

17 October 2008

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## Colombia: Rate of new displacement highest in two decades

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*The protracted internal armed conflict in Colombia had by June 2008 displaced 2,649,139 people according to the government, and 4,361,355 people according to a reliable non-governmental source. An alarming trend of rising internal displacement has been registered since 2006, and the highest rate of displacement in 23 years was recorded in the first semester of 2008.*

*All parties in the conflict, including guerrilla groups, paramilitaries, and state forces are responsible, to different degrees, for forced displacement and human rights violations and abuses.*

*President Uribe's "Democratic Security" policy has entailed a hard-handed approach against the left-wing guerrilla insurgents, and a demobilisation programme for right-wing paramilitaries. While it is clear that the guerrilla Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) have been weakened, and although demobilisation of paramilitary members of the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC) has been formally completed, the displacement crisis and the conflict are far from over: FARC have announced an escalation of their military offensive, and paramilitary groups are as active as before the demobilisation process. Further, the last year has seen an escalation in the regional ramifications of the conflict.*

*The government's response to the plight of internally displaced people has improved in recent years, partly because of the notable role played by the Constitutional Court. Nevertheless, much more needs to be done to prevent new displacement, protect the displaced population, and implement durable solutions through effective reparation and return policies.*

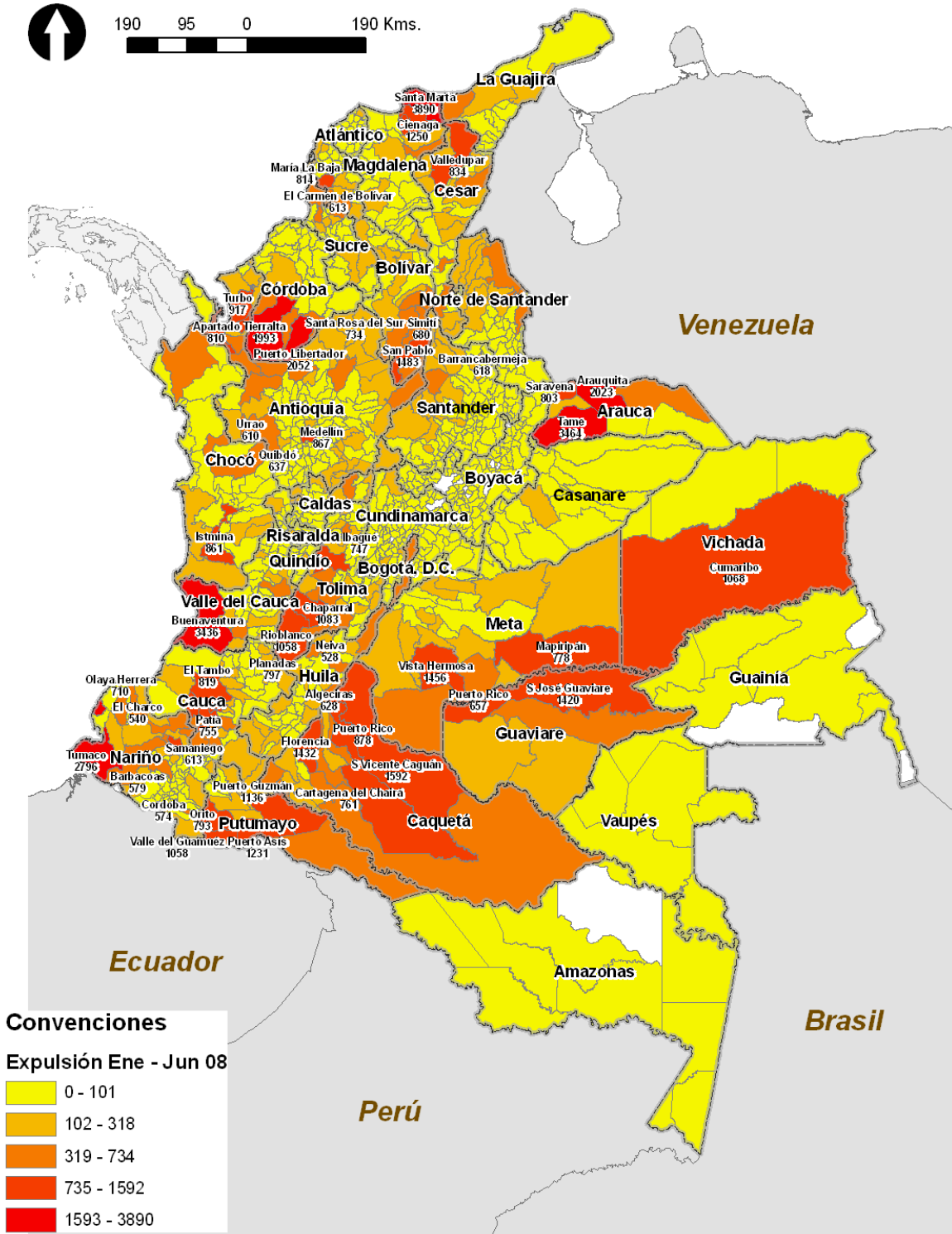
# Map of Internal Displacement in Colombia, 1 January – 30 June 2008



DESPLAZAMIENTO EN COLOMBIA - EXPULSIONES I SEMESTRE 2008  
 1 Enero - 30 Junio 2008  
 Fuente: SIPOD - Acción Social



190 95 0 190 Kms.



**Convenciones**

**Expulsión Ene - Jun 08**

0 - 101
102 - 318
319 - 734
735 - 1592
1593 - 3890

Source: UN OCHA

More maps are available on <http://www.internal-displacement.org/>

## Background to the conflict and internal displacement

The current internal armed conflict and widespread violence in Colombia have their roots in the country's post-independence history. The 1950s period of deep social unrest known as *la violencia* ("the violence") is generally identified as the precursor to the current situation. The unrest was triggered by the assassination in 1948 of a presidential candidate from the Liberal party who had challenged the power structures of both the Liberal and Conservative parties (Livingstone, 2003, p.41). An estimated 200,000 people were killed and hundreds of thousands more were displaced during the following years. The political crisis ended when the two parties reached a power-sharing agreement in 1957.

The guerrilla groups currently fighting the government emerged largely in response to *la violencia*, to repression in the 1960s, and to rural violence aimed at consolidating extreme economic inequalities. Peasant farmers were killed or driven out of their homes as a means of expanding large-scale commercial farms or *latifundia* (IACHR, 1999). The guerrilla fighters of groups including the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*, or FARC) originated chiefly among the forcibly displaced in these isolated areas where they had a strong popular support base, a main reason why they have managed to sustain armed conflict against the government for more than 40 years (Lair, 2000, p.94). Another major factor sustaining the guerrilla war was the growth of the coca trade in the late 1980s and 1990s.

In the late 1970s and in the 1980s the paramilitary self-defense groups connected to the landowning elite grew stronger, and their counter-insurgency activities were increasingly coordinated with the Colombian security forces. The paramilitary groups also formed strong ties with drug trafficking organisations who sought to defend their economic interests against the guerrilla groups. Over the last 20 years, organised crime has also had a huge impact on Colombian national life, affecting all aspects of society, including the electoral process and the justice system. The guerrillas have also developed a confusing combination of alliances and simultaneous clashes with other actors in organised crime (IACHR, 1999).

President Alvaro Uribe was elected in 2002 after promising a decisive tough line with the insurgents. President Uribe began implementing a "democratic security" policy, which involved intensifying the military offensive against the insurgency. The policy has led to the reduction of some crimes associated with the conflict: the rate of homicides and kidnappings has drastically dropped since 2002 (Departamento Nacional de Planeación, 2007). Likewise, current events seem to signal that Uribe's approach to the insurgency may have weakened its position (ICG, April 2008), and public opinion polls have shown a rejection of the armed groups and support for Uribe's policy (Cambio, 2008).

Nevertheless, it is evident that the policy has had a negative impact on the rural population and has failed to prevent a continuing increase in the incidence of forced internal displacement. Furthermore, a political scandal exposing the paramilitary groups' links with high-

ranking government officials and congressmen has revealed the extent to which they have infiltrated public institutions and continue to flourish despite the highly publicised demobilisation process that ended in 2006 (Semana, 2007). Finally, President Uribe's policy has resulted in the regionalisation of the conflict as tensions with Ecuador and Venezuela have increased during 2008.

### Displacement figures and profile

Although the figures describing internal displacement in Colombia vary according to their source, it is clear that displacement has steadily increased since 2006. The government's Unitary Displaced Population Registry (*Registro Único de Población Desplazada*, or RUPD) has registered a total of 2,649,139 internally displaced people (IDPs) at the end of August 2008, with 281,937 people displaced in 2007, and 117,248 thus far in 2008. However, the authoritative local NGO *Consultoría para los Derechos Humanos y el Desplazamiento* (CODHES) records a total of 4,361,355 IDPs to March 2008, with 305,966 people newly displaced in 2007, and 270,000 in the first six months of 2008. Furthermore, high-ranking

government officials acknowledged before the Constitutional Court that there is significant under-registration of IDPs (UNHCR, August 2008). Some categories of displaced people who typically do not register include those displaced within urban centres, those displaced by aerial coca spraying; and those displaced by unlisted paramilitary groups or by security forces. Differences in counting methodologies may also account for some of the difference between the two figures.

Displacement affects the whole country. The table below summarises figures for registered IDPs in the ten departments in which most people are displaced and to which the highest numbers go. (Source: Government of Colombia, Acción Social)

The figures indicate that most people displaced have remained within the same department, while a significant number have fled to the major cities such as Bogotá. Despite an increase in intra-urban displacements since 2003, the main pattern of recorded displacement continues to be rural-urban. 92 per cent of the displaced population have been displaced from rural areas and only eight per cent from urban environments. Of those

Departments of Displacement			Departments of Reception		
Department	No. of IDPs	% of total	Department	No. of IDPs	% of total
Antioquia	419,887	16	Antioquia	386,037	14.6
Bolívar	234,839	9.2	Bogotá D.C	223,087	8.5
Magdalena	168,433	6.4	Valle del Cauca	163,044	6.3
César	139,665	5.5	Bolívar	157,880	6.2
Chocó	143,852	5.4	Magdalena	144,995	5.5
Caquetá	135,666	5.2	Sucre	130,356	5.2
Tolima	130,992	5	Santander	110,441	4.3
Putumayo	118,447	4.6	César	107,750	4.2
Valle del Cauca	112,495	4.3	Córdoba	106,050	4.1
Cauca	102,506	3.9	Nariño	103,082	3.7

displaced from rural areas, 93 per cent have moved into a town or city and only seven per cent into another rural area. Of those displaced from urban areas, 93 per cent stay in towns and cities, and seven per cent go to rural areas (Departamento Nacional de Planeación, 2008).

The Civil Society Follow-Up Commission on Public Policy on Internal Displacement, based on an extensive survey, found women comprise 48 per cent of IDPs, 47 per cent of displaced families are headed by women, 63 per cent of the displaced population are under 25 years of age, and 14 per cent of the displaced cannot read or write. Adding to their vulnerability, internally displaced families included an average of 5.2 children, compared to four for non-displaced families (Comisión de Seguimiento, 4 June 2007).

### **Physical security of IDPs and others affected by the conflict**

A defining feature of the Colombian armed conflict and associated violence is that the parties have routinely targeted civilians to clear land for economic and strategic advantage. Given that Colombia's is a multi-party conflict, it is virtually impossible for civilians to find safe ground where they are not targeted by any armed parties. Displacement is realised through a pattern of deliberate human rights abuses. The human rights to life, personal integrity, and personal liberty are regularly abused by all parties to the conflict, including the state (IACHR, December 2007).

According to *Acción Social*, the government agency for IDP policy, FARC and the guerilla National Liberation Army (*Ejército de Liberación Nacional*, or ELN) have been responsible for 23 per

cent of internal displacement, and the paramilitary groups no more than 12 per cent. A national verification survey (*Encuesta Nacional de Verificación*) conducted by the Civil Society Follow-Up Commission found, in contrast, that guerilla groups were responsible for 33 per cent of displacement, and paramilitary groups for 37 per cent. The sharp difference in the percentage of cases of displacement attributed to paramilitaries may be explained by the fact that people feel more comfortable declaring the cause of their displacement to a civil society group than to the authorities, especially for those who might fear retaliation from paramilitaries (Comisión de Seguimiento, 30 June 2007).

Extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances, and threats by FARC, ELN, and the security forces continued in the last year (OHCHR, 2008; Amnesty International, 2008; ICRC, 2008). Further, as the UN Secretary-General's Representative on the human rights of IDPs (the RSG) pointed out after his visit to Colombia, the increased military presence among the civilian population has blurred the lines between military and civilian parties, thus increasing the danger faced by civilians (RSG, 2006).

Even though the demobilisation process has been formally completed, paramilitary groups are flourishing. Immediately following the end of the demobilisation process, new illegal armed groups emerged to commit widespread human rights abuses which resulted in displacement. The government describes these groups as criminals, but there is evidence that they are rather demobilised paramilitary groups under a new identity (US-DoS, 2008; UN HCHR, 2008). Some

members of the state security forces, ranging from enlisted personnel to senior officials, collaborated with or tolerated the activities of new illegal groups or paramilitary members who refused to demobilise. This collaboration often facilitated unlawful killings and may have involved direct participation in paramilitary atrocities (USDoS, 2008).

Some of these groups, going by names such as the Black Eagles, *Organización Nueva Generación* (ONG), *Rastrojos*, *Traquetos*, *Machos* and Black Hand (ICG, 2007), existed as private armies for organised criminal groups preceding AUC demobilisation, but the paramilitary groups active in 2008 are more than simple criminal gangs: they replicate the military structure and organisation of the AUC, and some are headed by former AUC paramilitaries. Colombian NGO Indepaz estimates that there are at least 9,000 individuals who comprise 76 groups in 25 departments in throughout the country, the same extension and size as the AUC before the formal demobilisation started five years ago (Colombian NGO Platform, 2008). These groups operate in departments that were traditional AUC strongholds, including Norte de Santander, Nariño, the Atlantic Coast, and Medellín.

Human rights defenders and representatives of internally displaced populations are regularly targeted; at least eight leaders of IDP organisations were killed in the first six months of 2008 (CODHES, February 2008). Many human rights defenders have fled or at risk of being forced to flee (RSG, 2006).

Another factor that continues to affect the rural population and prevent IDP returns

is the extensive presence of landmines. According to Handicap International, Colombia has the highest number of victims of anti-personal mines in the world, and is the only country in the Western hemisphere where mines are still being laid (Handicap International, 2007).

### **Access of IDPs to shelter, food and healthcare**

Many IDPs continued to live in unacceptable conditions (USDoS, 2008). According to the Civil Society Follow-Up Commission, housing is perhaps the most critical problem faced by IDPs, and the one in which the least progress has been achieved (Comisión de Seguimiento, 4 June 2008). The Commission's national survey showed that fewer than eight per cent of displaced families registered in the RUPD were living in acceptable housing. The duration of displacement was not found to affect this indicator. IDP participation in focal groups consistently identified lack of decent housing as their most important challenge (Comisión de Seguimiento, 4 June 2008).

A World Food Programme/ICRC study conducted in eight cities found that the number of displaced families living in shelter that did not comply with minimum standards (in terms of construction materials, space, access to potable water and sanitation) was higher than the number of non-displaced families. Most displaced families were living in rented property or in informal dwellings over which they had no title. The principal form of state housing support to IDPs was the payment of housing subsidies.

Poverty has affected the food security of displaced families. A lower percentage of

IDP families than of non-IDP families had an adequate diet (WFP/ICRC, 2007). The expenditure on food of IDP families leaves no income for other needs. Food assistance programmes reportedly reach less than ten per cent of children registered in the RUPD, and 18 per cent of registered internally displaced children under the age of five are malnourished, compared to seven per cent for non-displaced children of the same age (Comisión de Seguimiento, April 2008).

For social and healthcare support, roughly 80 per cent of the internally displaced population are affiliated with the *Sistema General de Seguridad Social en Salud* (SGSSS) either under the special or the subsidised schemes (Comisión de Seguimiento, 4 June 2008). However, they have had more difficulty obtaining services or have received services of lower quality as members of these schemes (WFP/ICRC, 2007). Acknowledging these problems, the Constitutional Court in August 2008 ordered the government to improve access to healthcare for IDPs.

Aerial fumigations in some departments have had a negative impact on health, although the government has contested this (UN HCHR, 2008). Colombia is the only country in the world allowing aerial spraying for coca eradication.

Finally, internal displacement has been shown to have a negative impact on mental health. Displaced populations have shown rates of depression significantly higher than non-displaced groups. Violence associated to displacement has generated a high frequency of post-traumatic stress disorder (Comisión de Seguimiento, 30 June 2008). Finally, 18 per cent of displaced families registered in

the RUPD include someone with some form of disability.

### **Impact of displacement on indigenous and Afro-Colombian groups**

The internal armed conflict threatens the deep cultural wealth of Colombia's indigenous groups (UNHCR, 8 August 2008). There are around one million indigenous people in Colombia, belonging to 80 groups with over 60 different languages. Almost all of them have been victims of forced displacement or have been threatened as a result of the internal armed conflict (UNHCR, 8 August 2008; UN HCHR, 2008; AI, 28 May 2008). According to the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (*Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia*, or ONIC), the continued existence of 18 of these groups is at risk. Illegal armed groups have sought to control indigenous territories to profit from their strategic location, raise and process illegal substances, and exploit their rich natural resources (IACHR, December 2007). Each year, between 10,000 and 20,000 indigenous people are registered as displaced (UNHCR, 8 August 2008), and these numbers may not reflect the real figures, as many indigenous people cannot register because of lack of information and the remoteness of their location.

Indigenous communities were at high risk of mass displacement during 2007 due to armed confrontations, forced recruitment and minefields (Minority Rights Group International, 11 March, 2008). For example, in July 2007 the Ombudsman's Office reported that 600 members of the Awa indigenous community, having returned from an earlier displacement in 2006, faced renewed displacement due to minefields

planted throughout their communal territory in Magüí in Nariño Department (Minority Rights Group International, 11 March 2008).

Displacement has particularly shattering effects on indigenous people because of their dependence on their territories for the continuation of their way of life (I/A Court HR, 2001, para. 149). In addition to the impact they suffer directly from the conflict, indigenous groups have been affected by large-scale economic development projects that render their traditional livelihoods impossible, and by the aerial spraying of illegal crops (UN HCHR, 29 February 2008).

According to the International Labour Organization's Convention 169 of 1989, which Colombia has ratified, indigenous groups shall be consulted whenever consideration is being given to legislative or administrative measures which may affect them directly, or when the exploitation of natural resources belonging to them or under state property is being considered (ILO 1991, Articles 6 and 15). Various Colombian NGOs have denounced the government for violating indigenous groups' right to consultation because legislation affecting them directly was adopted without consultation. This legislation had a negative impact over the Wounáan, Embera, Eperara and Awá (Colombian NGO Platform, 2008).

Afro-Colombian communities face a similarly heightened risk of displacement as indigenous groups, and for much the same reasons: CODHES estimated in 2007 that 12 per cent of the displaced population was Afro-Colombian (USDoS, 2008).

The government reports that it has taken measures to protect displaced indigenous and afro-Colombian minorities. These measures include a decree to prevent discrimination in the governmental response to displaced minorities (Government of Colombia, 27 May 2008). While prevention of discrimination is an important step, differentiated policies are needed to respond to the special needs of displaced minorities.

### **Impact of displacement on women**

Displaced women in Colombia are in a situation of particular hardship and vulnerability. In 2004, the Constitutional Court ruled that the failure of the government's response programmes to reflect the particular vulnerability of women facing conflict, violence, and internal displacement amounted to a violation of their rights. The Court also stated that this vulnerability was even greater in the case of indigenous and Afro-Colombian women, who faced the added burden of discrimination.

The Court identified 13 risk factors that make women caught in the midst of violence and displacement more vulnerable than men in the same position. These factors include the greater risk of sexual violence and sexual exploitation; of exploitation for labour considered specific to women in a patriarchal society; of their children being forcibly recruited by armed groups; and the risk of being persecuted for their membership of women's organisations. In view of those risk factors, the Court ordered the government to implement 13 special programmes to protect internally displaced women, including programmes to protect against sexual violence and domestic violence; promote health; support head-of-household dis-

placed women; provide education support; and provide access to land. In 2008 the government has begun to comply with some of the Court's orders, and it remains to be seen how far it will go forward with the realisation of these programmes.

## **National response to internal displacement**

### *Failure of transitional justice processes*

President Uribe's administration has championed since 2002 a process of negotiated demobilisation of members of the paramilitary AUC. The process involved substantial reductions of criminal sentences to perpetrators of crimes against humanity; thus the victims' rights to justice and accountability were sacrificed so to better establish truth and eventually obtain reparations based on the testimonies of paramilitary members wishing to benefit from sentence reductions. However, the proceedings did not effectively guarantee the right to justice, truth, and reparation, but left human rights abuses unpunished (IACHR, October 2007).

The Justice and Peace Law of 2005 (Law 975), which came to regulate demobilisations when they were already underway, was flawed both substantively and procedurally, and several of its articles were declared unconstitutional by the Constitutional Court (Decision C-370, 2006). The government then issued various decrees that confounded and sometimes contradicted the Court's mandate, making impunity possible and violating victims' rights.

The process has to date brought no justice to IDPs, despite the valuable opportunity which it presented. First, the demobilisation proceedings did not effec-

tively allow for the participation of IDPs, even though the rules governing the proceedings guarantee the victims' right to participation. The right to participation in these proceedings implies, in turn, a bundle of rights including the right to be recognised as a party with standing; the right to file, demand, and contradict evidence; the right to have access to information; and the right to integral compensation (IACHR, October 2007). Throughout the proceedings, the victims were not able to enjoy these rights for a variety of reasons. Beyond the expense of being present at proceedings, and the fact that many victims lacked information about the proceedings, they could not question paramilitary leaders directly during the preliminary hearings, but only during the second stage, and indirectly. The prosecutor was able to eliminate questions and only asked those he or she considered important. Consequently, while forced displacement was the second most-frequently denounced crime after homicide, no questions were presented in relation to this crime during the first hearings. Further, victims were not able to re-question or ask for clarifications. Through the exclusion of direct questioning and re-questioning, the opportunity to find the truth was almost entirely lost.

90 per cent of paramilitaries were given a de facto amnesty by a decree preceding Law 975. Up to December 2007, only 116, less than one in 300 of over 30,000 AUC members were being tried under Law 975, and none of them had been found guilty December, 2007 (Colombian NGO Platform, 2008). After demobilising, paramilitary leaders continued to commit crimes; instead of taking back the sentence reduction benefits that had been given to them under the demobilisation

process, and continue their trial under criminal law, the government in May 2008 extradited 14 of these paramilitary leaders to the United States to be tried on drugs-related charges, leaving their human rights abuses unpunished.

Exacerbating it all, and confirming what many warned when the process began (CCJ, MAPP/OEA, 2005), there is clear evidence that many demobilised paramilitaries have re-armed, vie for power and control of the drug trade, and target the civilian population, causing new displacement. These new armed groups have threatened human rights defenders and IDP leaders. They forcefully recruit men and youth, run illegal check points and have targeted indigenous people (MAPP/OEA, 2008). Thus, neither justice nor transition has been attained.

#### *Prospects for property restitution*

Most IDPs in Colombia have been displaced from rural areas. The illegal armed groups have forced peasants from their land by violent means in order to profit from the land themselves. 74 per cent of the displaced population registered in the RUPD have declared that they abandoned property.

Exacerbating the problem is the fact that Colombia already has a highly unequal concentration of land ownership, which has itself been a root cause of conflict. The *Instituto Geográfico Agustín Codazzi* (IGAC) shows that 94 per cent of landowners in the country hold only 19 per cent of the total land area, while 1.4 per cent of landowners hold 65 per cent of the total. Further, studies demonstrate that displacement has been more frequent in departments with higher rates of land concentration, and that the areas with the

highest rates of internal displacement have witnessed an increase in the concentration of land ownership since 1996 (Comisión de Seguimiento, 30 June 2008).

The government has yet to demonstrate commitment to remedying the property loss associated with internal displacement, despite sustained pressure from civil society and the rulings of the Constitutional Court. Law 975 made reparation for property loss dependent on the criminal indictment of perpetrators, rendering it virtually impossible for IDPs to access redress. Paramilitary members tried under Law 975 have not been yet forced to return property that was taken by force. In 2007, the Constitutional Court ruled that the victims of violence had an integral right to reparations, and established the government's obligation to create a policy to guarantee reparations through property restitution. The government issued Decree 1290 in April 2008, creating a programme for individual restitutions through an administrative procedure. This programme is insufficient as it does not contemplate tailored-made mechanisms for restitution to IDPs, instead drawing on general existing rules on property.

A comprehensive plan for reparations through restitution has yet to be drafted. Some of the very thorny issues that the plan will have to address include criteria to prioritise beneficiaries of restitution; the type of property that will be included for restitution; division of responsibilities and powers between the various government institutions; procedural rules for the complaints; and funding for the restitutions programme. It is of utmost importance that the crafting of the national reparations plan includes the participation and voice of IDPs.

### *Role of the Constitutional Court*

Colombia was one of the first countries in the world to have a domestic IDP statute, which was adopted in 1997, a year before the UN issued the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. However, the adoption of this statute failed for many years to lead to improved protection of IDPs, and the Constitutional Court declared in the landmark decision T-025 of 2004 that the government's response to internal displacement amounted to an "unconstitutional state of affairs".

Through this innovative legal concept, the Court ruled that the violation of basic human rights extends to an unidentifiable number of people – the entire IDP population beyond those particular individuals who brought the complaint – and cannot be ascribed to one government authority, but to a widespread, structural failure of the government's response.

This decision has led to gradual improvements in the government's response to internal displacement. The government has since allocated steadily increasing funds to the IDP response, from \$177 million (363 billion pesos) in 2004 to \$525 million (1,080 billion pesos) in 2008.

Since decision T-025, the Constitutional Court has asserted its jurisdiction until the unconstitutional state of affairs is overcome. It has thus handed down, on its own initiative, a variety of subject-specific writs describing the special situation of vulnerability of women and children, and ordering the adoption of differential, needs-based measures, which the government has yet to realise in October 2008.

In order to close the large gap between policy and implementation highlighted by

the RSG after his last visit to Colombia, in 2006 the Court ordered the government to adopt outcome indicators to evaluate its response and allow the Court to determine if the structural inadequacy of the response has been overcome. The Court has emphasised that the indicators should be quantifiable and should provide information about the living conditions of IDPs rather than institutional aspects of the government's response (Rothing and Romero, 2008). The Court considered the government's initial indicators unsatisfactory, and has asked the Civil Society Monitoring Commission and other expert bodies to provide technical support in the elaboration of the indicators.

The Constitutional Court has also attempted to gather data on the response given by local and central authorities, with the aim of improving coordination and assuring equal response throughout the country. To this end, the Court issued Writ 052 of 2008, requesting that the government of each department provide specific information about its response to internal displacement. Drawing on that court order, the Congress passed Act 1190, ordering departmental governors to design, implement, fund and periodically evaluate better strategies based on time-bound goals. Nonetheless, the road ahead towards a more structured response from local authorities is still long.

### **Humanitarian access and international response**

Access to displaced populations in the towns and cities to which most IDPs flee is generally satisfactory. However, during 2007, access to conflict hotspots was obstructed by the intensity of the fighting. National and international aid organisa-

tions could not access many newly displaced populations in areas in the departments of Nariño, Valle de Cauca, Arauca, Antioquia, Chocó, and Norte de Santander (USDoS, 2008). Given the geographic location of conflict areas, humanitarian organisations need major logistical means to reach affected populations and to transport humanitarian aid (Diálogo Inter-Agencial Colombia, 2008).

International non-governmental and governmental organisations continue to place the situation in Colombia high in the agenda. The Inter-American Commission

on Human Rights' Annual Report included Colombia as one of the countries in the region whose situation required special attention (IACHR, December 2007). Colombia is one of the countries in which the humanitarian reform process has implemented the cluster approach, and protection, early recovery, and assistance clusters have been thus far tested.

*Note: This is a summary of the IDMC's Internal Displacement profile. The full profile is available online [here](#).*

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## About the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, established in 1998 by the Norwegian Refugee Council, is the leading international body monitoring conflict-induced internal displacement worldwide.

Through its work, the Centre contributes to improving national and international capacities to protect and assist the millions of people around the globe who have been displaced within their own country as a result of conflicts or human rights violations.

At the request of the United Nations, the Geneva-based Centre runs an online database providing comprehensive information and analysis on internal displacement in some 50 countries.

Based on its monitoring and data collection activities, the Centre advocates for durable solutions to the plight of the internally displaced in line with international standards.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre also carries out training activities to enhance the capacity of local actors to respond to the needs of internally displaced people. In its work, the Centre cooperates with and provides support to local and national civil society initiatives.

For more information, visit the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre website and the database at [www.internal-displacement.org](http://www.internal-displacement.org).

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