

9th FORUM ON MINORITY ISSUES “MINORITIES IN SITUATIONS OF HUMANITARIAN CRISES”

November 24th and 25th, 2016

KEY MESSAGES OF COLOMBIA

Panel 1: LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND KEY CONCEPTS

(Thursday 24th, 11:00)

Thank you Mr President,

Colombia has designed effective answers for the two types of humanitarian crises emergencies that it faces: those derived from the armed conflict and those produced by the risk of disaster. In these responses, the Colombian state has ensured to guarantee the protection of minorities' human rights and ensure that their needs are met during the assistance and redress for victims and during the delivery of humanitarian aid.

On this occasion, I would like to share some essential characteristics of Colombian institutional frameworks and operatives to face the crises related to natural disasters and those caused by a conflict.

The first one is information management. The gathering and systematisation of data on victims and those who are living in vulnerability incorporate the differential approach.

In second place, Colombia has a legal and normative framework based on principles of equality, participation and diversity, and incorporates the international human rights and international humanitarian law obligations. This is the case of the 'Victims and Land Restitution Law' and the 'Risk of Disaster Management Law' with the national plans for preventing and responding at the local, regional, and national level.

The third element refers to the existence of a strong institutional system, as well as the development of public policies which incorporate a differential and gender approach. Moreover, it is important to highlight that the entities responsible for coordinating both systems (Victims Unit and Risk Management Unit) and other institutions have spaces of dialogue with representatives of the victims in order to listen and consider their needs.

In fourth place, attention and assistance, as well as the full compensation, which objective is to guarantee the recovery of conditions of victims which allows them to live a decent life and re-incorporate them to social, political, and economic life, which allow their effective enjoyment of rights which have been abused. These measures consider also that victims belong to minority groups.

Nevertheless, the rights of vulnerable people such as women, children, elderly, people living with a disability, or LGBT people, are not neglected within the collective rights of groups. Furthermore,

Colombia holds the compromise of promoting and respecting practices and customs of ethnic peoples and communities, preventing actions that could cause any harm or discriminatory treatment.

Lastly, Mr President, I would like to highlight the response that the Colombian state has set in operation to accounting and redress the conflict's victims seeking for a stable and lasting peace. We reiterate our compromise with the implementation of the New Peace Agreement, which will be ratified today in Bogotá, with clear responsibilities to the Colombian state for giving more importance to minorities both in the policy making process and during the implementation of those policies.

The New Peace agreement has a clear differential approach, with specific chapters on minorities in which the rights of this and other communities are recognised. We are sure that will have a Colombia in peace, a condition needed to transit to the full respect of rights of each inhabitant of Colombia, despite we are aware of the progress achieve, we are also aware of the challenges we face in order to become an inclusive, equitable, and prosperous country.

Thank you.