

Editorial

Towards a Post-conflict Economy

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*Joan Miguel Tejedor Estupiñán**

After four years of negotiations between the Colombian government and the guerrilla of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP for its acronym in Spanish), from Havana, Cuba, on August 24, 2016, representatives of Cuba and Norway, guarantor countries, together with the negotiating parties, issued a joint communication in which they announced to the Colombian people and to the entire world the end of a conflict that lasted more than six decades, since they have reached a "final, integral, and definitive agreement on all points of the agenda of the General Agreement to End the Conflict and to Build a Stable and Lasting Peace in Colombia."¹ This agreement was ratified by the Congress of the Republic and then submitted to a referendum on October 2, 2016, so that the Colombian people decide on the final approval of its implementation (Gobierno Nacional y FARC-EP, 2016).

The question posed to Colombians in the plebiscite was: "Do you support the final agreement to end the conflict and to build a stable and lasting peace?" The results showed that of nearly 34.9 million people qualified to vote only slightly more than 13 million voters (37.46 %) participated in this electoral contest, in which 49.78 % of the voters supported "YES" and 50.21 % supported "NO".

This narrow margin of victory for those who represented the opposition to the agreement in Havana left a clear message: a political defeat for the government and image of President Juan Manuel Santos Calderón and many doubts about the legitimacy of the democratic system in Colombia. In the midst of a campaign full of controversy and on a card that only gave two options, 86,000 people did not mark any answer, and another 170,000 people made their vote invalid, while the abstention of more than 30 million people qualified to vote was even more worrying. In addition, regional analyzes showed that conflict zones mostly voted for "YES" to the agreement, while urban areas said "NO" (Registraduría Nacional del Estado Civil, 2016).

After numerous tensions between the parties, these results led to the resumption of dialogues, but now including the opposition party, with the purpose of reaching a new agreement in which some points should be reconsidered, as the opposition argued that there was a risk for the democratic institutionalism in Colombia due to the benefits that would be granted to the FARC-EP in a process with little legitimacy (Centro Democrático, 2015), even though this was considered to be one of the most complete agreements, inspired by peace processes in Ireland and South Africa. Despite his political defeat in the

* Joan Miguel Tejedor Estupiñán has a degree in Economics and an MA in Human Rights, and is the editor of the *Journal of Finance and Economic Policy*, at Universidad Católica de Colombia. Correspondence address: Facultad de Economía, Universidad Católica de Colombia, Carrera 13 N.º 47-49 (Bogotá, Colombia). E-mail: jmtejedor@ucatólica.edu.co.

1 The six points negotiated in the agreement included: (1) comprehensive rural reform; (2) political participation; (3) bilateral and definitive ceasefire and ending of hostilities; (4) solution to the problem of illicit drugs; (5) victims; and (6) mechanisms for implementation and verification (Gobierno Nacional y FARC-EP, 2016).

plebiscite, the international community decided to award the Nobel Peace Prize to President Santos, for his efforts in this process and as a motivation and support for the Colombian people to continue in the pursuit of this important goal.

Subsequently, as a result of almost two months of meetings at this new Negotiating Table, on 22 November, 2016, a new agreement was presented; however, there was uncertainty about the opposition's position on the subject, even though most of their proposals were included. Additionally, there was also concern expressed from different social sectors who mobilized after the plebiscite—both in the main cities of the country and by social networks—to demonstrate the urgent need to achieve a comprehensive peace agreement (Oficina del Alto Comisionado para la Paz, 2016).

Finally, on November 30, 2016, after forty days of negotiations, the majority of Congress members endorsed the new agreement presented by the Government (Gobierno de Colombia y FARC, 2016), in the midst of heated debates in which the opposition continued to express discontent, despite the fact that almost all of their proposals were incorporated (Oficina del Alto Comisionado para la Paz, 2016).

In this context, it is very clear that peace depends today on the way in which institutions, corporations, and citizens that make up the Colombian State assume, in an integral way, two main aspects: first, the transformation and evolution of a culture characterized by violence and human rights violations,² in the wake of the internal conflict among the Colombian State and the FARC-EP, the National Liberation Army (ELN, for its acronym in Spanish), the Popular Liberation Army (EPL, for its acronym in Spanish) and criminal gangs; and second, closing the economic and social development gap in comparison to the developed countries and its main consequences such as high levels of corruption, deindustrialization, violation of human (labor, social, cultural, etc.) rights, and high levels of inequality. This and the challenges posed by globalization and climate change represent the central points for the development of a national pact that allows to achieve a comprehensive, stable and lasting peace in Colombia, that does not only focus on the social problem of violence, but also pays attention to the structural problems of economy, society, and the Colombian territory as a whole.

After the previous reflection, from within the journal *Finanzas y Política Económica*, we would like to continue consolidating alternatives, from the perspective of science, to solve these transcendental challenges. For this reason, on behalf of this publishing office, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all members of the editorial team: members of the Editorial Committee and the Scientific Committee, the editorial team at the University, our reviewers and readers, and, especially, to the authors of this and previous issues, whose contributions make this project a reality and allow the journal to be one of

2 Despite signing the agreement, union and political leaders continue to be murdered in Colombia, which happens in addition to deeper cultural problems that directly affect the integrity of children, women, peasants and indigenous communities in the country.

the emerging sources of reference for economic sciences in the Colombian and international scientific literature, providing free access to our readers.³

In this regard, it is a pleasure to present the following researches, which, after a rigorous evaluation process characterized by scientific debate and feedback between reviewers and authors, have been selected due to their impact and contribution to knowledge and to our understanding of current economic problems. First, the article entitled "Unsustainable Public Debt in a European Fiscal Union?," by Professor Gábor Kutasi, from the Corvinus University of Budapest (Hungary); second, "Marketing + internet = e-commerce: opportunities and challenges," by Pedro Barrientos Felipa, professor at the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos (Peru); third, "The impacts of financial development on economic growth in Colombia and Chile, 1982-2014," by Armando Lenin Támara Ayús, Lina María Eusse Ossa and Andrés Castellón Pérez, professors at the Universidad EAFIT; fourth, the article entitled "Trends in temporary employment in the industry of the Boyacá region, 2000-2013," by Professors Edilberto Rodríguez Araújo and Lina Marleny López Sánchez, from the Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia; fifth, "(Re)discussing fiscal federalism as an instrument of social development in the Republic of Argentine," by Luciano Rezoagli and Cammarata Marín, from the Universidad Nacional del Litoral (Argentine); sixth, "location and regional production specialization in Colombia," written by Henry Antonio Mendoza and Jacobo Campo Robledo, professors at the Universidad Católica de Colombia; the seventh article is entitled "Relative efficiency within a tax administration: the effects of result improvement," by Professors Elena Villar Rubio, Pedro Enrique Barrilao González and Juan Delgado Alaminos, from the Universidad de Granada (Spain); and in the eighth place, "A comparative review of the role of income inequality in economic crisis theories and its contribution to the financial crisis of 2007-09," by Professor Thomas Goda, from the Universidad EAFIT (Colombia).

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3 This is evidenced in the recognition we received nationally in the last four years, which allowed the journal to reach the A2 category of Publindex, and internationally, by being included in bibliographic databases like EconLit, Repec, Econbiz, Scielo, RedALyC, Ebsco, Proquest, ESCI, Index Copernicus, and directories such as DOAJ, REDIB, Dialnet, and CLASE.

