Organic Territorial Law with a gender, ethnic, cultural, regional, urban, and rural perspective with the active participation of women in decision-making positions to formulate, implement, and monitor the process.

Our methodological process was applied to their work, and today they talk about the regional constitutions and the Women's Emancipatory Constitution. I mean, today we are positioned as political actors. . . . We are greatly satisfied with the results because it is clear that we [women] are dialoguing with the country.

For the IMP and WEC, the next steps are to continue working with other bodies in Colombia that are applying their consensus-building methodology. In doing that, they are reaching out to other social groups and institutions, allowing them to broaden their strategic alliances and gain influence at the national level as political actors. One of the tasks ahead is to reach out to other women's organizations and eventually, if possible, create a single women's agenda for peace that draws on the efforts of the WEC as well as those of the National Women's Network and others. While other efforts at developing agendas for peace have taken place, WEC's process has been the most successful in gaining national recognition, establishing a methodology that is applicable to other mainstream democratic mechanisms, and establishing a platform before other negotiating partners or groups.

Women's Tribunals: Calling for Justice and Reconciliation

The post-conflict stage in Colombia seems to be a distant scenario. However, women are aware that negotiating peace is the first stage in the long process of reconciliation. The post-conflict phase requires societies to be ready for the most difficult task of all after a civil war: to rebuild the country and learn to share the same territory with those formerly known as "enemies." Responding to this challenge, women's organizations in Colombia are working on a proposal to implement a series of post-conflict women's courts.⁹³

Given that the perpetrators of violence in Colombia—army, paramilitaries, and guerrillas—operate with very high levels of impunity,⁹⁴ the courts would consist of a series of symbolic tribunals where women would have the opportunity to give testimony, tell their stories, and share their memories with victims and other citizens. After a series of meetings with women's organizations, project designers concluded:

Women throughout the country are building life experiences and resistance projects; there are many proposals going on. In various parts of the country,

several symbolic tribunals have been conducted. . . . they touch on specific rights of women: economic, social, and cultural rights, as well as reproductive and sexual rights.⁹⁵

They anticipate that women's courts would be structured like "forums where the public can listen to the voices of victims and survivors, and to the women's voices that refuse to abandon their dreams. "Women's courts are sacred spaces in which the voices of women [will be heard]."⁹⁶

Governmental Initiatives to Promote Women's Equality and Participation

Since being appointed presidential councilor for women's equality in early 2003, Martha Lucía Vasquez has initiated a number of policies. The aim of the office, says Vasquez,

. . . is to promote gender in all the country's institutions, not only in the public but also in the private sector. The president [Alvaro Uribe] sanctioned Law 823 on July 10, 2003, which establishes an institutional framework for gender equity and equal opportunity in all state mechanisms.

Just eight days into her job, Vasquez was able to include a special article in the National Development Plan, which states that the women's office is responsible for coordinating with ministries and entities to incorporate a gender perspective into governmental policy. This was discussed at an event organized by the women's office that took place in Bogotá in October 2003. President Alvaro Uribe Velez, several Congress representatives, and members of the international community attended the meeting.

Vasquez has also reached out to the judicial branch, all ministries, Congress, trade union presidents, and the deans of three public universities. During the October meeting, they signed the agreement to work for women's equity. "This agreement is a pioneer event in South America," says Vasquez. "Even if there are countries that have gone further on the topic of gender than Colombia, there is no political commitment at the state level." The agreement outlines a process through which state institutions can incorporate a gender perspective into "the already formulated policies by the Ministries."

So the agreement was formulated, the programs designed, and then a whole process of training with the employees of 18 units, 10 ministries, and 8

entities in charge of national budgeting and planning. We have already inserted a person responsible for the gender topic. [It] is not only training, but it is a whole process to integrate the gender topic in each entity.

Vasquez is also keen on establishing links between her office and women's organizations. She outlines the work done by women's organizations:

When analyzing what has been done by different organizations, for us [the work of women's organizations] is very important work. I believe that the magnitude [of the Colombian] conflict must be recognized. And, to a great extent, the work done by women's organizations has prevented an even greater fraying of the social fabric. . . .

While civil society's links with government have been limited, Magdala Velázquez acknowledges that the work of the presidential councilor is important.

Marta Lucía has done a very valuable thing; I have come to realize that. In all ministries, so many people are making agreements on how to [mainstream] gender. For example, the education ministry, the health, labor, and defense ministries . . . they will all have a budget to integrate gender issue in their offices, and the women's office will supervise the whole process.

On the issue of women's participation in formal peace-making, Vasquez has initiated closer ties with the Ministry of Foreign Relations. Internationally, Colombia has been a strong advocate of UN Security

Council Resolution 1325, which calls for the participation of women in peace processes and the inclusion of gender perspectives in all aspects of conflict prevention, resolution, and reconstruction. In 2001, Colombia held a seat on the Security Council and, following that, joined the "Group of Friends of 1325." In 2002, the government began promoting Resolution 1325 within Colombia.⁹⁷ Internally, the Ministry of Foreign Relations has created a working group for women. Together with the Presidential Council for Women's Equity, the ministry launched a new initiative that has two aims: first, the dissemination of the resolution within their own departments; and second, its promotion within the Colombian government and civil society. In October 2003, several meetings were conducted between the minister of foreign affairs, the councilor for women's equality, the first lady, the international NGO International Alert, and the Colombian women's organization Pacific Route. Also drawing on 1325, NGOs have initiated advocacy efforts for its implementation in Colombia and have begun programs to disseminate it to women's groups across the country.⁹⁸

While these efforts are still at an early stage, they are nevertheless groundbreaking in terms of the partnerships they foster. Moreover, given that Resolution 1325 is a critical tool for ensuring women's participation in peace negotiations, the government's endorsement of it could be a sign of its willingness to engage with women on peace issues, even if there is currently no commitment to a national-level peace process.

CONCLUSION

The conflict in Colombia continues to take its toll on civilians across the country. While framing the situation as a war against narco-traffickers and terrorists enables the government to pursue a military solution, it does not address the root causes or underlying socioeconomic dynamics of the war. Since the collapse of the Pastrana-FARC dialogues, the larger peace movement has withdrawn, and space for public discussion of alternative solutions has diminished. Peace activists continue to be threatened and targeted by paramilitaries and guerrillas.

In spite of this, women's activism has risen to meet the challenge. Their activities may still be invisible to the eyes of the mass media, but in rural areas, often with the men gone, women have assumed leadership of their communities; they are resisting the encroaching violence by confronting armed actors and demanding safe spaces and access to food, medicine, and markets to sell their goods. As mothers and relatives of soldiers and kidnap victims across the country, they are reminders of the human cost of war. They are also reaching out to guerrilla women, calling on them to help prevent the rape and other sexual abuse being perpetrated by their male colleagues. Through vigils and protests, using cultural symbols of protection and hope, they challenge the increased militarization of society.

Nationally, women's organizations are uniting in their demands to end the war. The women's forum during the Pastrana-FARC dialogues laid the foundation for their current efforts. Since the mass march of July 2002, women have become the leading voice of civil society demanding an end to violence and a return to negotiations with the participation of women. "We don't believe in sending our agenda to FARC or the government, nor do we believe they would interpret our interests correctly," says Patricia Buriticá. "The

exclusion of women from any peace process is not only a failure of the process but also evidence of the weak state of democracy building."

In expanding their work, women are also developing new ways of working with the international community. The formation of the Women's Emancipatory Constitution—with its ties to the Swedish trade union movement and its outreach to groups throughout Colombia at local, regional, and national levels—is a key example. The WEC's 12-point agenda for peace talks was developed through a systematic process of building consensus and ownership among disparate groups. That their system of participatory decision making is now being replicated by local and regional authorities is indicative of the creativity and resources that women can bring to national-level negotiations. Moreover, women in government and civil society are increasingly drawing on UN Security Council Resolution 1325. In coming together to explore opportunities for the implementation of 1325, new partnerships are also emerging between government entities, women's national and international civil society groups.

Women are building a peace constituency nationwide and creating common agendas that unite Colombians across racial, geographical, and class boundaries, and highlight the root causes of conflict. "We recognize," says Gloria Tobón, "that if social sectors do not see their demands reflected in the accords, it is very difficult for them to succeed in the post-conflict stages and the construction of peace in the long run." Ultimately, in the processes they are developing and the issues they address, women are not only demanding a place at the table and laying the groundwork for dialogue, they are also demonstrating the value they can add in the next cycle of peace.

ENDNOTES

- ¹Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children. *Colombia's War on Children*. New York: Women's Commission, 2004.
- ²The researcher created 53 codes, each of which contains a large number of relevant quotations from the interviewees themselves. Examples of the codes include: activities of women's organizations, negotiations with FARC, reasons why the process failed, and conditions for a successful negotiation.
- ³Lund, Michael S. "Early Warning and Preventive Diplomacy." *Managing Global Chaos*. Eds. Chester Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela Aall. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1996. 379–402.
- ⁴Amson, Cynthia. *Comparative Peace Processes in Latin America*. Palo Alto and Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and Stanford University Press, 1999.
- ⁵For more information, see Daniel García-Peña's article, "In Search of a New Model for Conflict Resolution," in *Alternatives to War: Colombia's Peace Processes*, an *Accord* report edited by Mauricio García-Durán of Conciliation Resources (2004), on the web at <http://www.c-r.org/accord/col/accord14/newmodel.shtml>.
- ⁶Rojas, Catalina. "Círculos, circuitos, y redes de paz: una reflexión teórica acerca del rol de la sociedad civil en la resolución de conflictos intra-estatales." *Democracia, Administración de Justicia y Resolución de Conflictos*. Ed. A. J. Bozo. Caracas, Venezuela: Tribunal Supremo de Justicia, 2000. 26.
- ⁷Bejarano, Jesús A. "Ensanchando el Centro: El Papel de la Sociedad Civil en el Proceso de Paz." *Colombia: Democracia y Paz*. Eds. E. Domínguez and A. Monsalve. Medellín, Colombia: Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, 1999. 29.
- ⁸"Measuring the Quality of Governance," *The World Bank* 14 July 2003. 18 August 2003 <<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:20119698~menuPK:34457~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html>>.
- ⁹Qtd. in Tufts, Eva Irene. "Integrating a Gender Perspective in Conflict Resolution: The Colombian Case." *Gender, Peace, and Conflict*. Eds. Inger Skjelsbaek and Dan Smith. London: Sage Publications, 2001. 139–161; Sánchez, Gonzalo. "Introduction: Problems of Violence, Prospects for Peace." *Violence in Colombia, 1999–2000: Waging War and Negotiating Peace*. Eds. Charles Berquist, Ricardo Peñaranda, and Gonzalo Sánchez. Wilmington, Delaware: SR Books, 2001. 1–38.
- ¹⁰For a review of the role of women in Colombian civil wars, see *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America*, edited by Elizabeth Dore and Maxine Molyneux and published in 2000 by Duke University Press.
- ¹¹Red Nacional de Mujeres. *Cartografía de las Mujeres: Para Pensar los Derechos*. Bogotá, Colombia: Humanizar, 2003. 245.
- ¹²Red Nacional de Mujeres.
- ¹³Garrido, Margarita. "La Regeneración y la Cuestión Nacional Estatal en Colombia." *Boletín Cultural y Bibliográfico* XXI, 1 (1984). 16 March 2004 <<http://www.banrep.gov.co/blaavirtual/boleti3/bol1/regenera.htm>>.
- ¹⁴Tufts 143.
- ¹⁵Women's Commission 4.
- ¹⁶Red Nacional de Mujeres 30.
- ¹⁷Red Nacional de Mujeres 28.
- ¹⁸Red Nacional de Mujeres 30.
- ¹⁹Other groups include MRL (Liberal Revolutionary Movement), ANAPO (National Popular Alliance), and MOEC (Peasant, Student, and Workers Movement).
- ²⁰Valencia, Leon. *Adiós a la Política, Bienvenida la Guerra: Secretos de un Malogrado Proceso de Paz*. Bogotá, Colombia: Intermedio, 2002.
- ²¹For more information on paramilitaries, see: Molano, Alfredo. *Trochas y Fusiles*. Bogotá, Colombia: El Ancora Publishers, 1994; Romero, Mauricio. *Paramilitaries and Self-defense Units*. Bogotá, Colombia: Institute of Political Studies, 2003.
- ²²For more information, see Alfredo Rangel's *Colombia: Guerra en el Fin de Siglo*, published in 1998 by Tercer Mundo and Andes University Press, 1998.
- ²³Center for International Policy. *Information about the Combatants*. Washington, DC: CIP, 2002. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.ciponline.org/colombia/infocombat.htm>>.
- ²⁴United States Institute of Peace.
- ²⁵For a comprehensive analysis of the historical violence in Colombia, see Garry Leech's May 1999 article "Fifty Years of Violence" in the *Colombia Journal*, available online at <<http://www.colombiajournal.org/fiftyyearsofviolence.htm>>.
- ²⁶In 2003, US aid to Afghanistan, Iraq, and Jordan exceeded aid given to Colombia. Isacson, Adam. Email to the author. March 2004.
- ²⁷For more information on the US role in Colombia, see: Isacson, Adam. "Colombia after September 11: View from Washington." *Colombia Update* 14.1 (2002). 16 March 2004 <<http://colhrnet.igc.org/newsletter/y2002/fall02.art/colombiaupdatef02.pdf>>; Rojas, Catalina. "What is the War on (t)ERRORISM? US Foreign Policy Towards Colombia in the Post-September 11 World: The End of the Peace Talks, the Beginning of the New-Old War." *Reflexión Política*. 4.8 (2002): 76–94. 16 March 2004 <http://editorial.unab.edu.co/revistas/reflexion/pdfs/dem_47_1_c.pdf>; Sweig, Julia E. "What Kind of War for Colombia?" *Foreign Affairs* September/October 2002. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.cfr.org/publication.php?id=4737.xml>>.
- ²⁸Rojas, Catalina. "Regional Implications of the Colombian Conflict: Re-Defining the New Security Threat of the Americas in the Nineties." *Proceedings of the 41st Convention of the International Studies Association, Chicago, 20–24 February 2001*.
- ²⁹Center for International Policy. *Information about the Combatants*.
- ³⁰"Girls Go to War as Colombia's Frontline Killers." *Guardian Newspapers* 14 July 2002. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.buzzle.com/editorials/text7-14-2002-22362.asp>>.

- ³¹McDermott, Jeremy. "Colombia's Female Fighting Force." *BBC News* 4 January 2002. 16 March 2004 <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/1742217.stm>>.
- ³²Center for International Policy. *Information about the Combatants*.
- ³³Center for International Policy. *Information about the Combatants*.
- ³⁴Center for International Policy. *Information about the Combatants*.
- ³⁵Forero, Juan. "Colombia's Landed Gentry: Coca Lords and Other Bullies." *New York Times*, 21 January 2004.
- ³⁶Center for International Policy. *Information about the Combatants*.
- ³⁷Human Rights Watch. *Aprenderás a no llorar: Niños combatientes en Colombia*. New York: HRW, 2003. 16 March 2004 <http://www.hrw.org/spanish/informes/2003/colombia_ninos.html>.
- ³⁸For more information, please see the 2004 United States Institute of Peace report.
- ³⁹Center for International Policy. *Information about the Combatants*.
- ⁴⁰"Repression of Colombian Labour Leader and PSAC National Convention Guest Speaker." Ottawa, Canada: Public Service Alliance of Canada, n.d.
- ⁴¹For a review of the National Constitutional Assembly process, see "The Political and Legal System in Colombia," a document produced by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States; it is available online at <<http://www.cidh.org/countryrep/Colombia93eng/chap.3.htm>>.
- ⁴²Colombia. "Fulfillment of Obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights." *Report Submitted to the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations*. 8 October 1996. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.hri.ca/fortherecord1997/documentation/tbodies/ccpr-c-103-add3.htm>>.
- ⁴³For example, Colombian feminist author Yusmidia Solano has done research on the role of Caribbean women in the creation and implementation of the 1991 constitution. Her article is entitled, "Entramado Actual del Movimiento de Mujeres," and appeared in Red Nacional de Mujeres' publication, *Cartografía de las Mujeres*, in 2003.
- ⁴⁴Some examples of peace organizations with female leadership include Ana Teresa Bernal, president of REDEPAZ; Gloria Florez, director of MINGA (Association for Alternative Social Promotion); and Maria del Pilar Lopez, director of Maria Cano Institute.
- ⁴⁵Qtd. in Red Nacional de Mujeres 33.
- ⁴⁶For details on the women's movement, see Beatriz Quintero's "Map of the Women's Social Movement," in Red Nacional de Mujeres' publication, *Cartografía de las Mujeres*, published in 2003.
- ⁴⁷United States Office on Colombia.
- ⁴⁸Córdoba Ruiz, Piedad. "Black in Colombia: Organizing to Promote Afrocolombian Territorial Rights." *Beyond Armed Actors: A Look at Civil Society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Review of Latin America, 2003; Córdoba Ruiz, Piedad. "Mujeres en el Congreso de Colombia." *Mujeres en el Parlamento*. Stockholm, Sweden: International IDEA, 2002.
- ⁴⁹Amnesty International. "Fear for Safety/Threats." *Press release* 20 August 2003. 16 March 2004 <<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAMR230562003?open&of=ENG-COL>>.
- ⁵⁰Qtd. in Task Force on Latin America and the Caribbean, Fellowship of Reconciliation. "Overcoming the Logic of War in Colombia: An Interview with Ana Teresa Bernal." *Colombia Update* October 2002. 16 March 2004 <http://www.forusa.org/Programs/Colombia/Col_Update_1002-2.html>.
- ⁵¹"La Constituyente del Caguán." *Semana* 11 July 2002, edition 914. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.semana.com/archivo/articulosView.jsp?id=38181>>.
- ⁵²Valencia.
- ⁵³Valencia.
- ⁵⁴Valencia.
- ⁵⁵"La Constituyente del Caguán."
- ⁵⁶Sandoval, Luis. Personal Interview. October 2003.
- ⁵⁷Lozano, Carlos. Personal Interview. October 2003.
- ⁵⁸Bernal, Ana Teresa. Personal Interview. October 2003.
- ⁵⁹Bernal, Ana Teresa. Personal Interview. October 2003.
- ⁶⁰Others on the commission were the president of Colombia's Senate, Miguel Pineda Vidal; president of the Representatives Chamber, Armando Pomárico; the governor of Cundinamarca, Andrés González; the mayor of Medellín, Juan Gómez Martínez; the national planning director, Mauricio Cárdenas; the president of the Trade Council, Hernando José Gómez; the dean of the Industrial University of Santander, Jorge Gómez Duarte; and a media representative, and Fernando Hinestrosa.
- ⁶¹Other FARC representatives were Simón Trinidad, Iván Ríos, Felipe Rincón, and Marco León Calarcá. During the 40-month period, both parties changed members constantly. The information presented here was taken from *Semana Magazine*, November 8, 1999, Edition 914. www.semana.com
- ⁶²García-Peña, Daniel. Personal Interview. October 2003.
- ⁶³Unfortunately, after the collapse of the talks, the whereabouts of the material collected by FARC is unknown. The government kept some material. Many interviewees expressed their regret of not knowing where or how to access the data.
- ⁶⁴Lozano, Carlos. Personal Interview. October 2003.
- ⁶⁵Sandoval, Luis. Personal Interview. October 2003.
- ⁶⁶Bernal; Sandoval.
- ⁶⁷It is illegal in Colombia to establish communication with armed actors; therefore all the descriptions from Mariana Páez come from women and men who interacted with her during the Pastrana-FARC negotiations.

⁶⁸Morris, Holman. Personal Interview. October 2003.

⁶⁹Berrio, Nelson. Personal Interview. October 2003.

⁷⁰Although contacted for an interview, it was not possible to obtain one with Ana Mercedes Gómez; she is a member of Women Waging Peace.

⁷¹Thomas, Florance. "Women in Caguán." *El Tiempo* 21 June 2000.

⁷²Some interviews have mentioned 500, others 1000. Marta Lucía Vasquez gave the number of 600 approximate participants.

⁷³National Women's Network. *Women's Public Audience. Memoirs. For a Country in which We Can Live, Dream and Die Old*. Bogotá, Colombia: RNM, 2001.

⁷⁴Castrillon, Gloria. "Las Mujeres del País Presentaron Más de 700 Propuestas de Todo Tipo para la Paz." *El Espectador* 26 June 2000, A3; Thomas.

⁷⁵Velázquez, Magda. "Cuando la Paz es Femenina." *Caja de Herramientas* 72 (2000).

⁷⁶Qtd. in "El Presidente Colombiano Anuncia el Fin del Proceso de Paz con las FARC." *CNN en español* 20 February 2002. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.cnnenespanol.com/2002/americas/02/20/pastrana.paz/>>.

⁷⁷Toro, Juan Pablo. "Alvaro Uribe, Nuevo Presidente Electo de Colombia." *The Associated Press* 28 May 2002. 16 March 2004

<http://www.dfw.com/mld/startelegram/2002/05/28/news/special_packages/la_estrella/3349815.htm>; "Uribe Asume la Presidencia de Colombia Protegido desde Aire y Tierra." *CNN en español* 7 August 2002. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.cnnenespanol.com/2002/americas/08/07/uribe/>>.

⁷⁸For further analyses, see: Azcarate, Camilo. "Why Did the Colombia Peace Process Fail?" *The Online Journal of Peace and Conflict Resolution* 5.1 (2003): 57–65. 16 March 2004 <http://www.trinstitute.org/ojpcr/5_1azcarate.htm>; Valencia, Leon. *Adiós a la Política, Bienvenida la Guerra: Secretos de un Malogrado Proceso de Paz*. Bogotá, Colombia: Intermedio, 2002.

⁷⁹Some interviewees said the march gathered around 45,000, others 40,000.

⁸⁰"Colombianas Exigen Respuestas Civilizadas a los Conflictos Sociales y Armados y Respeto a los Derechos Humanos." *La Jornada* 2 September 2002. 16 March 2004 <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2002/sep02/020902/articulos/49_colombianas.htm>; "Mujeres Marcharon Contra el Conflicto Armado: 'No Paremos Más Hijos para la Guerra.'" *El Espectador* 26 July 2002. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.elspectador.com/2002/20020726/paz/nota1.htm>>.

⁸¹For the full declaration, see their Web site: <http://www.rutapacifica.org.co/movilizacion_bogota.htm>.

⁸²For information on this march, see Ruta Pacifica's website: <http://www.rutapacifica.org.co/movilizacion_putumayo.htm>.

⁸³Morales, Piedad. Personal Interview. October 2003.

⁸⁴Quintero, Martha. Email to the author. March 2004.

⁸⁵United Nations Development Programme. *El Conflict, Callejón con Salida* . . .

⁸⁶"El Banco de Buenas Prácticas de la 'Otra Colombia'." *El Tiempo* 12 October 2003, 17.

⁸⁷For more information on "peace communities" or "peace zones," see: "Peace Communities in Colombia." Resource Center of the Americas. 16 March 2004 <http://www.americas.org/index.php?cp=item&item_id=18>; Rojas, Catalina. *The People's Peace Processes in Colombia: A Preliminary Review of Zones of Peace in Mogotes, Samaniego, and San Pueblo*. Fairfax, Virginia: George Mason University, n.d. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.gmu.edu/depts/icar/zopsocolumbia.pdf>>; United Nations Development Programme. *El Conflict, Callejón con Salida*. . . ; United States Institute of Peace.

⁸⁸United States Institute of Peace.

⁸⁹Jeffery, Neil. "The Impact of War on Women: Current Realities, Government Responses, and Recommendations for the Future." February 2004. Memo to US Policymakers. Washington, DC: United States Office on Colombia, 2004. 27 February 2004 <<http://www.usofficeon-colombia.org/documents/womenbrief.htm>>.

⁹⁰Morales.

⁹¹Fundación Cultura Democrática, the Colombian Ministry of the Interior, and the United Nations Development Programme. *Peace Communities and Humanitarian Zones in Urabá and Atrato*. Bogotá, Colombia: FCD, 2003. 76

⁹²Cuéllar, Parmenio. Address. Event for the Southern Colombia Governors. Bogotá, Colombia. 22 October 22 2003.

⁹³Tobón, Gloria. Personal Interview. October 2003.

⁹⁴The Swedish NGO Foundation for Human Rights. *Impunity in Colombia: Report on the Mission to Colombia October 5–18, 2002*. Stockholm: The Swedish NGO Foundation for Human Rights. 29 March 2004 <<http://www.humanrights.se/svenska/Colombia%20Report%202002%20Final.pdf>>.

⁹⁵*Project for Women's Courts*. Proposal. Bogotá, Colombia: National Network of Women, 2003.

⁹⁶*Project for Women's Courts*.

⁹⁷Perez, Alma Viviana. Emails to the author. 2003, 2004.

⁹⁸Perez, Alma Viviana. Emails to the author. 2003, 2004; Quintero, Martha.

APPENDIX 1: MAP OF COLOMBIA



Base 802670A1 (R00820) 6-01

Source: University of Texas. 1 February 2004 <www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/colombia.html>.

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF ACRONYMS

AMOR	Association of Organized Women of Eastern Antioquia
ANAPO	National Popular Alliance
ANMUCIC	National Association of Peasant, Black, and Indigenous Women of Colombia
ASODEFENSA	Trade Union of Public Servants of the Ministry of Defense, Military Forces, and National Police
AUC	United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia
CCJ	The Colombian Commission of Jurists
CODHES	Human Rights and Displacement Bureau
CRS	Socialist Renovation Trend
ECOPETROL	Colombian National Oil Company
ELN	National Liberation Army
EPL	Popular Liberation Army
ERG	Guevarist Revolutionary Army
ERP	Popular Revolutionary Army
FARC	Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces
IDP	Internally displaced person
IMP	Women's Peace Initiative
INDEPAZ	Institute for Development and Peace Studies
M-19	Movement April 19
MAQL	Quintín Lame Armed Movement
MOEC	Peasant, Student, and Workers Movement
MRL	Liberal Revolutionary Movement
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NPC	National Peace Council
OFP	Popular Feminine Organization
PRT	Workers Revolutionary Party
REDEPAZ	National Network of Peace
RNM	National Network of Women
TC	Thematic Commission
UN	United Nations
USIP	United States Institute of Peace
WEC	Women's Emancipatory Constitution

APPENDIX 3: GLOSSARY OF SPANISH TERMS

<i>Audiencias Públicas</i>	Public forums designed to increase the participation of civil society at the Pastrana-FARC dialogues
<i>Campesinos</i>	Peasants
<i>El Polo Democrático</i>	The leading center-left wing political coalition in Colombia
<i>La Violencia</i>	Period characterized for its extreme levels of violence between liberals and conservatives from 1946 to 1966 (direct translation: “the violence”)
<i>Quintín Lame</i>	The only indigenous-based guerrilla movement in Colombia; signed a peace agreement in 1991 with the government and disarmed
<i>Regeneración</i>	Period of conservative government rule in late-nineteenth century in Colombia
<i>Sicariato</i>	Death industry; mostly young impoverished men in Medellín hired by drug cartels as assassins
<i>Tirofijo</i>	Alias for Manuel Marulanda Velez, FARC’s founder and top leader (direct translation: “Sureshot”)

APPENDIX 4: SELECTED MAJOR PEACE ORGANIZATIONS

Asamblea Permanente de la Sociedad Civil por la Paz (Permanent Assembly of Civil Society for Peace): Created in 1996, the Permanent Assembly is a coalition of Colombian groups that seeks to strengthen the civil society peace movement through the establishment of “peace tables”—among other activities—to foster dialogue and understanding among Colombians. It is a multi-sectoral, grassroots organization.

REDEPAZ—Red Nacional de Iniciativas contra la Guerra y por la Paz (National Network of Peace): Founded in 1993, REDEPAZ is an umbrella organization with members across all regions and all levels of society. It has pioneered coalition building between peace organizations in Colombia. Its activities include: the creation of “peace territories”; the establishment of public referenda where children and adults have the opportunity to express their desire for peace via official ballot votes; and lobbying in favor of proposals to forbid armed groups from involving children in the war.

Mandato Ciudadano por la Paz, la Vida y la Libertad (Citizens’ Mandate for Peace, Life, and Freedom) and Paz Colombia: Both of these organizations emerged as part of the 1997 campaign for 10 million votes for peace.

CODHES—Consultoría de Derechos Humanos y Desplazamiento (Human Rights and Displacement Bureau): Created in 1992, CODHES is primarily a research and advocacy organization that monitors forced displacement and plays a leading role in civil society peace efforts.

CCJ—Comisión Colombiana de Juristas (The Colombian Commission of Jurists): CCJ is a human rights NGO established in May 1988. Its mandate is to contribute to the development of international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

INDEPAZ—Instituto de Estudios para el Desarrollo y la Paz (Institute for Development and Peace Studies): INDEPAZ is a grassroots NGO created in the mid-1980s that works with the peace movement to build public awareness about democracy, peace, aspects of violence, mutual tolerance, and conflict resolution.

Viva la Ciudadanía (Citizenship Ahead!): This group of organizations seeks to strengthen democracy and equality in Colombia by conducting advocacy and research.

Programa de Desarrollo y Paz del Magdalena Medio (Middle Magdalena Development and Peace Program): Created in 1995, this organization promotes sustainable human development and peace building in the conflict-ridden Magdalena Medio region. It seeks to create change at the institutional and political levels and promote an economy based on equity.

Pastoral Social-Caritas Colombia: The National Secretariat of Pastoral Social-Caritas Colombia is a body belonging to the Colombian Catholic Bishop’s Conference. It was created by the Twenty-third Ordinary Plenary Assembly of Bishops in 1977. Pastoral Social works “in the promotion of social development in Colombia, enlightened by the Gospels and the Magisterial Teachings of the Church.”¹

Justapaz: Founded by Mennonites, this organization operates at the community and grassroots levels to promote peace initiatives.

¹ www.pastoralsocialcolombia.org

APPENDIX 5: METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

What does it mean to conduct research in the midst of conflict?

In Colombia, violent events are localized in certain sites, mostly but not exclusively in rural areas. Life in urban areas usually goes on like normal; however, the danger of terrorist acts is always present. During the field trip, the researcher witnessed several bombings in Bogotá; an assassination attempt on Alfonso Visbal, president of the cattle owners' association FEDEGAN; and the assassination of Esperanza Amarís, a woman who belonged to a well-known women's organization in Barrancabermeja, an area of heightened conflict in Colombia. Despite the series of violent events that occurred in Bogotá and elsewhere, the national elections occurred without major public disturbances, even in territories controlled by guerrillas or paramilitaries. By agreeing to meet and talk to many of the interviewees, the lives of the lead and local researchers were potentially at risk. For example, women at the Feminine Popular Organization in Barrancabermeja told the researchers that anyone who enters their center becomes a target of paramilitary groups. Although the visit to the center was during a funeral, both the local and field researchers entered and exited Barrancabermeja without any security problems.

The majority of the people interviewed had between one and five bodyguards and rode only in bulletproof cars; some of them cannot walk on the streets because of constant threats to their lives. Perhaps the most salient aspect of all these protective measures was the doors of peace organizations. In some instances, the researchers had to pass through three bulletproof doors to enter the offices. By the end of the month, the researcher was able to identify the level of danger of a particular organization by the number and thickness of the doors that were needed to pass through en route to an interview. These anecdotes help explain the nuances of conducting research in a conflict-ridden society such as Colombia.

APPENDIX 6: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES¹

1. Gloria Nieto, October 2, 2003, Bogotá
2. Jorge Rojas, October 3, 2003, Bogotá
3. Holman Morris, October 7, 2003, Bogotá
4. Luis Sandoval, October 8, 2003, Bogotá
5. Ana Teresa Bernal, October 13, 2003, Bogotá
6. Mauricio Uribe, October 14, 2003, Bogotá
7. Olga Amparo Sanchez-Gomez, October 14, 2003, Bogotá
8. Nelson Berrío, October 15, 2003, Bogotá
9. Martha López, October 15, 2003, Bogotá
10. Gloria Tobón, October 16, 2003, Bogotá
11. Patricia Ariza, October 16, 2003, Bogotá
12. Carlos Lozano, October 16, 2003, Bogotá
13. Daniel García-Peña, October 17, 2003, Bogotá
14. Alvaro Villarraga, October 17, 2003, Bogotá
15. Gloria Amparo Suarez, October 18, 2003, Barrancabermeja (Santander)
16. Patricia Buriticá, October 20, 2003, Bogotá
17. Gloria Cuartas, October 21, 2003, Bogotá
18. Governor Parmentio Cuéllar, October 22, 2003, Bogotá
19. Piedad Morales, October 23, 2003, Medellín, Antioquia
20. Olga Lucía Ramírez, October 23, 2003, Medellín, Antioquia
21. Diana Gutiérrez, October 23, 2003, Medellín, Antioquia
22. Marta Lucía Vazquez, October 24, 2003, Bogotá
23. Martha Segura, October 24, 2003, Bogotá²
24. Mario Gómez, October 28, 2003, Bogotá
25. Nancy Tapias, October 29, 2003, Bogotá³
26. Antonio Sanguino, October 29, 2003, Bogotá
27. Magdala Velazquez, October 29, 2003, Bogotá
28. Father Fabio Enrique Orozco, November 28, 2003, Bucaramanga (Santander)⁴

¹All interviewees in this research were asked permission to be cited with their full names. All agreed in a consent form given to them prior to the interviews.

²Not a formal interview; she is a member of Women Waging Peace.

³Not a formal interview; she is a member of Women Waging Peace.

⁴A research assistant in the field conducted this interview.

APPENDIX 7: BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Amnesty International. "Fear for Safety/Threats." *Press release* 20 August 2003. 16 March 2004 <<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGAMR230562003?open&of=ENG-COL>>.
- Amnesty International. *Report 2003: Spiraling Political Violence in Colombia*. New York: AI, 2003.
- Arnson, Cynthia. *Comparative Peace Processes in Latin America*. Palo Alto and Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and Stanford University Press, 1999.
- Azcarate, Camilo. "Why Did the Colombia Peace Process Fail?" *The Online Journal of Peace and Conflict Resolution* 5.1 (2003): 57–65. 16 March 2004 <http://www.trinstitute.org/ojpcr/5_1azcarate.htm>.
- "El Banco de Buenas Prácticas de la 'Otra Colombia'." *El Tiempo* 12 October 2003, 17.
- Bejarano, Jesús A. "Ensanchando el Centro: El Papel de la Sociedad Civil en el Proceso de Paz." *Colombia: Democracia y Paz*. Eds. E. Domínguez and A. Monsalve. Medellín, Colombia: Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, 1999.
- Castrillon, Gloria. "Las Mujeres del País Presentaron Más de 700 Propuestas de Todo Tipo para la Paz." *El Espectador* 26 June 2000, A3.
- Center for International Policy. *Information about the Combatants*. Washington, DC: CIP, 2002. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.ciponline.org/colombia/infocombat.htm>>.
- Center for International Policy. *Peace on the Table*. Washington, DC: CIP, 2001. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.ciponline.org/colombia/pot-eln.htm>>.
- CODHES. "Desplazamiento." *El Embrujo Autoritario*. Bogotá: Colombian Human Rights Platform, 2003.
- Colombia. "Fulfillment of Obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights." *Report Submitted to the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations*. 8 October 1996. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.hri.ca/fortherecord1997/documentation/tbodies/ccpr-c-103-add3.htm>>.
- "Colombianas Exigen Respuestas Civilizadas a los Conflictos Sociales y Armados y Respeto a los Derechos Humanos." *La Jornada* 2 September 2002. 16 March 2004 <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2002/sep02/020902/articulos/49_colombianas.htm>.
- "La Constituyente del Caguán." *Semana* 11 July 2002, edition 914. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.semana.com/archivo/articulosView.jsp?id=38181>>.
- Cuéllar, Parmenio. Address. Event for the Southern Colombia Governors. Bogotá, Colombia. 22 October 2003.
- Dore, Elizabeth and Maxine Molyneux, eds. *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2000.
- Dudley, Steven. *Walking Ghosts: Murder and Guerrilla Politics in Colombia*. London and New York: Routledge Press, 2003.
- Forero, Juan. "Colombia's Landed Gentry: Coca Lords and Other Bullies." *New York Times* 21 January 2004.
- Fundación Cultura Democrática, the Colombian Ministry of the Interior, and the United Nations Development Programme. *Peace Communities and Humanitarian Zones in Urabá and Atrato*. Bogotá, Colombia: FCD, 2003.
- García-Peña, Daniel. "In Search of a New Model for Conflict Resolution." *Alternatives to War: Colombia's Peace Processes*. Ed. Mauricio García-Durán. London: Conciliation Resources, 2004. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.c-r.org/accord/col/accord14/newmodel.shtml>>.
- Garrido, Margarita. "La Regeneración y la Cuestión Nacional Estatal en Colombia." *Boletín Cultural y Bibliográfico* XXI, 1 (1984). 16 March 2004 <<http://www.banrep.gov.co/blaavirtual/boleti3/bol1/regenera.htm>>.
- "Girls Go to War as Colombia's Frontline Killers." *Guardian Newspapers* 14 July 2002. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.buzzle.com/editorials/text7-14-2002-22362.asp>>.

- Human Rights Watch. *Aprenderás a no llorar: Niños combatientes en Colombia*. New York: HRW, 2003. 16 March 2004 <http://www.hrw.org/spanish/informes/2003/colombia_ninos.html>.
- Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. "The Political and Legal System in Colombia." Washington, DC: Organization of American States, n.d.
- Isacson, Adam. "Colombia after September 11: View from Washington." *Colombia Update* 14.1 (2002). 16 March 2004 <<http://colhrnet.igc.org/newsletter/y2002/fall02.art/colombiaupdatef02.pdf>>.
- Jeffery, Neil. "The Impact of War on Women: Current Realities, Government Responses and Recommendations for the Future." February 2004. Memo to US Policymakers. Washington, DC: United States Office on Colombia, 2004. 27 February 2004 <<http://www.usofficeoncolombia.org/documents/womenbrief.htm>>.
- Leech, Garry. "Fifty Years of Violence." *Colombia Journal* May 1999. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.colombiajournal.org/fiftyyearsofviolence.htm>>.
- Lund, Michael S. "Early Warning and Preventive Diplomacy." *Managing Global Chaos*. Eds. Chester Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1996. 379–402.
- McDermott, Jeremy. "Colombia's Female Fighting Force." *BBC News* 4 January 2002. 16 March 2004 <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/1742217.stm>>.
- "Measuring the Quality of Governance," *The World Bank* 14 July 2003. 18 August 2003 <<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:20119698~menuPK:34457~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html>>.
- Molano, Alfredo. *Trochas y Fusiles*. Bogotá, Colombia: El Ancora Publishers, 1994.
- "Mujeres Marcharon Contra el Conflicto Armado: 'No Pariremos Más Hijos para la Guerra.'" *El Espectador* 26 July 2002. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.elespectador.com/2002/20020726/paz/nota1.htm>>.
- National Women's Network. *Women's Public Audience. Memoirs. For a Country in which We Can Live, Dream and Die Old*. Bogotá, Colombia: RNM, 2001.
- "Peace Communities in Colombia." Resource Center of the Americas. 16 March 2004 <http://www.americas.org/index.php?cp=item&item_id=18>.
- El Presidente Colombiano Anuncia el Fin del Proceso de Paz con las FARC." *CNN en español* 20 February 2002. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.cnnenespanol.com/2002/americas/02/20/pastrana.paz/>>.
- Project for Women's Courts*. Proposal. Bogotá, Colombia: National Network of Women, 2003.
- Quintero, Beatriz. "Map of the Women's Social Movement." *Cartografía de las Mujeres*. Eds. Red Nacional de Mujeres. Bogotá, Colombia: Humanizar, 2003.
- Rangel, Alfredo. *Colombia: Guerra en el Fin de Siglo*. Bogotá, Colombia: Tercer Mundo and Andes University Press, 1998.
- Red Nacional de Mujeres. *Cartografía de las Mujeres: Para Pensar los Derechos*. Bogotá, Colombia: Humanizar, 2003.
- "Repression of Colombian Labour Leader and PSAC National Convention Guest Speaker." Ottawa, Canada: Public Service Alliance of Canada, n.d.
- Rojas, Catalina. *The People's Peace Processes in Colombia: A Preliminary Review of Zones of Peace in Mogotes, Samaniego, and San Pueblo*. Fairfax, Virginia: George Mason University, n.d. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.gmu.edu/depts/icar/zopscolombia.pdf>>.
- Rojas, Catalina. "Regional Implications of the Colombian Conflict: Re-Defining the New Security Threat of the Americas in the Nineties." *Proceedings of the 41st Convention of the International Studies Association, Chicago, 20–24 February 2001*.

- Rojas, Catalina. "What is the War on (t)ERRORISM? US Foreign Policy Towards Colombia in the Post-September 11 World: The End of the Peace Talks, the Beginning of the New-Old War." *Reflexión Política*. 4.8 (2002): 76–94. 16 March 2004 <http://editorial.unab.edu.co/revistas/reflexion/pdfs/dem_47_1_c.pdf>.
- Romero, Mauricio. *Paramilitaries and Self-defense Units*. Bogotá, Colombia: Institute of Political Studies, 2003.
- Rupesinghe, Kuman and Sanam Anderlini Naraghi. *Civil Wars, Civil Peace: An Introduction to Conflict Resolution*. London: Pluto Press, 1998.
- Sánchez, Gonzalo. "Introduction: Problems of Violence, Prospects for Peace." *Violence in Colombia, 1999–2000: Waging War and Negotiating Peace*. Eds. Charles Berquist, Ricardo Peñarda, and Gonzalo Sánchez. Wilmington, Delaware: SR Books, 2001. 1–38.
- Saunders, Harold. *A Public Peace Process: Sustained Dialogue to Transform Racial and Ethnic Conflicts*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999.
- Solano, Yusmidia. "Entramado Actual del Movimiento de Mujeres." *Cartografía de las Mujeres*. Eds. Red Nacional de Mujeres. Bogotá, Colombia: Humanizar, 2003.
- Swieg, Julia E. "What Kind of War for Colombia?" *Foreign Affairs* September/October 2002. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.cfr.org/publication.php?id=4737.xml>>.
- Task Force on Latin America and the Caribbean, Fellowship of Reconciliation. "Overcoming the Logic of War in Colombia: An Interview with Ana Teresa Bernal." *Colombia Update* October 2002. 16 March 2004 <http://www.forusa.org/Programs/Colombia/Col_Update_1002-2.html>.
- The Swedish NGO Foundation for Human Rights. *Impunity in Colombia: Report on the Mission to Colombia October 5–18, 2002*. Stockholm: The Swedish NGO Foundation for Human Rights. 29 March 2004 <<http://www.humanrights.se/svenska/Colombia%20Report%202002%20Final.pdf>>.
- Thomas, Florance. "Women in Caguán." *El Tiempo* 21 June 2000.
- Toro, Juan Pablo. "Alvaro Uribe, Nuevo Presidente Electo de Colombia." *The Associated Press* 28 May 2002. 16 March 2004 <http://www.dfw.com/mld/startelegram/2002/05/28/news/special_packages/la_estrella/3349815.htm>.
- Tufts, Eva Irene. "Integrating a Gender Perspective in Conflict Resolution: The Colombian Case." *Gender, Peace, and Conflict*. Eds. Inger Skjelsbaek and Dan Smith. London: Sage Publications, 2001. 139–161.
- United Nations Development Programme. *El Conflicto, Callejón con Salida: Informe Nacional de Desarrollo Humano para Colombia – 2003*. Bogotá, Colombia: UNDP, 2003.
- United States Institute of Peace. *Special Report 114: Civil Society Under Siege in Colombia*. Washington DC: USIP, 2004.
- United States Office on Colombia. *The Impact of War on Women: Colombian Women's Struggle*. Washington, DC: USOC, 2004. 27 February 2004 <<http://usofficeoncolombia.org/insidecolombia/women.htm>>.
- "Uribe Asume la Presidencia de Colombia Protegido desde Aire y Tierra." *CNN en español* 7 August 2002. 16 March 2004 <<http://www.cnnenespanol.com/2002/americas/08/07/uribe/>>.
- Valencia, Leon. *Adiós a la Política, Bienvenida la Guerra: Secretos de un Malogrado Proceso de Paz*. Bogotá, Colombia: Intermedio, 2002.
- Velázquez, Magdala. "Cuando la Paz es Femenina." *Caja de Herramientas* 72 (2000).
- Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children. *Colombia's War on Children*. New York: Women's Commission, 2004.

ABOUT WOMEN WAGING PEACE

Women Waging Peace, a program of Hunt Alternatives Fund, advocates for the full participation of women in formal and informal peace processes around the world. Over 250 members of the “Waging” network, all demonstrated leaders with varied backgrounds, perspectives, and skills, bring a vast array of expertise to the peacemaking process. They have met with over 1000 senior policy shapers to collaborate on fresh, workable solutions to long-standing conflicts.

ABOUT THE POLICY COMMISSION

The Policy Commission is conducting a series of case studies to document women's contributions to peace processes across conflict areas worldwide. The studies focus on women's activities in conflict prevention, pre-negotiation and negotiation, and post-conflict reconstruction—including governance; disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration; and transitional justice and reconciliation. This body of work is pragmatic and operational, offering suggestions, guidelines, and models to encourage policymakers to include women and gender perspectives in their program designs.

Advisory Group to the Policy Commission

Hizkias Assefa
Professor of Conflict Studies
Conflict Transformation Graduate Program
Eastern Mennonite University;
Founder and Coordinator
African Peacebuilding and Reconciliation Network

Leon Fuerth
J.B. and Maurice C. Shapiro Professor
Elliott School of International Affairs
George Washington University

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
former Minister of Finance, Liberia;
Coauthor, UNIFEM's
Women, War, Peace: The Independent Experts' Assessment

Jane Holl Lute
Assistant-Secretary-General
Department of Peacekeeping Operations
United Nations

Rita Manchanda
Program Executive
South Asian Forum for Human Rights

Jane Mansbridge
Faculty Chair
Women and Public Policy Program
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University

Luz Méndez
President
Advisory Council
National Union of Guatemalan Women

Thandi Modise
Chairperson, Portfolio Committee on Defense
Parliament of South Africa

Olara Otunnu
Under-Secretary-General and
Special Representative for
Children and Armed Conflict
United Nations

John Ruggie
Evron and Jeane Kirkpatrick
Professor of International Affairs
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University

Nancy Soderberg
Vice President
International Crisis Group

