

## DECLARATION OF VIANA

9 February 1998

Aware that the solution to the armed political–social conflict in Colombia requires a broad process of dialogue and consensus involving all sectors of society to ground the transformations of the country and its institutions and deliver peace based on democracy and social justice, the national government and the National Liberation Army (*Ejército de Liberación Nacional, ELN*), with the participation of the National Reconciliation Commission (*Comisión de Conciliación Nacional, CCN*) and supported by the good offices provided by the government of Spain, agree:

1. To convene a National Convention for Peace, Democracy and Social Justice to determine the structure of an agreement whose implementation will involve all required legislative instances and possible spaces, including the convening of a National Constitutional Assembly, in line with the insurgent group's proposals, a referendum involving the broad democratic participation of all Colombians.
2. The national convention will be convened following a preparatory meeting that will take place on 5, 6 and 7 June this year at a location in Colombia to be previously determined by the parties based on the following points:
  - The government and ELN will each have three representatives and decisions will be made by consensus.
  - CCN will have three representatives and will be responsible for facilitating dialogue and consensus.
  - A representative of the Spanish government will be invited as witness, in addition to a representative of each of the presidential candidates for the second round of the presidential elections (if a second round occurs), a representative of the incoming president and a representative of the party with the most votes other than the incoming president, the president of the National Congress, the president of the United Federation of Workers (*Central Unitario de Trabajadores,*

CUT), the president of the Workers' Union (*Unión Sindical Obrera, USO*), a representative of the trade union council, a representative of the government organisations responsible for the defence of human rights and a representative of the Communist Party.

- The sessions of the preparatory meeting will be in private and the public will be informed of the decisions by communications that are mutually agreed between the parties.
  - The government and ELN will provide the required security for participants in the meeting under the same procedure used in Santa Ana, Antioquia on 2 November 1997. The government will provide the guarantees required for transport and the negotiations.
  - The preparatory meeting will determine the elements of the national convention, including:
    - the terms for the transformation of social and political structures through concerted action taking into account factors such as the full force of human rights, social and economic justice, political democratisation, the definition of the role of the armed forces in a peaceful country, and sovereignty, integration and internationalisation;
    - participants in the national convention, with a maximum of 100 people representing the country's economic, political and social forces;
    - date and location for the national convention, which must take place after the second round of the presidential election;
    - methodological aspects of the national convention.
3. The complementary aspects for the development of the process to lead to the termination of the armed conflict will be determined in parallel to the gathering of requests related to the political and social conflict.

While the conflict persists, the parties will reach an agreement to ensure the respect for life and humanitarian conditions in the war in the context of international humanitarian law, in addition to safeguarding the civil population.

4. The dialogue process to find the political solution, which begins with the signing of this preliminary agreement and its ratification, will be supported by the international community, primarily Spain, Mexico, Costa Rica and Venezuela.

The Spanish government will act as facilitator of the process, providing good offices and acting as host where necessary. This group may be extended by the agreement of the parties. International support must be based on the principles of neutrality, impartiality and discretion.

5. This agreement must be ratified by ELN at two meetings to take place in Itagüí, one with the commanders Francisco Galán and Felipe Torres, and another with representatives of the central command. The same representatives of the government and CCN who sign this agreement will attend. It will also be ratified by the President of the Republic.
6. The government of Colombia, ELN and CCN express their gratitude to the Spanish government for its support and hospitality in reaching this preliminary agreement and its friendship with the Colombian people.

This agreement is signed in the Palace of Viana in the city of Madrid, Spain, on 9 February 1998 by:

- JOSÉ NOÉ RÍOS and DANIEL GARCÍA PEÑA for the Colombian government
- MILTON HERNÁNDEZ for central command and the leadership of ELN
- JUAN VÁSQUEZ for the International Front
- AUGUSTO RAMÍREZ OCAMPO and ANA MERCEDES GÓMEZ for CCN.

Witness for the Spanish government:

- Fernando M. Villalonga, Secretary of State for International Cooperation
- Eduardo Gutiérrez Sáenz de Buruaga, Director General of Foreign Policy for Ibero-America.