



Nonviolent Peaceforce Colombia

Summary of the Project Proposal and the Report of the Exploration in February 2006

The Project Proposal as Adopted by the International Council of Nonviolent Peaceforce on 15 October 2006 (extract)

A programme in Colombia will be started as soon as funding is secured for one year. Reasons for the recommendation made by the Executive to the Council to this project include:

- The urgent need in Colombia for protective accompaniment and presence for groups and communities that are involved in nonviolent resistance.
- The programme fully matching NP's overall objectives and mandate.
- The need to have another deployment project in another continent for building up NP's track record and increasing its experience.
- The need to have a second deployment with the potential to grow to larger numbers of deployed FTMs
- The proposal being well-based on the ground with invitations from various groups and organisations, and being supported by the NP Colombia Working Group.

The plan is initially establish two NP teams. The first team would consist of up to 12 members, and would be based in Cali, in order to accompany the civil society organisations there. At the same time it would explore other possibilities of accompaniment. Within that region, the population is highly organized, and proposals

of international accompaniment are in high demand, as there are no permanent teams or other organizations filling this need.

A second team will be based in Bogotá, initially with up to four members. Their task would be to intervene in cases of human rights violations. From Bogota, occasional accompaniment tasks will take place, in the areas of Alto Ariari and Curvarado, as well as in the Antiochean East, until eventually a team can be established in Medellín.

The project management will also be based in Bogotá.

It is suggested to begin with medium-sized teams with a total of about 16 FTM, so that the exploration of different areas of Colombia can take place in an organized, analysed and planned manner. It is necessary to establish a slow and continuous growth of the teams in Colombia, and that needs the establishment of a team responsible exclusively for administrative support, as well as the increase of support networks outside the country. This means that the infrastructure needed must be extremely well organized, in order to provide for the needs of emotional accompaniment of the volunteers; reaction in case of emergencies or urgent actions, to disseminate the project; to establish networks of persons and international organisations that can undertake emergency actions or lobby in the United States and Europe, knowing beforehand the violent situations that occur in the middle of the conflict, as well as having political and international influence; training and preparation of the volunteers; logistical support and fundraising.

We believe that the project could grow slowly to reach a team of 100 people in the period of three to five years. This would depend on the implementation of proposals based on deep analysis of the situation that needs to be made taking into account the expressed considerations, as well as on the requests and demands of Colombian community processes, and/or of Colombian organisations that work for the promotion and defence of human rights. We consider of supreme importance that the first team of 16 members be formed by individuals with previous experience in accompaniment and protection tasks in Colombia, since they will be responsible for structuring the organization in the country, and this will require highly skilled personnel in order to avoid risks to the community, and to preserve the organization's public image. There are many former volunteers in Colombia with experience in the above tasks, so finding a qualified and experienced team should not present obstacles.

The main goal of the Colombia deployment is to support local individuals, communities and organizations working in the field of human rights, providing international protective presence in order to enhance local capacities for peace, to reduce local violence, and increase the safety and security of civilians.

The objectives of the project are to:

1. Contribute to the respect of human rights and to prevent the outbreak of, or to mitigate, new violence through the deployment of international unarmed civilian teams that assure protective presence to human rights defenders in vulnerable rural communities or "peace communities."
2. Enhance the work of local peace and human rights activists through accompaniment and "safe space" for their work and an international early warning system reporting to international key actors about what happens on the ground.
3. Facilitate the local networking among peace communities so to get increased national visibility and to contribute to a just peace.

Activities will include:

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- Peacekeepers living in communities up to 20 days per month, regulating their presence according to the risk analysis made by NP along with local communities and organizations.
 - Accompaniment of local leaders and/or organizations in their journeys and activities.
 - Accompaniment / observatory periods within different communities, visiting for 2 or 3 days, returning to the base, followed by a 2 or 3-day visit to another community within the region.
 - Accompaniment to meetings between communities and assemblies when the processes involved affect more than one community.

The deployment would be open-ended. The IGC would yearly revise its prolongation based on evaluatory reports from the field.

NP would not be the only organisation providing this kind of service but discussions with the other NGOs active in the same field have clearly shown that there is a need for another one covering other areas of Colombia, especially if that organisation eventually would be able to send a larger number of up to hundred field workers.

Because of the long-lasting character of the conflict, there is no special date to name when NP would have to begin working in Colombia. Of course the exploration and the Working Group on Colombia have raised expectations, but generally a begin in 2007 seems acceptable. There is no date after which the begin would not make sense any more.

All field staff need to be fluent in Spanish, which puts some restrictions on international recruitment especially from Africa and Asia. Nevertheless it should be possible to find enough Spanish speakers to fulfil the need without having to depend upon only North Americans and Europeans.

Nonviolent Peaceforce

Latin America and the Caribbean Coordination

Summary of the main report on the Exploration in Colombia

Exploration dates: 29 January – 20 February 2006

Based on the original report¹ by the exploratory team:

Jutta Meier-Wiedenbach

Sarah Weintraub

Jhonny Jimenéz

Alvaro Ramírez-Durini

Part 1. Context and General Summary

Colombia is situated in the intersection between Central and South America, with coasts to the Caribbean and to the Pacific Ocean and frontiers with 5 other countries. Colombia is rich in natural resources, such as oil, fresh water, fertile land, coal, emeralds, gold and biodiversity and has one of the highest rates of economic growth in Latin America. Its income per capita in 2005 was 6006 USD, and in the human development index it takes place 69 what is one of the highest in Latin America. Colombia is divided into four areas, the Andine area which is found in the centre of the country and includes the capital city, Bogotá, and the second largest city, Medellín. This is the most densely populated part of the country. The Caribbean area includes the Caribbean coastline and extends from the Panama border to the Venezuelan border and includes the famous colonial city Cartagena and the largest city in Colombia, Baranquilla. The pacific area extends from the Panama border to the border with Ecuador and is the least developed area of the country. It includes the third large city of Cali. The eastern area of the country stretches from the east and includes the south of the country and is where both the plains and the Amazon are found, it is the least populated part of the country, historically much controlled by the guerrilla forces.

The armed conflict in Colombia began over 50 years ago, and has resulted in cases of human rights violation and violation of international humanitarian law, amongst the worst in the world – we refer to the report of the UN on the human rights situation in Colombia. Massacres, selective assassination, kidnappings, pillage, indiscriminate bombings, indiscriminate fumigations, are amongst the violations along with the highest rate of forced displacement. Forced displacement affects all areas of the country, with the news agency Reuters estimating a total of between 1.7 to 3.7 million people forced to displace themselves as a result of the armed conflict.

¹ Translation of the original version of the report by the NP/ ENCPS translation network coordinated by Aurélien Tobie, with the help of Tristan Hughes, Jo Drugan, Lucy Frankel, Debbie Hide, Louisa Robbins, Sarah Marshall, Claire Buswell, Agatha Haun, Linda Lock, Damaris Garzon-Marques and Christine Schweitzer

In its essence the conflict has its sources in the economic inequality which has existed in the country since the times of the Spanish conquest. The conflict is characterised by a total lack of respect towards the civilian population that often gets involved in the conflict as informers, providers, shields, war booty and even as targets. All the armed groups work on the assumption that 'who is not for us is against us' and based on this assumption they frequently attack the population. All the armed groups use violence towards the civil society as a means of winning and maintaining territorial and economic control.

The conflict is also magnified by narcotic trafficking, and although this is not a cause of the conflict, narcotics form an important source of funding for all the groups. The illegal groups benefit directly from drugs while the state takes advantage of the funds sent from the United States to combat the problem.

The United States of North America have strong interests in Colombia. Since 2000 the USA has lent or granted nearly 4 billion dollars to Colombia, originally destined for the war against drugs, and after the 11th of September 2001 expanded for use in the war against terrorism. (The two main leftist groups, the FARC and the ELN, and the principal paramilitary organisation AUC have all been classified as international terrorist groups by the USA state department). Much of this money is destined for means which are directly beneficial for American corporations; for example there are funds for the fumigation of cocaine cultivations, and the chemicals and the planes used for the spraying are produced by American corporations. The USA is particularly interested in Colombia for the strategic position in controlling the rest of the hemisphere, its natural resources, and the gains the Colombian war has brought to the arms' industry.

In the 1980s and 90s two of the guerilla groups, M-19 and EPL, negotiated peace and disarmament with the government and were demobilised. Although there have been some positive outcomes, both processes of demobilisation have not been fully successful.

Currently the FARC are the largest and strongest guerrilla group. They were formed in 1964 as a peasant movement with the aim of redistributing farm lands. Their current financial sources are kidnappings, extortion and drug trafficking. Colombian guerrillas are responsible for approximately half of the world's kidnappings. The FARC recruits adults and minors sometimes through force. It needs to be mentioned that more than 13,000 people have been deprived of their freedom by the armed forces in the last six years. 9% of them were children.

The second current 'left' guerrilla is the ELN. It was created by dissidents of the FARC who were influenced by the theories of the revolutionary focus promoted by the Cuban revolution. This group found support of some sectors of workers in the department of Santander, and young people coming from the university sectors and some catholic priests joined them, stimulated by the example of Father Camilo Torres who joined that movement and died in 1966 in a confrontation with the Army. Today the ELN is in a negotiation process on peace in Colombia, including disarmament as a part of a wider political dialogue.

In the 80s paramilitary groups emerged, originally as private armies to protect land, property and the lives of landowners and drug traffickers against guerrilla group attacks. They were called "Self Defence Groups". The paramilitary in Colombia, or the use of armed civilians as auxiliaries for the public armed forces, has had many faces in Colombia although the "Self Defence Groups" is the strongest ever and continues to dominate the paramilitary groups. They converted from being private armies with a

defensive nature to organic groups with an offensive nature and their own extreme rightwing ideology to justify the violence as anti-guerrilla politics. Various diverse groups of paramilitaries have united to become the United Self Defences of Colombia (AUC) and now the majority of the paramilitary groups belong to this organisation although some remain independent.

Since their formation the “Self Defence Groups” have shared with the different governments a common enemy - the guerrilla groups- and have worked closely together. At the same time the paramilitary leaders control a big part of the illegal business, and the drug traffic as well as other illegal traffic, for example that of electronic equipment in the big black markets of Bogotá. With so much money it is not surprising that the paramilitary chief Salvatore Mancuso claims to control 30% of the Colombian congressmen.

Since 2002 the Self defence Groups have been involved in a process of negotiation and demobilisation with the government that recently seems to have concluded after twenty years of armed struggle. From that struggle have emerged initiatives of landowners who sought to defend themselves against the subversion that they linked to extortion and hostage taking, but the groups grew both number-wise and in regard to the number of weapons they had, and sought to control large territories, sowing terror by committing criminal atrocities against the population that they supposed to be a member of or sympathizing with the left guerrillas.

While some see the disarmament as a positive development, as less armed people is always an improvement, the majority of those involved in human rights both in Colombia and abroad, see this process as simply legalisation of impunity. There is still no heeding of the minimal guarantees of respecting the rights to “truth, justice and reparation” of the victims of the atrocities. And so by not recognizing their rights also their effective participation in the juridical processes is hampered. It is tried to deal with this situation by the means of a so-called “Commission for Reparation and Reconciliation” but that commission does not have independence nor the mechanisms for guaranteeing. The law for example does not require the “demobilized” to confess or give back the goods they acquired illegally as conditions to receive the legal benefits and to integrate into this process. It is also important to mention the heavy influence of the US government that involves itself and makes permanent proposals to the Colombian government in regard to initiate “processes of extradition of paramilitaries” what caused doubts in its impartiality and justice” both for the Colombian people and for the victims of the paramilitary abuses. This pressure leads also to threats to reduce economic aid which is in some way a veil over the true intentions they pursue with the matter.

Many paramilitary groups have demobilised however many populations inform that the situation has not changed and the paramilitary continues to function as always. In other areas the paramilitaries have left and there are fears that the guerrilla groups will retake control. In other areas the paramilitaries have been replaced by the Army who came with strong forces, or when the military came it were the paramilitaries who committed massacres like in the case of Ariari in the community of “CIVIPAZ”. The military sometimes also itself violates human rights, or if not it remains unclear how long it will be possible to maintain such heavy control in these areas. In addition there has been an almost total impunity amongst demobilised paramilitary members, owing to cracks in the legal system which convert into legal traps.

On the other side, although FARC and ELN both still claim they have a moral imperative which justifies their rebellion, they have both lost, and continue losing, a lot

of credibility amongst the Colombian population. In fact there are certain areas of the country where guerrillas and paramilitaries, supposed ideological enemies, work together in drug trafficking. There are also regions of the country where the population still support the FARC or the ELN and believe that the insurgents are still fighting in the defence of their rights, although they are few who continue to believe that. Generally speaking the civil populations have absolutely no confidence in the armed groups and have to find civil solutions to the problems they face, thus there are a great deal of very strong, diverse and active social movements in Colombia.

Organised civil groups and organisations of the civil society trying to create peace have taken a number of forms. There are groups of young people protesting against obligatory military service and trying to develop peace within their communities. There are groups of mothers who are pressuring the government regarding the disappearance of their children. There are groups of human rights lawyers who defend the community rights and the community leaders. There are communal action bodies or community committees in the majority of the rural communities who organise the people enabling them to claim their rights, like for example the Community AMOR of East Antioquia. There are indigenous groups who have managed to convince the government to respect their ancestral territories. There are communities of Afro-Colombians promoting an all inclusive peace, incorporating their own world view into the general peace process, for example the Process of Black Communities. There are initiatives for fair trade and grass roots development like in Antioquia. In conclusion there are a number of organised groups in Colombia and many individuals working for peace and for the protection of human rights.

Often these individuals or organisations receive a series of threats, smaller attacks and murders committed by the armed groups. We can refer to the Report written by Mrs. Hila Jilani, the Special Representative of the UN General Secretary for the Defence of Human Rights who in her report from 2001 mentions for example that in the year 2001 there were 21 murders of human rights defenders in Colombia. For example, the paramilitaries often attack the social leaders as they believe social organisation to be the work of the political arm of FARC. In other cases they are attacked as their work is considered to be against the interests of the armed groups, a clear example would be when the peasants organise themselves so as not to have to move from their lands thus the armed groups are not able to take over the land. The civil organisations and communities are also attacked for representing a real alternative power and threaten the hegemony of power, a power which the armed groups want. Although the social movement is vibrant, it is also fractured, owing to so many attacks and owing to the lack of coordination between the various organisations.

Amongst others, one of the civil society's responses to a need for protection and a need to continue with their work has been international accompaniment. International accompaniment has existed in Colombia since 1994 when Peace Brigades International (PBI) entered the country. Currently PBI is the largest team of accompaniers/observers in the country and have paved the way for other accompaniment projects run by other international organisations. Some of the main organisations which offer accompaniment apart from PBI include the US Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR-USA), the Swedish Fellowship of Reconciliation (Swe-FOR), the International Peace Observatory (IPO), the European Network of Brotherhood and Cooperation for Colombia and Christian Peace Action Teams (ECAP), the Presbyterian Movement for Peace and the Community Accompaniment projects PASC/Canada. These organisations offer both physical and political protection for human rights defenders and community leaders within the country. Accompaniment has been extremely effective in Colombia in

protecting the lives and the work of these people and thus creating a safe place where they can search for solutions to the conflict.

The international accompaniment organisations mainly work with human rights organisations and campaigners, although they also work on a lesser scale with communities and social grassroots' organisations at the community level and in some cases accompanying for example youth peace groups – but not in great numbers. The majority of accompaniment takes place in specific areas of the country, such as the Andine area, the Urabá area (near to the border with Panama) and the area composed of Magdalena Medio (the eastern part of the country). There is virtually no presence in the south (neither the southeast nor the southwest) and very little in the coastal Pacific area.

The exploratory team postponed contacting the Colombian authorities for permission to work in the country for the time after the NP IGC would make a positive decision on the project. From the fact that other INGOs are permitted to work in Colombia the conclusion was drawn that in principle a permission would be possible.

The INGOs in Colombia took the position that a presence would be good and that there is much need and work to do, therefore we would be welcome.

In general the organisations see the need for accompaniment and consider that if there were more international groups there would be more political impact. That said it is important that we communicate with different organisations to increase the potential impact and avoid doing damage. The importance of this communication is based in the possibility to participate actively in meetings for analysis, evaluation and cooperation, as well as staying in contact with the field staff of all the organisations.

It is also important to not take risks especially regarding the information that is shared between organisations since this could affect seriously all of them if the information cannot be verified.

Part 2. Areas and NGOs visited were:**A) ANTIOQUIA AND CHOCO REGIONS**

1. Cocorná community in Antioquia, with the support of the NGO *Corporación Jurídica Libertad, Asociación de pequeños productores del Oriente de Antioquia*, ASOPROA)
2. Cacarica Community in Choco , had a meeting with the NGO CAVIDA (Comunidad de Autodeterminación, Vida y Dignidad del Cacarica)
3. Community of Curvaradó (Urabá)

B) CAUCA AND VALLE DEL CAUCA REGIONS

1. Black Community Process (PCN) in Valle del Cauca
2. The Yurumanguí River Communities (San Antonio and Veneral del Carmen in Valle del Cauca) (with the support of PCN)
3. Municipality of Buenos Aires, Communities of Palo Blanco, La Alsacia, La Balsa (Cauca) (With the support of American Friends services committee)
4. Utinaya Process (Interethnic Territorial Union of the Naya, River Naya region.
5. Process of the Association of Indigenous Councils of Northern Cauca (A.C.I.N) and the indigenous councils of Jambaló and Toribío (With the support of American Friends services committee)

C) META REGION

1. CIVIPAZ Community en El Castillo, Meta (Alto Ariari)
2. Community of Puerto Toledo – Puerto Toledo Peasants' Association, Bajo Ariari Sector)Only had a meeting, we didn't have the possibility to visit the city.

D) REGION OF CAQUETA

1. Chocaguan Process – Caguan region.

Part 3. Evaluation of results and impact

1. What contribution would the presence of the NP make to the transformation of the conflict?

The contribution that the NP would make would be of great importance as it would allow the communities and social organizations in the midst of the conflict to be able to bolster and sustain their organizational processes. This is of the utmost importance as the objective of the armed parties is to destroy the social processes and the social fabric in order to control the population. NP support would help to strengthen the processes in order to generate benefits for the communities and to build peace in Colombia. To this end, the greater the presence in the communities, the greater the impact will be.

As we state in our recommendation, it is important that the intervention process be carried out in an **organized, analysed and well-planned** manner, beginning with a medium sized group and soon progressing to a larger one.

With regards the transformation of conflicts that we assume would be developed and strengthened by the Colombian organisations themselves: If there is no coordinated social fabric it is difficult to implement processes in an attempt to transform a conflict with as many facets as the Colombian one, consequently it is complicated. If the NP intervention serves to support and strengthen the organizational processes the contribution shall be enormous.

The task of making the organizational processes visible is becoming more and more indispensable. International pressure allows the organizational processes greater security and therefore, greater permanence.

We envisage that the NP is able to support numerous regions and organizations that work within organizational processes and which need international support, this will allow the NP greater coverage.

On the other hand, many of these communities have proposed a process to return to the communities from which they were displaced at different times and in different forms. NP could seriously consider the possibility of supporting those returns as a thematic internal axis, always and whenever there is a previous risk and outcome assessment. This would enable the underpinning of the social fabric and organizational processes.

If we want to make a greater impact, we believe that the importance of establishing inter-institutional coordination with international organizations who undertake international support is indispensable. This would enable the available resources to be used to their maximum potential, and the diplomatic work and political impact to hold greater relevance.

2. Who would benefit from NP' presence?

One of the main beneficiaries of NP presence are the social organizations and their communities who see the support as an opportunity to bolster and maintain the organizational peace processes which have been initiated, but moreover an opportunity to sustain themselves on their own land and thus avoid being displaced with the consequences we all know only too well.

The families and communities who are in the process of returning see the accompaniment as security in retrieving their land.

The human rights and social organizations see the accompaniment as an opportunity to develop and underpin their work in defence of human rights and support for the communities in a more secure manner.

3. *What would indicate the project's success?*

1. To significantly reduce violent attacks on the accompanied communities (and families).
2. Communities declaring that there is more security because of the accompaniment.
3. External analysis will demonstrate a higher level of security.
4. Diplomatic acts of national and international pressure.
5. Various return and accompaniment processes carried out securely.
6. Significant numbers of (community and family) accompaniment processes without acts of violence.

Part 4. Recommendations

(See the summary of the proposal at the beginning of this text for the suggested activities and regions. That proposal is largely based on the recommendations made by the exploratory team.)

We do not recommend to establish protection / accompaniment schemes twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week in any of the communities, since we observed the likelihood of creating dependencies which would weaken our objectives, instead of strengthening them. We note that the processes however strong are 'dependent' on the international presence like in the case of Cacarica, so that in some cases we cannot just continue to have meetings with them or work and promote ideas, or simply develop projects to meet their needs without having international presence with them, because otherwise they would be threatened or the processes diminished. The idea therefore is not to be 30 days permanently in the community in order to make the community realize that the accompaniment is nothing "for all life", and that they are the only who can strengthen their social communitarian work and that they need to confront in any moment the challenges of the life and their communitarian organisation.

However, many communities are in need of regular presence, given the constant threat represented by armed agents and of other civilian structures that may oppose 'democratic security' by cooperating with the guerrilla. 'In this country, the State will consider us part of an armed group by virtue of being organized'.

We therefore suggest different types of accompaniment schemes, according to the needs and demands of the various processes:

1. Semi-permanent accompaniment schemes: volunteers living in communities up to 20 days per month, regulating their presence according to the risk analysis made by NP along with local communities and organizations.
2. Accompaniment to local leaders and/or organizations in their journeys and mobilizations (eg community leaders, when they are in tasks of training another communities in their proceedings).
3. Accompaniment / observatory periods within different communities, visiting for 2 or 3 days, returning to the base, followed by a 2 or 3-day visit to another community within the region.

4. Accompaniment to meetings between communities and assemblies when the processes involved affect more than one community.

The objective of international accompaniment schemes in Colombia is to facilitate the growth of communities and their processes, and to maintain space for their organization. We understand that these are processes of resistance to the war, and in favour of autonomy and independence, which feel threatened by Uribe's likely re-election, which is interpreted as an increase in the forces of repression against popular processes. We consider the aforementioned objective affordable, and we positively believe in the results that schemes of international accompaniment can achieve. We rest assured in the latter since, according to various organizations, both the Government and its civilian and military structures need to portray themselves as a democratic society which respects the lives of civilians and their freedom of expression and association. 'The military told us that "someone called from the United States" following some reports that we could not divulgate by fear of the army's reaction'.

In addition, international presence strengthens the processes in place, as individuals lose their fears to get organized. 'People are happy if they are in trouble and find out that France showed interest'. The various accompaniment schemes that we suggest ensure the coverage of wide areas, and ensure a significant impact with reference to the visibility and protection of such processes. Nearly every organization, process and community commented on the political significance that NP can have in Bogota. 'Our country works thanks to international pressure'. Despite the varied methods that NP can implement, the nature of Colombia's conflict does not allow for talks of a definite period of time within which NP intervention will take place.

We believe that the work we suggest to be carried out in Colombia would serve to inject strength and experience to NP's project, in view of the current climate of vulnerability. We also consider important the possibility of developing a system of public relations for NP, particularly considering that one of the strong actors in the Colombian scene are the United States, with their interest of political and military control over a country that would serve as a gateway to the rest of South America. Moreover, this would be the NP's only project in the Americas.

Although indigenous communities have Spanish as their mother tongue, they are rather on their way to recover the use of their own languages. Thus, the requirement for international staff would be that they are fluent in Spanish, a language that day by day gains relevance in the world. We believe it would be useful to have Latin American staff alongside teams of different nationalities, as this would facilitate coming into contact with the diplomatic body. 'The Army gets support from different countries, so international schemes of accompaniment would help them realise that their money is being wasted (Alsalcia)'. Above all, we believe that the inclusion of Latin American staff would provide us with sufficient volunteers to organize the two teams that we recommend in this report. This would also facilitate the gradual expansion of accompaniment teams in other areas. We encourage 'balance among nationalities'; in other words, a policy whereby volunteers from any country (including Africa and Asia) can be recruited, as long as a project is sufficiently backed up by volunteers from countries that can exert significant pressure (often, countries of the Northern hemisphere). This is based on the requirement of maintaining strong relationships with both the authorities and the diplomatic body.

We believe that recruitment will be facilitated through the establishment and dissemination of NP's work in Colombia. As we have already mentioned, the support of NP's international structures is vital in order to promote projects at international level.

Therefore, public relations are not only considered to be feasible, but indispensable to guarantee the success of this project.

The assessment of the impact of a scheme of accompaniment cannot be based on the belief 'nothing happens', as this will hinder objective evaluations – it will be difficult to take into account already existing achievements. However, those communities who had had experience of international accompaniment attributed many of their organizational successes to such schemes of accompaniment. 'The fact that we are here today talking to you has been made possible by previous accompaniment we have had'. The impact of such schemes can be measured not only quantitatively, but also assessing communities' ability to maintain their internal cohesion and organization, the increase in their confidence when it comes to state their rights in front of other agents involved in the conflict, and the number of instances where communities have been able to successfully recover their former territories.

Many PCN communities are only accessible via the river, which constitutes a huge logistical challenge. This can be overcome by using public speedboats or by renting them from the communities, thanks to the agreement between them and the Department of Home Affairs (CIDH). In other regions we do not foresee logistical problems.

We believe it feasible to gather all necessary funds for an NP project, particularly from European sources, since they display a less confrontational policy than the United States towards Colombia. Different European governments have funds available for the 'peace building and maintenance' purposes. The same is true of the European Parliament. Thus, it will be possible to elaborate joint projects and occasional proposals with different organizations.