THE OPPORTUNITY FOR PEACE
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A PROPOSAL FOR TRANSFORMATION IN COLOMBIA
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German D. Rueda S.

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Introduction

The year 2000 saw events that marked the national memory of violence and conflict. In May of that year, Colombia witnessed a moment both great and tragic. The media gave step-by-step coverage of the case of Ana Elvia Cortés, the woman who died in the explosion of a bomb forcibly tied around her neck, in the rural municipality of Chiquinquirá in the department of Boyacá. Her story and that of 28-year-old DIJIN deputy lieutenant Jairo Hernando López, who died trying to deactivate the explosive device, turned the world upside down and became a symbol of the degradation brought by the Colombian conflict.

Even though common criminals were eventually discovered to be responsible for this tragedy, statements made by the Church, various local residents, and some military commanders showed the great distrust that the country had in the El Caguán peace dialogues going on at the time, and, in particular, in the FARC. Despite the official versions of what happened that day, many assigned responsibility for this act to the guerrilla group.

Some referred to the direct action of the José Antonio Anzoátegui Front, which was active in the region of Boyacá, Cundinamarca, and Santander. Others identified the sad case as one of the perverse indirect effects of so-called “Law 002.” Under this rule, which took advantage of the FARC’s enormous capacity for intimidation, the group “decreed” that any citizen with more than one million dollars of assets should pay a “tax for peace”, and should therefore report to the local guerrilla front operating in their area, or face the possibility of being indefinitely “detained”.

At the time, various analysts agreed that this fearful “law” had given illegal groups carte blanche to take extortive activity to a new level, and thereby challenge the rule of the State. It is indubitable that this event (in addition to paramilitary leader Carlos Castaño’s proposal that the paramilitaries be part of the peace dialogues, the resignation of Commissioner Victor G. Ricardo, and the hijacking and subsequent piloting of a Satena plane to the peace dialogue zone) made peace seem a distant dream in the year 2000.

These conditions, which surrounded the creation of Fundación Ideas para la Paz (FIP), characterized a terrible moment in national history. Illegal armed actors’ threat to institutional stability was real, and the war between the State, the guerrilla groups, and the paramilitaries had begun to take on the characteristics of a tremendously victimizing conflict that we still have not managed to bring to a close.
However, since the end of the nineties and during the first years of this century, a process of change was forged that led, after 15 years, to a qualitatively distinct panorama. No less challenging, but certainly very different to that seen at the beginning of the new millennium. In general terms, a progressive consolidation of the State in which the strengthening and modernization of defense and security mechanisms was key. This consolidation guided the route we are following as a nation, one that has led us to a different balance in the correlation of forces between the State and the illegal armed groups.

The Democratic Security policy, which was the name given to the core of proposals made by Alvaro Uribe’s administration, was the most elevated point of public action. Focusing on armed combat against illegal organizations, and with the conviction that security was the most basic and necessary condition for institutional stability and investor trust, this policy was applied in a wide variety of intelligence, police, military, and integrated actions to combat the guerrilla groups and drugs trafficking organizations.

As is shown in all of the analyses of the Colombian conflict, this policy – whose methods and strategies are the subject of diverse ideological and technical debates – showed its efficacy very quickly, and along with other measures focused on fiscal processes, the promotion of assets, and basic services, broadened state capacity in conflict-affected regions. The so-called “consolidation zones” are a good example of this process.

Despite this good example, according to security and socioeconomic welfare data, this early model of statebuilding – which was so fundamental to changes in national dynamics – gradually decreased in its transformative capacity at the end of the first decade of the millennium. From that moment, there was a deceleration in the rate at which the violence diminished, as well as a later mutation of other expressions of illegal activity, which was aided by new dynamics such as the criminal bands (“BACRIM” by their Spanish acronym). Other forms of social, environmental, economic, and cultural conflicts also appeared due to the contraction of the war, and began to manifest themselves in rural Colombia.

This is a topic that drives great political and ideological debate, and at FIP we believe that the gradual reduction of Democratic Security implies neither its lack of utility nor its failure. Our reflection is much more pragmatic, and focuses on the way that the Foundation, since its creation, has addressed these topics: each historical moment requires a well-grounded, effective, and comprehensive collection of policies. The challenge today consists of understanding the type of conflicts we are facing, and of precisely defining the policies the country needs to progress in overcoming the war and building stable and lasting peace.
Analysis of the conflict in Colombia in the last 15 years allows us to affirm that we do want peace, and the moment has come to create a broader framework of reference within which to consider the integral development of our country. The previous focus on national security produced results and laid the groundwork for a new moment in history. However, to avoid becoming what Francis Fukuyama called "half a miracle," we must reach consensus on the model of transformation to be used, and the "theory of change" to which we as a society will adhere.

FIP considers that the current peace process did not start as the result of a new consensus; from there stem its difficulties. However, we are sure that if we manage it well, it could mark the creation of an enormous opportunity to transform our country.

This does not mean to say that what happens in Havana should dictate Colombia's future, but rather that Colombia and its wish to change should dictate what happens in Havana, exactly as the peace agreement referendum process will show. For FIP, the signature of peace with the FARC will allow us to rethink the state of our country and, above all, to reconnect our development agenda with our plans for peace.

For years, there existed a theory that peace (or pacification) would be the result of the development generated by investment, which was closely related to security condition guarantees. Today, we know that we must connect the peace agenda with many others, including those of: good government; the fight against corruption; the efficiency of public spending; inequality; productivity; citizen security; justice; and education. This will without a doubt generate much uncertainty, because there can be no progress without steps backward.

This document therefore presents a broadened agenda for transformation, without aiming to be exhaustive. We examine some of the crucial topics that we believe form part of this agenda, which are also areas in which FIP aspires to make fundamental contributions. This document is also an invitation to jointly build Colombia’s peace with a more ambitious and comprehensive focus than that which is currently illustrated by public discussion.

In the first part of the document, we provide a panoramic analysis of the evolution of the conflict and show the elements of conflictivity that constitute crucial challenges in today’s Colombia. In the second, we examine three key aspects of post-conflict transformation. On one hand are governance and legitimacy, which are necessary for peace-building and in which trust is vital. On another, reference will be made to the institutional challenges of the security sector and its relationship to justice, where we highlight the importance of citizens taking a central role. The last aspect of transformation we will touch on will be the culture of peace, where we stress the importance of working to change behaviors, beliefs, and values to avoid reproducing violence.
Finally, to close the document, we will make an explicit call for the business sector to assume an active leadership role in peacebuilding in Colombia. Just as we share the notion that peace is the effect of collective action to which everyone is committed, we also have the conviction that the business sector can be a driver of fundamental change in this moment of history.

As is confirmed in the coming pages, the great value that we give to businesspeople and businesses has as much to do with FIP’s organizational agenda as it does with the belief that businesses have understood the value of innovation, tenacity, and the unknown as opportunities.

In the Colombia of today, it is ever clearer that if we propose it and invest our drive and enthusiasm, we will be able to build a better country for ourselves and for the generations who follow us. It will not be an easy process, and will take a lot of effort and frustration, but without a doubt, the recompense will be incalculable. We deliver this document to Colombian society with the firm trust that peace is a possibility within our reach.

With this in mind, we conclude this introduction with a passage from William Ernest Henley’s famous poem “Invictus”, which was said to be a source of inspiration and strength for President Mandela in his years of imprisonment.

“It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.”
Colombia and Its Conflicts
Where Did We Come From and Where Are We Now?
1. Colombia and Its Conflicts. Where Did We Come From and Where Are We Now?

In FIP, we have insisted that the current context of the armed conflict differs radically from that of 15 years ago. At that time (Graph 1), the war intensified as a result of the regularization of terror and the interaction between the illegal armed groups and state forces. The country suffered kidnappings, massacres, forced displacements, targeted assassinations, sexual violence, forced disappearances, child recruitment, accidents due to anti-personnel mines, assaults on civilian assets, and terrorist attacks. In the middle of this rising tendency, which had its peak between 1999 and 2002, Colombians were highly affected – so much so that renowned sociologist and Colombia expert Daniel Pécaut defined the conflict as a “war against society.” In 2003, according to the Unique Victims’ Registry (RUV by its Spanish acronym), that war had left almost four million victims and affected more than 500 municipalities.

The paramilitary groups grew fast. According to official data, they went from less than 1,000 members in 1992 to almost 12,000 in 2002, with presence in approximately 50% of the national territory. These groups articulated themselves in the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC by its Spanish acronym), and expanded from prosperous areas into the periphery. They even began to dispute territorial control with the FARC in regions such as Valle del Cauca, Cauca, and Putumayo. For their part, the guerrilla groups (FARC and ELN) went from being concentrated in marginal areas of peasant colonization or refuge to being spread out across richer areas such as the Caribbean Coast which were integrated into the local, national, and international economies, and held opportunities to control resources.

We cannot forget, for example, that the FARC’s Eastern Bloc had been growing since the 1980s, positioning itself in and occupying the central and southeastern cordillera with the objective of consolidating a strategic position that would complete the enclosure of Bogota. The image of the FARC 15 years ago was one of an armed group with the capacity to rapidly mobilize 500 combatants, and it had carried out great offensives against the armed forces (Miraflores, Las Delicias, Patascoy, El Billar, Mitú) in addition to overcoming the state’s military power in 1998. By 2002, the group had 62 fronts and 20,000 members deployed in slightly more than half of the country’s municipalities.
Graph /01
Periodization of the Armed Conflict (1999 - 2014)

This process of expansion and territorial consolidation was based on strategic decisions to finance the growth of armies and military capacity. In addition, longer transformations driven by local powers were deepened, as was shown in studies by Fernán González S.J. Institutions were molded with the fluctuations of war, criminal economies were organized, war-related territorial dynamics were financed, and new social orders arose and replaced or competed with the State, putting its sovereignty at risk.

The prevalence of armed groups throughout the regions also brought about the expansion of illegal crop cultivation. According to the Integral Illegal Crop Monitoring System (SIMCI by its Spanish acronym), Colombia was the main producer of cocaine in Latin America in 1997, with 350 metric tons per year and the greatest area of coca crops - 80,000 hectares - a statistic that was duplicated in 2000 and 2001.

Fifteen years ago, we rested our hopes for peace on the FARC process in El Caguán, which did not progress due to the negotiation strategy, as well as the national and international context: an increase in violence, paramilitary expansion, division between negotiators and military command, and the terrorist attacks of September 11th. Distrust between parts was also a determining factor. The government believed that the FARC had taken advantage of El Caguán to try to increase their tactical advantage, which they had been losing as the armed forces became stronger. Meanwhile, the FARC believed that the State's strategy was to contain the violence, deepen the modernization of the armed forces, and recover military power, which did in fact occur between 1998 and 2002.

Fifteen years ago, we also viewed contact with the ELN with great optimism, but it never led to a formal negotiation process due to various factors: regional opposition to the so-called National Convention for the Reinstatement of El Caguán in Magdalena Medio; AUC leader Carlos Castaño’s refusal to fall back in military and regional advances that aimed to force the ELN to negotiate in a weakened state; and the ELN’s violent actions, which contradicted its contact with civil society, previously thought of as the interlocutor that could press for dialogue with the government.

1.1. The Conflict Today

Today, we can say that Colombia is a different country. The armed conflict has evolved and generated a new context, the use of weapons to influence politics is no longer an option, there have been unprecedented advances in the negotiation process with the FARC, and we are on the verge of a process with the ELN. This makes us think that it is possible to close a cycle of political violence that has lasted for decades. However, FIP investigations show challenges - some newer than others - that will continue past the eventual signature of agreements with the guerrilla groups.
In comparing 2002 with 2015 (Graph 2), we see that the main variables of the conflict have been decreasing, such as massacres, kidnappings, and attacks on energy infrastructure\(^1\). Homicides decreased by more than 50%, although the rate of 27 per 100,000 inhabitants continues to be unacceptable when compared to other countries in the region and the world. Similarly, we no longer see the levels of forced displacement of a decade ago\(^2\). Even so, the RUV shows that the conflict left more than four million displaced people in the last 12 years.

In the same period, we can observe that extortion has significantly increased, as have attacks on oil infrastructure, especially between 2010 and 2013. Anti-personnel mine victims are also seen at higher levels than 2002, as the FARC started to use this tactic more frequently to compensate for their loss of military clout and to contain the advances of the armed forces and paramilitary groups.

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\(^1\) According to the FIP conflict database, between 2002 and 2014, massacres and kidnappings diminished by 95% and 90% respectively, going from 115 to 6 and 2,882 to 288. Attacks on energy infrastructure also saw a great reduction, going from 258 in 2002 to 28 in 2015.

\(^2\) According to the RUV, in 2002, 700,130 people were displaced, in 2014 there were 227,332, and in 2015 there were 32,591.
Forced disappearance, sexual violence, and threats are other types of violence whose dimensions and clarification have not been an easy task for the State and Colombian society. These forms of violence, to which the armed groups and other conflict actors continue to turn in order to exercise territorial and social control, mark what anthropologist Nancy Scheper-Hughes has called a “continuum of violence” in the middle of the progressive pacification that the country is currently experiencing.

With respect to the increasing deactivation of the armed conflict, our studies show that the Colombian State recovered and maintained military superiority even during the current negotiations with the FARC. Similarly, it managed to consolidate security in a great part of the territory, and strategically defeated the guerrilla groups, decreasing their capacity for war.

It is undeniable that the restructuring of the armed forces and police since the 1990s, and the operational, intelligence, doctrinal, and technological strengthening that has taken place since the years of Democratic Security, have been key in containing the insurgent threat. In addition, these forces have greater capacity for mobility and reaction, police presence in all of the municipal capitals, and greater manpower and spending on security and defense, particularly between 2002 and 2010.

We cannot forget the deployment of coordinated action between police and the military, to hit “objectives of high strategic value,” through which they achieved what until then had been unthinkable: to hit the FARC high command. Between 2008 and 2012, high-profile commanders such as aliases Raúl Reyes, Iván Rios, and El Mono Jojoy all fell. At the end of 2011, the highest commander – Alfonso Cano – also fell, in the middle of the exploratory phase of peace negotiations with the FARC.

In this new context, the FARC and the ELN redeployed to fallback and border zones, reducing and focusing the confrontation, and modifying their strategy. The FARC, for example, adopted Plan Rebirth in 2008, under the principle of the economy of force, which privileged guerrilla war and the use of low and medium intensity actions such as explosive devices, hostage taking, sniper attacks, and others against economic infrastructure.

This had various direct effects: the number of municipalities affected by the conflict reduced by 85% between 2002 and 2015, and by 75% in areas where there are gue-

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1 Perhaps the most definitive result of Democratic Security was the weakening of the insurgency. This had significant impact on the decrease in the internal armed conflict in terms of homicide figures and the fall in extortive kidnappings by more than 90% between 2002 and 2010, which had been mainly carried out by the guerrilla groups. In: Granada, Restrepo, Vargas, 2009.

4 According to the FIP conflict database, it went from 508 municipalities affected in 2002 to 64 in 2015.
rrilla groups. Their ranks also decreased, with individual demobilizations as part of the counter-insurgency strategy and its psychological operations playing an important role. According to official data, the ELN went from having more than 4,000 members in 2002 to approximately 1,500, and the FARC decreased from 20,000 in 2002 to not more than 7,000.

Without disregarding these achievements in the military field, and others such as the partial demobilization of the paramilitary groups between 2003 and 2006, FIP studies show two worrying elements in the current strategic context. On one hand, there is the resettlement and military reactivation of the insurgent groups in some areas of the country, and on the other, organized crime that could be characterized as a potential saboteur of the post-agreement phase.

1.2. The Rearrangement of Insurgent Groups

In recent years, there has been a geographic reconfiguration of the confrontation (Maps 1 and 2). This has been concentrated on the borders and frontiers with the Pacific Ocean where conditions are favorable for maintaining war economies and strategically re-grouping, including slowing down the confrontation and gaining time in exchange for space. In these areas, the FARC and the ELN increased their armed action, even managing to overcome the number of actions by the armed forces, as in the cases of Catatumbo and Arauca. However, at the same time, in the departments of the center and the southeast, which experienced high levels of guerrilla activity and control in the 1980s and 90s, the armed forces overcame the guerrilla and maintained their military capacity through the first decade of the 2000s.

This different configuration is mainly due to the uneven effects of state military action, paramilitary influence, and various alliances and no-aggression pacts between guerrilla groups and BACRIM. For example, in Arauca, the Domingo Lain front of the ELN became superior in the region and now represents the greatest threat to an eventual peace process with that group. In fact, as we have proved in our studies of the regional dynamics of the conflict, at the same time that there has been a gradual weakening of historical structures of the FARC, such as the Eastern Bloc, others have recovered territories, as in the case of the Southern Bloc in Caquetá.

The Eastern Front of the ELN in Arauca, Boyacá, and Casanare, as well as the Southern Bloc of the FARC in Putumayo, have both weakened and redeployed. However,

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5 According to the FIP conflict database, it went from 637 municipalities in 2002 to approximately 150 in 2015.

6 The sources for this estimate are official figures from the Armed Forces General Command, which do not include militia networks or reserve armies.
MAP /01
TERRITORIAL PRESENCE FARC, ELN, PARAMILITARIES (2002)

Source: FIP Conflict Database / Created: FIP 2015
other structures have become stronger in faraway areas, such as the FARC in Cata-
tumbo and in the southwest of the country. Even in their new fallback positions, the
guerrillas do not have the capacity to carry out high intensity military actions, but rather
low and medium intensity actions such as those seen in the disruption of the unilateral
ceasefire of the FARC at the beginning of 2015.

1.3. The Fractioning of Organized Crime

The partial demobilization of the AUC concluded a crucial point in the history of
paramilitary activity in Colombia in which various local and regional factions had been
bound together around a state project that was not only armed but also political, social,
economic, and cultural. However, the demobilization of 31,000 paramilitaries did not
mean the end of this project. On the contrary, in addition to the continuation of regional
and local powers as a result of the re-composition of elites associated with the paramili-
taries, BACRIM also emerged starting in 2006 and 2007. At that time, 33 BACRIM were
registered, with slightly more than 4,000 members. Today, while there are four main7
BACRIM with approximately 3,500 members present in more than 160 municipalities
(Graph 3), they group themselves in individual “firms” or franchises that can maintain
the appearance of cohesion8.

FIP studies show that these structures are divided and in some regions there are no
clear chains of command, so confrontations between members of the same group are
common. Captures9 and deaths are systematic and widespread, with the undesirable
effect of the groups’ progressive fractioning and rearrangement.

The criminal groups maintain characteristics similar to the paramilitaries who were
in this country until 2006, such as drugs trafficking and their zones of operation. Howe-
ver, these groups no longer raise the flag of the counter-insurgent campaign, they are
not organized by front or bloc, and their commanders are “criminal businessmen”
who, although they may have passed through an armed group, have now adapted to
the new context of the conflict, innovating their income and social networks. They have
also cemented alliances with guerrilla group factions and transnational networks, diver-

8 There are others such as FiAC in the Llanos Orientales, La Empresa, La Cordillera, La Constru, Los Cauquetanos, Criminal Or-
ganizations Integrated into Drugs Trafficking (ODIN by their Spanish acronym) in Medellin, Los Botalones, Los Costeños, Los
Pachenka, Clan Isaza, Red de Marquetitos, Clan de Los Soto, tribute units (FGN, October 2015). Such is the magnitude of this
fractioning that between 2006 and 2016, 122 bands have been dismantled: 11 between 2006 and 2007, 8 in 2008, 4 in 2009,
2 in 2010, 14 in 2012, 22 in 2013, 48 in 2014, 9 up to August 2015 (FGN).
9 Between 2007 and 2015, according to National Policy and Attorney General’s Office statistics, the number of captured mem-
bers of these bands fluctuates between 22,000 and 16,000 respectively.
sifying their sources of financing into illegal mining, illegal logging, human trafficking, and contraband in border areas, and the focus of their criminal repertoire on extortions, selective homicides, and threats.

1.4. Risks for Peace: Criminal Economies, Local Powers and Corruption

In this new context of armed conflict, we see that the continuation of criminal economies and the institutions created to support their various actors represent a great risk for the post-agreement phase.

It is possible that a disturbing context of criminal economies will be generated in this phase, changing the rules of the game and the presence of the State in territories where the guerrilla groups demobilize. Greater institutional presence will have the effect of changing incentives and increasing risks for illegal armed actors. Depending on the dissuasive capacity of the State, these actors could assume new rules, adapt, or even try to sabotage the peace process through violence and intimidation.

The peace negotiation with the FARC has progressed like no other, but the signature of the agreements must not translate to greater insecurity. In territories prioritized for the implementation of the agreements, state action will face competitors and saboteurs such as BACRIM and dissidences of the FARC, ELN, and EPL. Effective occupation of the territory and the substitution of the institutions of war will be key to make imple-
mplementation of the agreements viable, guarantee civilian security, increase capacity for society’s absorption of people who demobilize from the FARC, and reduce the risk of recidivism.

In addition to the need to strengthen the local State, minimize violence, and transform social and political orders created in war, we cannot ignore the potential conflicts brought by the way politics is conducted in the country and the historical tendency of regional and local political classes to block modernizing and democratizing reforms. Furthermore, the relationship between corruption, precarious local institutions, criminal economies, and implementation of the agreements must be considered. The possibility that peace could become another treasure chest for local powers, “criminal business-people,” and various corrupt actors in public administration, is latent and could become a greater obstacle to the country’s transition to peace.

There is another series of social conflicts that will emerge with greater force in a context without the FARC and ELN. As CINEP has demonstrated, Colombia has recently seen an unprecedented increase in different manifestations of social mobilization that have revealed other networks of conflict and forms of protest, many of which were neutralized in virtue of the conflict, and will surely continue after the agreements with the guerrilla groups. These conflicts revolve around various re-vindications and unsolved problems such as land access and formalization, mining and oil activity, and victims of different crimes committed by the paramilitary groups and state forces, to which will be added victims of the FARC and ELN. The dimensions of these problems have yet to be known.

In a post-agreement context, it is very probable that these topics will become more relevant in newly opened democratic spaces due to the demands for truth, justice, and reparation, whose central axis will be peace as a constitutional obligation and right.

1.5. Reflections on Urban Security

It is almost an urban myth to say that the demobilization of the FARC will affect cities in the same way as that of the AUC and other international experiences, particularly in Central America, which are frequently referenced as examples of the future of security in the Colombian post-conflict.

However, in FIP we believe that the impact of peace with the FARC cannot be foreseen in terms of the security situation in large cities. As studies by CERAC, EAFIT, and FIP have shown, crime and violence at the urban level separated from conflict dynamics

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10 An example of this is movements of victims of the crime of forced disappearance, who according to the RUV, number 45,515.
in 2008 if not before. In addition, it is unlikely that FARC ex-combatants will relocate to cities, as happened with many demobilized people from the AUC, because their profile is more rural.

Even so, we must not forget that in urban areas, indexes of crime and violence are worrying. This affects the sense of security, which – added to the authorities’ credibility to protect the citizenry – is very precarious. For example, in the last five years, according to surveys conducted by the How Are We Doing in Cities Network\footnote{The How Are We Doing in Cities Network conducts periodic monitoring in ten departmental capital cities.}, only a third of the population feels safe in their city, and only slightly more than 10% of victims think the crime they suffered will be punished.

Small-scale drugs trafficking is one of the phenomena that greatly impacts the perception of deteriorated urban security and state capacity, and has increased to the point that it is said to be one of the greatest challenges to be faced. Despite the successive wars that the State has recently declared on the “ollas de vicio” (literally pans of vice, or areas where crime is concentrated) in Colombia’s main cities, these areas have become “zones of impunity” in which a diverse amalgamation of crimes and social problems are persistently concentrated.
Transformations for the Post-Conflict Phase
2. Transformations for the Post-Conflict Phase

In the study of mediation, it is common to affirm that peace is achieved through a series of changes. Authors such as Galtung and Lederach have stated that if the relationship between relevant social actors (including those excluded) does not change, the sustainable conditions for peace cannot be generated.

Within this framework of relationships, at FIP we believe that the topics of governance and legitimacy, citizen security, and a culture of peace, are crucial for the post-conflict phase. These three topics will mark an itinerary of structural transformation that implies adjustments in behaviors and values at the normative level. All three are concentrated in large part on the efforts made by FIP, and those that the organization will continue to make in proposing policy measures.

The first topic, governance for peace, touches on state legitimacy and the challenges of interaction between the State and the citizenry. As we will see, building trust is essential to peace. Similarly, the second topic views security as a fundamental element of trust, and proposes that the citizenry should be at the center of the approach. Finally, in the part about peace culture, we examine a series of topics that should demand our daily action and values so that peace can be understood as something that affects our day-to-day lives.

2.1. Governance for Peace: Overcoming the Institutional Deficit

At FIP, we ascribe to the thesis proposed by various authors on the close relationship between the Colombian armed conflict, regional conflicts that surround the use of natural resources, and the institutional deficit.

While there is a debate about the most appropriate name for this deficit (some talk of state absence while others prefer incomplete or non-homogenous presence), it is undeniable that in vast regions of the Colombian territory, the State has been unable to provide the public goods essential for development, and to guarantee rule of law.

Citizen mistrust in institutions, and the lack of legitimacy of public authorities, is a worrying effect of this inability. Proof of this can be seen in the results of the LAPOP political culture survey in 2014, which show that the average level of trust that Colom-
bians have in local authorities is 40 on a scale of 0 to 100. Similar figures have been shown since 2004.

This gap in authority and welfare provision has been filled by various actors. In some regions, local elites completed this role through a political process derived from parroquialism and clientelization. There is a decisive debate on whether in these cases there was intentional transactional delegation from the center as was proposed by James Robinson, or logical occupation of functions as proposed by Francisco Gutiérrez. Either way, it is clear that this form of state consolidation responds to the specific difficulties of consolidating a nation.

In other regions, the difficulties were exacerbated and sharpened by the presence and action of illegal armed actors, who challenged state authority and reacted to the ‘threat’ of private interests. They therefore established territorial control mechanisms, tribute systems, provision of justice and security, and regulation of economic activity (mainly illegal) as has been illustrated in the work of Gustavo Duncan and Maria Teresa Rondeños.

One of the most critical aspects of this situation is that in many regions of the country, this illegal authority has been exercised by means of an armed, antidemocratic, and paternalistic strategy that made communities become accustomed to resolving problems through sensationalist mechanisms and without respect for the social rule of law. The armed groups have not only acted against the imperium of law by public authority, but also created areas of popular support and recognition – and acceptance – of their power.

FIP research on justice in the so-called “consolidation” zones clearly shows the enormous difficulties that justice officials have in exercising their functions in regions in which illegal armed actors are present. There, the irregular groups influence even affairs related to the private life of the inhabitants, as well as local assets and coexistence.

This allows us to confirm that the armed conflict has been closely related to a deep institutional deficit, and that therefore if this page of our history is to turn, we must strengthen institutions and advance without hesitation in the construction of the State.

The following section demonstrates some of the elements that make up the challenge of building peace from the institutional perspective.

Searching for Territorial Autonomy

The decentralization model constructed in the 1990s was insufficient to build peace based on regional development. A discussion of the design of this model is therefore necessary in the post-conflict phase, as are the resulting bold and creative changes.
The way in which decentralization has occurred in Colombia has contributed to an increase in coverage of some basic public services including electricity, water, and education. In the case of the rural sector, which is where the greatest deficiencies occur, water coverage has gone from 41% to 72.8% in the last 20 years.

Similarly, institutional mechanisms have been developed. These include the General Participation System (previously known as the transfer system), the General Royalty System, the Contract Plans, and the local and regional tax system. The royalty system, for example, allowed municipalities to execute almost 4.1 billion pesos in 2014, according to National Planning Department statistics. More recently, these developments were strengthened by the issuance of the Organic Law of Territorial Ordinance (LOOT by its Spanish acronym), which facilitates regional and municipal cooperation and the presentation of regional development projects.

Despite this progress, none of these mechanisms has effectively contributed to the distribution of responsibilities and the promotion of territorial autonomy. FIP believes that a good part of this failure is due to the fact that although decentralization changed the system of competencies and responsibilities, it did not lead to a real process of capacity generation at the local level. The fact that these tools are implemented by people who must understand them, adapt them, adapt themselves, develop new competencies, and implement changes in their entities was not taken into account.

In general terms, it can be said that the municipal and departmental regime does not help to close the existing gaps between municipalities with greater and lesser capacities, but rather widens those gaps. Current capacity is the reason that municipalities with fewer resources have less and less tools and possibilities to transform their situation.

A good example of this are the resources destined for security and justice. FIP, Fundación Paz y Reconciliación, and the Ministry of the Interior conducted participatory research on regional resources for peace in 81 municipalities affected by conflict. The research found that the average annual amount that municipal public administrations have to manage security and coexistence is less than 70 million pesos. This figure is an insult for a mayor who acts as the primary police authority in zones with particularly bad public security problems.

The same research showed that integral security and citizen coexistence plans (PISCC by their Spanish acronym) – for which the Ministry of the Interior should provide oversight – are often created by external consultants who use pre-formed models that have probably only been used in urban areas. In addition, many of the public order committees and security and coexistence councils are dominated by the armed forces and police, and are used only to decide which resources should be used for financing operational costs for armed forces personnel.
A Perverse Re-Centralization

In Colombia, after the huge effort to decentralize in the 1990s and the subsequent overtaking of local income by the illegal armed groups and local elites, there was an effort to re-centralize. This impeded the advance of regional autonomy and generated incentives that contradicted project development. Today, when we are close to peace, we must re-examine the model because the existing one simply does not work.

In post-conflict municipalities, development plans are mere formalities and state investment is represented by subsidies and benefits from national programs and institutions. In these contexts, mayors are hostages to the lack of resources, and their capacity for influence is less than that of third-line representatives who work in Bogotá. Here, it has been impossible to develop and prove their leadership – a fundamental requisite for territorial development.

The asymmetry between regional and national governors has generated a corrupt conversation, which should be corrected as soon as possible. On one hand, the national level blames the regions for corrupt practices, lack of competence, clientelism, and ignoring priorities. On the other hand, the regions increasingly resent a centripetal national state that imposes guidelines above considerations necessary for local development.

Today, there are arguments about territorial order, local and regional tributes and taxes, and participatory policies. However, the municipal councils and departmental assemblies are mute invitees in these discussions, and the need to assign resources to strengthen them has not yet been examined. It is contradictory to worry about the use of the land when the entities that issue, modify, and approve POTs and water plans, and have direct influence on tax collecting at the local level, are ignored.

This frustration about decentralization is the logical correlation of an unjust and unacceptable relationship between center and periphery. Colombia, as has been shown by historian Eduardo Posada Carbó, is the obvious heir of a historical tradition of centralization and of a defeatist elite trapped in internal conflicts. The effect of this could not be more devastating: a perennial image of the Colombian regions as indomitable and uncivilized places with exuberant natural beauty and corrupt, criminal, and uneducated people.

This stigmatizing imaginary still dominates the relationship between the center of decision-making and the regions, and leaves its stamp on processes such as the royalty system and the delivery of resources from the National Security and Citizen Coexistence Fund (FONSECON by its Spanish acronym). It is arbitrary that a group of national-level representatives can approve regional-level development, security, and coexistence projects without understanding the reality of the areas in which those projects are to be implemented.
Similarly, the uneven distribution of human capital with high levels of training is exacerbated by policies that restrict the hiring of well-paid bureaucracies in peripheral regions. It is therefore not strange that representatives of national and central entities play a more important role in the life of citizens than the local mandatories popularly elected and submitted to political and administrative control in the regions. The fact that national authorities systematically ignore demands for greater autonomy from mayors and governors is therefore unjustifiable.

This, of course, does not mean to disregard the high risk implied by the lack of local capacity for the execution of public resources. Evidence has shown that on par with this deficiency are corruption and inefficiency. However, the response to these dilemmas cannot be re-centralization and the progressive decrease of regional autonomy.

The Choice to Strengthen Local Capacity

At FIP, we believe that the post-conflict phase requires a choice – or bet – to generate and strengthen local capacities. We asked departmental governments about assistance for victims and the post-conflict phase, and only 17% believe that the victims’ policy is appropriately decentralized. There is also a constant demand due to the lack of support and transfer of resources and capacity on this issue.

We also looked into the model of institutional structure preferred by local governments to implement the agreements made in Havana. More than 76% believe that there should be resource assignments from the General Participation System and technical assistance from national government. In addition, more than 65% believe that appropriate post-conflict management depends on strengthening municipal budgets. These figures are confirmed by the 45% opposition to post-conflict resources being executed by national government entities with regional presence. These findings reveal the great distrust between different levels of government.

In addition to these challenges, development planning in the new context implies a clash of new and different – sometimes opposed – criteria. The Organic Planning Law (Law 152 of 1994) incentivizes a territorial logic that facilitates the design and formulation of development plans, but the interlocution between national governments and regional entities, and the demanding requirements made by the first of the second, are sectorial in nature. Each mayor and governor must meet the demands and needs of each sector (agriculture, social development, health, education, mining), even if they are not compatible or coordinated. Fedesarrollo, CIDER (University of the Andes), and RINDE Network studies have shown a worrying dissonance between sectorial and regional development criteria.

The vices of decentralization, the nation-territory relationship, and the confrontation described above, are reproduced and exacerbated in a parochial and traditional way.
of conducting politics. Research by FIP and other organizations and think tanks such as CINEP, Paz y Reconciliación, and Arco Iris, show that the exercise of politics at the local level does not incentivize the improvement of living conditions for the citizenry, by which means they could reproduce their power, but rather takes advantage of opportunities that generate public resource administration for the creation and generation of family and individual wealth.

In our system, the “best” political operators are those who manage to make national and regional programs privilege the electoral base and establish blackmail and sinecure mechanisms to reproduce their own opportunities. This is perverse behavior driven by equally perverse rules.

Peace will be neither stable nor sustainable if clean, effective, and vigilant implementation is not an objective for regional politicians – something that will not happen if the implementation of the agreements is conducted in a centralistic and technocratic way. That’s why we are convinced that strengthening regional capacity is the most important agenda point in the decentralization model, and that this strengthening should not be understood as training or handing over books.

FIP believes that strengthening regional capacity implies permanent support, gradual delegation of competencies and functions, handing over resources, monitoring autonomy, respect for regional criteria, evaluation, standards, demands, and in general, opportunities for development and the exercise of competencies for adaptive and transformative leadership. It also implies the formation of high performance teams, improvement of objective and material work conditions, recognition of the political nature of public functions, learning and knowledge management, generation of incentives, and above all, understanding that change is made by people, and without motivation and feeling for the work, and deep ethics in the construction of public goods, any entity risks failure.

**Lights and Shadows of Citizen Participation**

Strengthening capacities also requires driving clear management with respect to the citizenry, which has shared responsibility for the success of regional public administration. The exercise of public functions in a post-conflict context occurs against a backdrop of the necessary re-activation of trust in the State. For this, there must be a great effort towards transparency, public control, oversight, and permanent communication through participation.

In this way, part of the problems that have led to the discrediting of state authority have to do with the failure to fulfill the spirit of participation of the Constitution of 91.
It is not strange that the partial agreements between the government and the FARC mention again and again the importance of active participation by the citizenry, not only in implementation of the agreed measures, but also in public administration of development. The underlying thesis of the agreements is that participation improves decision-making and corrects corruption in representative politics.

At FIP, we agree that direct democratic mechanisms are important, but we also believe it necessary to take certain precautions. The first is related to neither making community participation sacred, nor idealizing it. Research on this topic, such as that conducted by World Bank expert Vijayendra Rao, has shown that if processes do not ensure the quality of participation and permanent debate mechanisms, participation can generate unjust and unfeasible decisions.

We must consider that participation, when focused on organizations and not on citizens, tends to reproduce dynamics of cooptation and corruption. As has been shown in international experience, participation is effective when it involves common citizens and manages to capture the interests of people who are not part of interest groups.

In an analysis of the peace agreements conducted by FIP, we identified proposed instances and mechanisms of participation. By contrasting them with existing mechanisms, we observed that there is a risk of duplicating mechanisms that already exist, and debilitating communication processes that have been developed over various years at the regional level. Ideally, a strong and pluralistic mixed participation mechanism would be agreed based on what already exists, and with various functions. If not, this participation could contribute to the atomization of spaces and exacerbate the existing disorder.

For example, the agreements propose the installation of coexistence and reconciliation councils with functions very close to those of the transitional justice committees created by the 2011 Victims’ Law, and to the peace councils created by Law 434 of 1998. The agendas of these bodies must be brought together so that when one functions well, it is not substituted but rather strengthened.

With that idea in mind, FIP conducted the only existing detailed map of peace councils: where they are, where they function, where they have failed, and where there is interest in creating them. That analysis allowed us to confirm that participation mechanisms in the municipalities require political will, concrete resources, and real capacity for influence. We also found that in small municipalities, it is foolish to propose multiple mechanisms if they aim to be strong. We hope that this panorama, more bitter than sweet, serves to guide the new interest in participation that will come about through implementation of the peace agreements.
Technological innovation is also essential for participation. International and national experiences show that technology can reduce transaction costs, include more actors, and democratize information. Participation must be taken to the twenty-first century and go beyond the parameters established in the 1990s.

**A State That Fulfills Its Promises**

The centrality of the topic of participation is founded not only on the place it occupies in the Havana agreements, but also on the close relationship between quality participation and the trust that citizens have in the State. Good participation helps to reduce the deficit of legitimacy, and frustrating participation generates gaps that cannot be filled by social programs. Taking massive participation to contexts in which the State has not had an effective presence is a necessary but risky proposal. The process must be designed and implemented with quality standards that guarantee that the State follows through on what it agrees.

The capacity to fulfill promises in the regions will be one of the main challenges in the post-conflict phase. As the image of the State is that it does not fulfill its promises, there is an urgent need for a national effort to generate and strengthen state capacities as much at the local level as at the national level. Representatives must acquire competencies and be able to follow through for the citizenry, as well as designing and implementing measures that significantly impact everyone’s lives, and in particular, the lives of the most vulnerable.

At the national level, capacities and communication with the citizenry, which should be exercised by ministries of justice, the interior, and those in charge of citizen security, will also be requisites to achieve peace in our country.

Finally, the elements that we have illustrated in previous pages talk of the need to reconstruct the relationship between the State and its citizens. The center-periphery relationship, citizen participation, institutional imbalance, decentralization, and other areas have highlighted that the links and relationship between Colombians and the State are fractured at many levels, and that with this fracture, it will be difficult to build peace.

Apart from these elements, and along the same lines of trust and legitimacy, we are enormously interested in putting security and justice at the service of citizens, as essential elements of legitimate democratic regimes. In the following section we therefore address the challenges of security sector institutions and their relationship with justice, which at FIP we consider to mark our country’s itinerary in the post-conflict phase.
2.2. Security and Justice for Peace

In Colombia, government security efforts over recent decades have been strongly tied to facing the threats associated with the armed conflict and drugs trafficking. As was highlighted by the Criminal Policy Evaluation Committee in the report it provided the government in 2012, peace and security policies have been based on strengthening the military and police apparatus, and on finding the negotiated political solution to the conflict. Similarly, the Committee showed that an increasingly punitive criminal policy had been developed – one subordinate to the need to fight insurgency and drugs trafficking, or contain these threats through political negotiation and/or submission to justice.

Now that we are facing an opportunity to close the armed conflict with the guerrilla groups, we hope that one result of this process will be the generation of a well-defined space to make adjustments to the security sector, moving its center of gravity from the military-police context to that of crime prevention, where the police will be the first link in the chain of justice, and other institutional actors will gain importance.

This requires that the focus on citizen security that until now has been a second-level priority, takes on a more central role. Various legal developments have been made since the beginning of the 1990s, and intermittent efforts have been made in the main cities which have gained national and international recognition. From a normative standpoint, we went from focusing on a predominantly military model of security and public order management, to one in which leadership is in the hands of national and local civilian authorities. Public policies have been made to drive diagnostics, work plans, indicators, and the leadership of mayors and governors.

However, in practice, this evolution has not become a reality. The work conducted by FIP in this field makes evident that this leadership continues to be passed, either totally or partially, to the armed forces, especially the police, which privileges activities that correspond to the guidelines and vision of the Ministry of Defense on which it relies. We have also found a lack of leadership to make the security and justice sectors act under coordinated policies and strategies.

At FIP, we believe it is crucial that the civil authorities assume a leadership role not only in the formulation of public policy but also in governance of security and justice, aligned with the strategic objectives of those policies. This design should involve all entities with direct or indirect responsibilities for security and justice, including the citizenry, organized civil society, and other actors who have shared responsibility for the production and sustainability of these areas.
The Relocation of The Police And The Modernization of Its Strategies

From the perspective of institutions in the security sector, we are convinced that in a context of peace, the National Police should leave the Ministry of Defense and be relocated in an institutional context that allows it to maintain a civilian nature and its functions preserving citizen security and harmonic work with administrative authorities and justice operators.

The police should continue the process of modernization and institutional strengthening that was recently begun. These processes, which take place in the framework of the Community Policing by Quadrants model, have focused on strengthening police capacities for local diagnostic and intervention through problem solving methods.

International evidence shows that police work based on random patrols and reactive services is not effective. According to criminologists and police experts David Weisburd and John Eck, the combination of strategies to get closer to crime and better focus service improves police effectiveness and reduces crime rates in the “medium and long term.” Progress made by the police in the identification of and intervention at critical points should be maintained and expanded.

As has been demonstrated in various studies carried out since the 1980s in the United States, crime tends to concentrate on few geographical zones, no matter the unit of analysis. Colombian cities are no exception, and FIP studies show, for example, that in Bogotá almost 70% of the crime is concentrated in 30% of the territory, so institutional capacities should continue to target these concentrations to eradicate the entrenched problems. A typical case of these persistent concentrations of crime are the “pans of vice” in various cities across the country.

FIP’s experience in the ten main cities of the country allows us to identify that police action to control complex critical points is insufficient. Decisive leadership and commitment by mayors is needed in situation-specific interventions (public space, transit, illumination, parking, sidewalks, trash), social interventions (at-risk youth, social integration, homeless people) that prevent crime and generate sustainable solutions that impact citizens’ quality of life. Similarly, it is necessary to strengthen coordination with justice authorities to concentrate all efforts on the problems that most affect citizen security.

The Rural Security Deficit

The State is facing various challenges, which mostly have to do with the historic debt of security in rural areas of the country, which requires both immediate and long-term measures.
In the immediate context, we find the topic of stabilization, which is a particularly delicate phase in the peace process, and follows the signature of an agreement. According to international definitions, this phase is designed to protect and promote legitimate political authority, using a combination of civil and military action to reduce violence, re-establish security, and prepare for long-term recovery though the construction of an environment that facilitates structural stability.

From there, it is essential that the State respond rapidly in areas most affected by the conflict, and simultaneously provide security and justice to the citizenry, as well as filling the gap left by the demobilized guerrilla groups and containing the threat of organized crime.

In the long term, it will be necessary to consider the institutional design required to address security and justice needs in departmental capitals, villages, and isolated rural areas.

**Confronting The Challenge of Organized Crime**

Various international cases show that in the post-agreement phase, crime and violence tend to increase in close relationship with the appropriation of income, disputes between illegal actors, and gaps in conflict resolution. The demobilization of the FARC will generate a gap in or change of power in the group’s zones of influence, which could be occupied by factions of combatants who decide not to take part in the process, and instead continue illegal activity, or by criminal organizations that aim to take control of illegal economies.

Colombia has globally recognized experience in the fight against organized crime, particularly with respect to the organizations associated with drugs trafficking that have generated so much violence in the country. This experience has focused on the strategy of hitting the heads of criminal organizations, with the goal of dismantling them. Without disregarding these achievements, it must be said that instead of being dismantled, these structures have transformed and fragmented, generating new challenges to society and the State.

FIP supports a multi-dimensional approach that goes beyond dismantling the organizations and using tactical-operational indicators (such as captures and neutralizations). This approach prioritizes the police along with more strategic action in the area of justice. This means deepening the justice strategy with respect to organized crime by allowing integral investigations of its structures, the collection of crimes they commit.

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12 Statements on this multi-dimensional approach are based on a report by Maria Victoria Llorente, Executive Director of the FIP, as a member of the Drug Policy Evaluation Committee, whose final report was handed in to the government in May 2015.
and their assets. It is therefore important to systematically monitor and evaluate the reform carried out by the Attorney General’s Office, targeting the change in focus of criminal investigation and strengthening investigative capacities with respect to organized crime and corruption.

In addition, it is important to consider strategies to intervene in regional, institutional, and organizational conditions that allow these groups to reproduce. Policies on organized crime should focus on the reduction of violence associated with the action of these groups. In addition, an interest in reducing violence should include combatting illegal markets.

In the stabilization phase, criminal economies and the organizations associated with them require special treatment. The control of organized crime in this stage implies a dilemma whose solution is equally problematic. On one hand, combatting criminal economies could generate imbalances and spirals of violence. On the other, not confronting them in the early stage of the post-agreement phase could empower pre-existing criminal organizations and generate cycles of legitimization in the long term, through the domination of regions and control of populations.

For FIP, it is important that the State decides whether the goal in the stabilization phase should be dismantling criminal economies, or if the immediate objective – both possible and desirable - is the reduction of their negative impact, prioritizing the reduction of violence and crime. This implies containing and diminishing crime and violence in the short term, without abandoning long-term goals, and making clear that regional control by the armed forces is insufficient if not accompanied by integral state intervention.

**Towards a Flexible State Response**

There is no unique formula to confront security challenges in both the present and the post-conflict phase. This requires flexible and differential public policies that take into account four dimensions:

- The first is spatial, and relates to the heterogeneity between rural and urban problems affected by cultural, social, economic, and political factors in the regions.

- The next is temporal, and has to do with the institutions required to immediately respond to post-agreement needs, and to implement a medium and long-term institutional design that allows the implementation of public policies that consolidate peace, security, and justice with a regional focus.
This strategy must allow different entities with security and justice responsibilities to coordinate under unified leadership that facilitates planning, budgeting, execution, and goal-setting processes appropriate for local security plans.

Finally is an organizational dimension that incorporates factors related to the management of human resources, education, and training, development and progress, work regimes and benefits, and other strategic topics relating to security and justice for peace.

### 2.3. Towards a Culture of Peace

For decades, various lines of thinking have united in certainty that the fundamental changes required by society revolve around transformations in norms, behaviors, beliefs, and values. This consideration, made by institutionalism in its most classic (North) and contemporary (Ostrom) forms, coincides with theories of social and economic psychology (Arielly), as well as peacebuilding studies.

This reasoning, which impregnates itself in the proposals we have made about security challenges in Colombia, makes us ask what we can do to be peace builders in our everyday lives.

Just as citizens’ shared responsibility has been thought of in discussions of citizen security and coexistence, so also must we consider our obligation to propose what we should change about our behavior and attitudes so that peace is stable and sustainable. The following text lays out various cultural challenges that speak to the need to construct patterns of coexistence that impede the reproduction of violence. In this case, as in that of almost all topics examined in this document, we are proposing a prioritization that we believe will be useful for collective action, rather than an exhaustive description.

Parallel with the national effort for institutional change and generation of leadership capacities, in FIP we think that Colombian society should work together for a joint purpose of cultural transformation. From our point of view, the reproduction and transformation of violence and illegal activity are related not only to social, economic, and political structures and progressions, but also to patterns of interaction and ways of relating to others, social groups, and public and private entities.

The centrality of relationships in peacebuilding processes has been highlighted by various studies in this field. In his famous text The Moral Imagination, Lederach said: "Peacebuilding demands a vision of relationship. Stated bluntly, if there is no capacity to
imagine the canvas of mutual relationships and situate oneself as part of that historic and ever-evolving web, peacebuilding collapses."

Similarly, authors inspired by systemic thinking have recently highlighted the relevance of relationships to peacebuilding. As has been proposed by the founder of the Alliance for International Conflict Prevention and Resolution, Robert Ricigliano, it is possible to modify complex systems that provide the conditions for conflict just by intervening in the relationships of which they are formed.

At FIP, contrary to some, we do not believe that Colombians are culturally and irreversibly violent and that achieving peace is therefore against our nature. On the contrary, we are convinced that if we want peace, we must commit to the task of questioning the way in which we have related to each other in certain contexts, and the way we imagine ourselves and our society.

From FIP’s perspective, sustainable peace is unthinkable without a change of our imaginary, stories, rules of the game, and narratives. In that way, we understand reconciliation as a process that involves all Colombians and implies much more than forgiveness and coexistence between conflict victims and ex-combatants, although this is a central challenge.

The good news is that national and international experiences have shown that collective public and private efforts can modify the characteristics of citizen relationships. What we today call “citizen culture” is perhaps the most irrefutable example of this. Years ago, Antanas Mockus showed that it was possible to modify relationships through second and third-level behaviors, which generate environments more prone to collectively beneficial decisions. A first-level behavior is to cross the street. Inviting someone to cross at the zebra crossing is second-level, and having a disapproving expression that generates shame in the pedestrian who crosses in an inappropriate place is known as a third-level behavior.

Sustained increases in levels of tax, saving water, and transport security indicators have served as evidence of the above. That is harmony between law, morals, and culture, which is desirable in civic behavior of citizens. This means fulfilling laws because that is the right thing to do and because society will condemn us if they are broken.

Authors such as John Sudarsky and Jorge Giraldo explored the link between culturally accepted values, representations, imaginaries, and practices in the generation of environments prone to illegal actions and violence. Studies of political culture, citizenry, and social capital that have so blossomed in Colombia show the development of this idea for the transformation of culture.
As a contribution to the definition of a peacebuilding agenda, below we will highlight some challenges of cultural transformation that FIP should address in the post-conflict context. All of these have been broadly debated in academia, and corroborated by our research.

**A Culture of Legality and New Narratives**

First is the imperative of modifying the culture of not complying with norms. A few years ago, Mauricio García, founder of Dejusticia, proposed a classification of the mentalities of non-fulfillment that continues to be useful in understanding the reasons why Colombia sees such a generalized contempt for the law. His analysis of the “alive,” “rebels,” “arrogant,” “crafty,” and “restorers” is very appropriate in differentiating the type of motivation and incentive each of these typologies has and the degree to which it is susceptible to state and citizen intervention.

There is a collective obligation to move towards a culture of legality and to give support, from informal institutions, to our social rule of law. FIP believes that to be the most effective way to combat the broad problem of corruption, which is so delicate in the post-conflict phase.

Second, and closely related to the challenge of the nation-territory relationship exposed in previous pages, we consider fundamental the recognition of and assistance for the large problem of territorial stigmatization which has been generated by the armed conflict. In our research in different areas of Colombia we have confirmed the importance that many citizens give to their places of origin.

There are testimonies of practices as painful as registering recently born babies in the department capitals in order to prevent their birth certificates from telling the truth about their birthplaces. The same happens with the registration of cars, properties, and businesses. It is amazing to admit that the war in Colombia, in addition to its direct effects, has marked the identity of an enormous group of citizens who have internalized the shame, anger, and resentment of region and nation.

In a recent book, renowned philosopher Martha Nussbaum showed the importance of emotional climate in great social decisions. She definitively exposes how transformations towards peace are more possible when they are carried out in a climate of compassion, feeling, and empathy – far from what has been cultivated for years in our regions.

The third challenge of cultural transformation related to the above consists of selected appropriate stories to narrate the history of the crisis and overcoming of violence.
Facing History and Ourselves, the international project by Harvard University, has shown the enormous importance of teaching about and reflection on the history of reconciliation processes, awareness, and construction of identity. Selecting the narrative with which the country will identify these decades of war is no small task.

As has been highlighted by Eric Hobsbawm, the conclusion of violence is closely related to the collective capacity to select and reproduce a story that foments recognition and reconciliation, but not shame. We suggest addressing current debates on justice, truth, reparation, and non-repetition from this approach.

In Colombia, transitional justice could catalyze collective constructions of truth and local exercises of memory. It could also construct a shared story about the conflict and constitute an instrument of reconciliation. For this to be possible, we need diverse sectors and actors to come together. The value of their contributions will depend on the quality of participation and deliberation put in place by the Truth Commission, among other things.

In the agreements on transitional justice in Havana, third-party responsibility has been addressed and has generated much discussion and uncertainty among various sectors such as the business sector. Although transitional justice is a strange context for this sector, businesses do have the tools to navigate this environment and eventually contribute to the sustainability of peace. The discussions and developments that have occurred in recent years in the field of business and human rights, in particular the UN framework of protecting, respecting, and remedy, can serve in thinking about business participation in transitional justice. Businesses can mark processes that recognize the centrality of truth and memory not as a measure for assignment of blame and recrimination, but as pillars of non-repetition, transformation, and the construction of new narratives.

**The Transformative Power of Dialogue**

During the post-conflict phase, we must also emphasize dialogue and conversation as tools for transformation and reinvention. FIP believes that there are three focuses of dialogue that will be particularly relevant. One will be what Lederach calls dialogue between improbable parties, which implies a conscious and consistent effort for exchange with people with whom we could never imagine ourselves sharing anything. This notion comes from the recognition of dialogue’s transformative power when it convenes completely different points of view and realities. This means making an effort to recognize other perspectives and actors as valid and legitimate.
The second focus relates to multi-action dialogue exercises, which aim to generate consensus between a plural number of actors with diverse positions on and interests in the same point. In Colombia, there are various successful initiatives. The Development and Peace Programs, the roundtables on mining, climate change, and human rights, the exercises of prospective planning driven by chambers of commerce, and those of regional visions, are some valuable precedents that could be strengthened.

FIP has participated in several of these processes. It is worth highlighting that we actively promoted the Colombia Guides on Human Rights and IHL, a multi-actor project that has brought together businesses, government representatives, civil society, and international community for eight years. That context addresses worries about situations presented in the context of business operations and relating to the respect and promotion of human rights. This choice of collective construction can shed a light on how to foment and feed pluralistic dialogue.

Some central elements in this effort include trust building, adhering to mutual respect, identification of common interests, and definition of a collective agenda. Perhaps the main contribution of an experience like Colombia Guides is understanding dialogue not as a process of negotiation and convincing others, but rather as an exercise of mutual learning and construction between different parties.

At FIP, we also believe that dialogue with an appreciative focus can be a valuable tool for transformation. This type of dialogue, which has been implemented in practice in environments of innovation and design, emphasizes the recognition of resources and the identification of shared dreams and proposals for change, more than on problems and needs. It is a dialogue on optimism and the future, not on the reiteration of our enormous problems.

Colombia needs to reverse the tendency to naturalize violence and understand it as the result of an otherwise avoidable tragedy. We must recognize that we have created a collective culture of the inevitability of our current situation, which is accompanied by a need to naturalize its painful effects. This is a natural reaction but for that reason it is also less worrying, and challenges us to build and strengthen the idea that peace is a social imperative for the construction of our nation.
The Strength of the Business Sector for Peace
3. The Strength of the Business Sector for Peace

Until now, we have discussed the main aspects that FIP believes constitute the central nucleus of the challenges we must face during the post-conflict phase if we want peace to endure and bring true transformation.

However, we have made more or less general calls for action in which we invoke the citizenry and the State as collectives.

Given the nature of our Foundation, we cannot finish this text without defining what we believe to be the general areas of business commitment to peace. An organization such as FIP must value and defend the fundamental role of the business sector as an agent and protagonist of social change.

As few organizations in Colombia, we have witnessed the dynamism and changes that business commitment and opinion have had on peace in our country. Based on that experience, we can affirm that businesses and Colombian businesspeople are in the right conditions to make a difference.

FIP’s engagement with the business sector has not only come from our organizational history. It also has to do with an interpretation of the values and behaviors we consider necessary for peacebuilding. From our perspective, simple entrepreneurship – often the most valuable kind – in parallel with peace, requires high levels of trust in the future, adaptability and a capacity for reading reality, acceptance of failure, creativity, drive, respect for norms, and distribution of welfare.

Businesspeople and businesses, as citizens and institutions, are those who should build opportunities for a future post-conflict phase. It is they, in many cases, who will take the risk of investing in the new Colombia, integrated in the regions that today are seen only as producers of basic goods. It is they who will innovate and, if they do this right, who will take a good part of the credit. In this inter-connected world, business initiative continues to be an enormous driver of change, a sign that it is possible to transform destiny with a lot of decision, clarity, effort, and favorable conditions.

3.1. We’re Not Starting From Zero

In Colombia, some business leaders and businesses have become involved in peacebuilding experiences, whose lessons learned are often great. These experiences have
focused on topics such as the creation of employment and the generation of opportunities for vulnerable populations affected by the armed conflict. Additional experiences include participation in peace negotiations, support for ex-combatant reintegration processes, economic recovery in areas affected by war, and voluntary agreements on business and human rights.

However, these contributions are small when compared to the transformation we hope will unfold upon the end of the conflict with the guerrilla groups. At FIP, we believe that efforts are required with as much quantity as focus. On one hand, we must increase the number of business initiatives for peace. On the other, it is worth reviewing the areas of work that have been implemented until now, as it is possible that they do not get to the essence of peacebuilding – the transformations and closing of regional gaps that can break the cycles of violence. On FIP’s recent mapping of initiatives implemented by businesses as peace builders, we found that only a small percentage really contributed to that end.

It is clear that for business, peace will always be better than war. However, for the business sector, building peace is an effort that generates questions and uncertainty. Business leaders and unions have observed this in interviews and statements made during the peace process. Surveys also reflect how businesspeople are divided with respect to the peace process, similar to Colombian society in general.

Significantly, a survey conducted by the Bogotá Chamber of Commerce in August 2015 showed that of 1,300 businesspeople, only 9% stated that they were working on projects that aimed to support peacebuilding. It is also worrying that according to the same survey, two thirds of businesspeople say they do not know about the agreements made until now in Havana. Even so, it is worth noting that close to half would participate in reintegration initiatives, and that percentage would increase with economic incentives.

We must not ignore that the armed conflict has imposed serious challenges to business operations in Colombia. These range from security issues to acquisition of rights to land and other resources, and interaction with institutions and local interest groups. These challenges will not dissipate overnight with the signature of a peace agreement, but businesses can contribute so that they do not get worse in the post-agreement phase, but rather strengthen the path to sustainable peace.

In this panorama, at FIP we wish to facilitate initiatives that convene solid participation by businesspeople and awaken their interest in peace agreements about structural topics such as integral rural development, participation, and the solution to the problem of illegal drugs. We hope that these initiatives will open a space for debate on the focus and options for participation by the business sector, and the definition of common paths. Similarly, we hope these initiatives will strengthen the leadership of some to bring
others onboard and propose incentives that could allow the government to increase the number of businesspeople who support what we consider could be a great business contribution to our country.

With respect to the focus and options for participation, based on a detailed analysis of national and international experiences, and taking into account the challenges that we have prioritized in the previous chapter, we have identified a series of dimensions for intervention that could strengthen business efforts for peace. There are six dimensions (Figure 1) that contribute to strengthening institutions that support democracy, responsible management, and the implementation of initiatives for economic, social, and political inclusion.

**3.2. Business Agenda For Peace**

The first dimension aims to strengthen local capacities and focuses on businesses’ potential to influence interest groups and their operations environments, and to contribute to the construction of public goods at the local level. Specifically, this refers to strengthening state and non-state institutions with the goal of substituting the perverse

**FIGURE 01**

**KEY DIMENSIONS TO ENHANCE THE BUSINESS STRENGTH FOR PEACE**

- Strengthening Local Capacities
- Transparency and Anti-Corruption
- Responsible Management
- Extension of Citizenship Rights
- Entrepreneurships for Peace
- Reconciliation and New Narratives

Source: Fundación Ideas para la Paz / Created: FIP 2015
institutions associated with war. It is also related to the recognition of common good and the enjoyment of rights as the ultimate goal of local institutions.

Even though businesses alone cannot generate the required local capacities and institutional transformation, they can work jointly with state and social actors to achieve this. This task implies deep transformations and new social pacts that allow us to overcome local organizational and administrative weaknesses, as well as the provision of citizen security and justice in rural areas.

Closely related to this is the second area, which has to do with business capacity to contribute to transparency and to counter practices connected to corruption. These practices include all initiatives with which businesses sanction and fail to stimulate practices in their operations and their relationships with interest groups. Similarly, business initiatives that aim to overcome asymmetries in access to information are key in decision-making within interest groups themselves.

A task of this magnitude cannot be the sole responsibility of businesses. However, the sector can contribute significantly to overcoming corruption. This implies initiating processes of profound transformation capable of strengthening recognition and valuing the common good and care for public resources.

A third line of work relates to broadening democracy and citizenship through participation. This is work that businesses can contribute to through the promotion of participation, aiming to empower local populations as managers and responsible parties in decisions about their regions and lives.

In the framework of the peace agreement on participation, we believe that businesses can contribute to two of the six points of which it is comprised: citizen control and oversight, and democratic participatory planning. To achieve this, they must also work on the promotion of coexistence, tolerance, and non-stigmatization.

In terms of broadening citizenship, the most important role of the business sector is to contribute to political dialogue in favor of the creation and strengthening of spaces for participation. Businesses’ involvement in managing the presence of state entities in these spaces is key. They can contribute by generating and financing local capacities necessary for active participation, by administering the resources necessary to drive the participation process and diminishing asymmetries in access to information.

Businesses’ choice to broaden citizenship through participation means implementing initiatives that overcome obstacles that the conflict has imposed, such as stereo-
types with regard to certain causes, the invisibility of some communities, the lack of coordination of organizations and social movements, the absence of capacity between key social actors, and the precariousness of resources.

The fourth line focuses on entrepreneurship for peace. Here, businesses’ work relates to economic inclusion, which is the result of diverse strategies to integrate populations and regions that have historically been socially marginalized and economically controlled by the national government. This implies creating conditions that are stable and sustainable for inhabitants, beyond illegal economies and despite the fragility of legal ones. Ideally, businesses’ work should unite public and private efforts in such a way that the State and the business sector generate and reinforce economic inclusion processes, preferably in equal conditions.

The fifth dimension is responsible management and due diligence in human rights. This alludes to the mechanisms that businesses should have to ensure that their activities do not impact interest groups’ exercise of their rights and, in the case that this occurs, guarantee that there exist opportune channels for response and remedy. Responsible management and due diligence are necessary elements in business contribution to the generation of environments with better conditions to achieve sustainable peace. Similarly, to ensure that management respects human rights, businesses should fulfill their due diligence according to what has been expressed in the framework of the United Nations.

The sixth and last line is reconciliation, and new narratives that respond to the need to build and reconstruct connections between different actors with the objective of transforming antagonistic relationships into solid ones. In this process, businesses should support initiatives that lead to truth and non-repetition, as well as historical memory exercises that allow dialogue between improbable actors, to use Lederach’s idea. Working in this dimension also requires the transformation of perceptions of the “other” to generate new ideas and shared experiences. This means understanding reconciliation as a process that involves not only victims and victimizers, but also all Colombians.

The forms of business participation in reconciliation and the construction of new narratives are less known than other efforts that can be implemented in the post-conflict phase. However, businesses can contribute to these two areas when their initiatives contribute to forming the base for reconstructing antagonistic relationships and guaranteeing non-repetition, when they pro-actively participate in exercises such as building memory, promoting interaction between people who the conflict placed in different groups, or leading the construction of narratives that congregate actors that the conflict and its associated dynamics have polarized.
Progressing in a business agenda for peace such as the one we have proposed is not about money. Above all, it implies the private sector’s choices with respect to the public sector, and the implementation of initiatives that aim to transform regional realities interwoven with the conflict and its violence. This requires leadership and capacity for innovation – two characteristics inherent to the business sector, which in contrast with other actors, has three essential areas of capital that can give life to this agenda: human capital, economic capital, and political capital.

The way in which the six dimensions are put into practice will vary according to the context and nature of the businesses. The regional focus is indispensable, and allows recognition of the history, conflicts, and socio-cultural, geographic, and environmental characteristics of Colombia’s diverse regions.

The proposal for business commitment to peace that we make is related to broader choices such as those assigned in the 2014-2018 Competitiveness Agenda, launched in August 2014, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) approved in September 2015. More than half of the prioritized points on the competitiveness agenda coincide with the global SDG agenda and also with our proposal. The call to modernization, competitiveness, and transformation of vicious cycles of conflict and exclusion are connected in this historical moment that we cannot allow to slip through our hands.

The business community has many of the keys and capacities necessary to transform the realities of many Colombians. The question that representatives of the sector should ask themselves is whether they will be protagonists of change, or whether they will remain on the margins of this great opportunity.
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Fundación Ideas para la Paz

Calle 100, No. 8ª – 37 Torre A. Of. 305
Bogotá Tel. (57-1) 218 3449
e-mail: fip@ideaspaiz.org

www.ideaspaz.org