

Peacebuilding in Colombia: without women, there can be no Peace

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ENG Abstract. Women's political participation in peace negotiations in different countries has been marked by a history of absence. For this reason, the United Nations Council passed Resolution 1325 (2000), which urges countries to include women's participation at peace negotiation tables. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) follow in this wake by including peace, justice, strong institutions and achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls among their development goals. In this vein, this article addresses women's participation in peace negotiations in Colombia: from the first negotiations in the 1990s to the latest agreement between the government and the FARC-EP (2016). This will make it possible to assess how public peacebuilding policies are being carried out from a gender perspective. Equitable implementation is essential, because it is clear from the lessons learned that only with them will peacebuilding be possible in Colombia

Keywords: Colombia, gender, women, conflict, security, peace processes

Summary: 1. Introduction. 2. International agendas: SDGs and "Women, Peace and Security. 2.1. The Sustainable Development Goals: just, peaceful and equitable societies. 2.2. Resolution 1325: assessment of two decades. 3. Women's participation in the peace agreements in Colombia: a history of absences. 3.1. Assessment of women's participation in the peace agreements. 3.2 The other roundtables: women as agents of change. 4. Colombia: post-conflict mechanisms in a scenario of conflict. 4.1. What is being done well? Opportunities, achievements and progress. 4.2. What could be improved? Obstacles and challenges; Conclusions; Bibliography.

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1.Introduction

This article deals with women's participation in the Colombian conflict from a broad conception of security: under the umbrella of Human Security.¹ The concept of Human Security requires the "people-centered, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented responses that strengthen the protection and empowerment of all people." (Res. 66/290 NNUU).

Under this vision, which refers to a framework of analysis and planning that broadens the classical concept of security, we can conceive several of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). In particular, the 16th objective looks for the "promotion of fair, pacific and inclusive societies" and the 5th objective makes reference to "achieve gender equality and empowering women and girls".

Along these lines, the "Women, Peace and Security" agenda, approved following Resolution 1325 by the United Nations Security Council (2000), has urged all Member States to pay attention to the differential impact of armed conflict on women's bodies, as well as the need for their participation in all phases of peace negotiations, thus promoting a gender-differentiated analysis and approach and the empowerment of women in peacebuilding. Two lines of action that reinforce the goals outlined by the SDGs. Specifically, the article deals with women's participation in the peace agreements in Colombia. Since the agreements were made in the 90s, until the ones signed in August 2016 with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia - People's Army and which has become a milestone in the achievement of a gender approach to peacebuilding in the country.

Nevertheless, after several years of the signing and the change of government in Colombia, it is necessary to examine how public peacebuilding policies are being carried out. An equitable implementation is essential, because it is clear from the lessons learned that only with them, peacebuilding can be possible in Colombia.

For this reason, the article is divided into three parts: the second epigraph will identify international agendas as legal and political tools for achieving peace, equity and security. In the third and fourth epigraph, the case study of Colombia will be specifically identified. The epigraph provides an overview of women's participation in the different peace agreements that have taken place in Colombia, as well as the role of women's and feminist organizations in peacebuilding in the country. Section four will address the current situation, pointing out the opportunities and obstacles to achieve a gender focus in peacebuilding. Finally, the conclusions will return to the main issues of the work, offering some keys to achieving a democratic, peaceful, equitable and safe society for women.

2. International agendas: ODS and "Women, peace and security"

The participation of women as peacebuilders can be analyzed through the articulation of two international agendas: the ODS and the agenda "Women, Peace and Security" that started with the Resolution 1325/2000. The ODS agenda (2015-2030) articulates this demand through objectives 16 and 5, by addressing, on the one hand, the need to establish a fair, pacific and inclusive society; and on the other hand, gender equity in different social status, from the different forms of violence against women until the participation in political spaces. The resolution 1325, approved 20 years ago, supposed a milestone at a specific agenda creation which links women, peace and security. Both agendas are cardinal tools for the attainment of pacific, secure and equitable societies.

However, we currently find ourselves with different obstacles that can qualify the attainment of the marked goals in both agendas. First of all, there's evidence in the regression of the multilateral system, when observing increasingly the boom of the anti-rights speeches that suppose a threat for Human Rights, and, specifically, for Women's Rights. In this line, it is known the so-called "gender ideology" that rejects feminist frameworks of analysis, denying gender hierarchies, as well as advocating a return to the "traditional" family. Secondly, the Covid-19 pandemic that is ravaging us is generating a health and economic crisis that affects the population differently, potentially leaving many people behind. Thirdly and lastly, the climate crisis is another of the great problems of the 21st century, because if we address it, we will be able to offer the necessary security to all those communities and people who require it.

2.1. The Sustainable Development Goals: just, peaceful and equitable societies.

In 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were approved as the first international development agenda that promoted a commitment among countries to achieve eight goals over fifteen years (2000-2015). Although this ambitious agenda did not meet the goals set, it did improve the indicators and promoted the achievement of an international development agenda that involved all countries, strengthening the generation of alliances and synergies between them.

This need to address a shared agenda that would promote development has been shown to be necessary to achieve it. The SDGs or Agenda 2030 (2015-2030) continues on the path of promoting an international

¹ The concept of human security is defined by the United Nations as "an approach that assists Member States in identifying and overcoming the widespread and cross-cutting challenges affecting the survival, livelihoods and dignity of their citizens" General Assembly Resolution 66/290.

commitment, in this case it stands as an agenda that challenges not only the countries of the South, but also the countries of the North. In addition, the SDG agenda sets a more ambitious horizon, doubling the goals. In this case, seventeen goals are set, ranging from the eradication of poverty, sustainable development of the planet and the fight against inequality. Specifically, there are two goals that refer to the issues to be addressed: goal 5 and 16.

Goal 5 seeks to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Although it can be seen that the MDGs already had goals² that would lead to this end, these goals had a limited focus. The 2030 Agenda includes, in a broader manner, goal 5, which refers to different situations of discrimination. In particular, target 5.5, which seeks to "Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of political, economic and public decision-making".

In this regard, the following implementation³ measure is indicated: "5.c. Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable laws to promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels". On the other hand, Goal 16 substantially modifies the approach addressed in the MDGs. This goal points to non-material issues, such as governance, rights and peace. Specifically, target 16.7, which sets out the objective of "ensuring inclusive, participatory and representative decision making at all levels that is responsive to needs", and implementation in 16.b, which calls for "promotion and implementation of non-discriminatory laws and policy for sustainable development". Besides, the goal 16 includes in its targets the end of violence against women and includes sexual violence against women derived from the armed conflict (Mesa, 2015).

2.2. The 1325 resolution: two decades evaluation.

The 1325 resolution was approved in 2000, and recognizes the labor of women in peace and security, so, therefore, women's participation in the peace processes; on all aspects of the establishment, peacekeeping and peace-building. This way, the Member States of the United Nations are urged to take measures to increase women's presence and participation in the prevention, management and the resolution of conflicts, promoting respect and the defense of women's rights. Similarly, it articulates the needed means in order to achieve the objectives, creating guidelines and materials*(typo do is it materials or subjects? Don't know if this word is still in Spanish from the original article), as well as a better financial technical and logistical support. In addition, the Resolution highlights the joint responsibility of all states "to end impunity and to prosecute those guilty of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, especially the ones related with sexual violence and other type of violence against women and girls", highlighting "the need to exclude those crimes where feasible, of amnesty provisions".⁴

The 1325 Resolution of the United Nations has been a milestone in women's, security and peace speech. For the first time, within the scope of action of the Security Council, the participation of women is included in all of the aspects of peacebuilding. Various subsequent resolutions, like several reports of the General Secretary, have only strengthened the normative framework for the protection of women's rights during and after armed conflict, as well as for meeting their needs in the peacebuilding period. The Resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2242 (2015) and 2467 (2019) from the Security Council addresses sexual violence against women as a war tactic. The resolutions 1889 (2009), 2122 (2013) and 2106 (2013) from the Security Council, seek to strengthen the willingness of the United Nations, as well as the other signatory states, to involve women in peace processes, governance and the post conflict recovery.

Nevertheless, despite the existence of a regulatory framework inside the Security Council that supposes a change in the way of treating the link between security and peace with a gender perspective, practice is still far from international discourse, showing a gap between narratives and processes. So as to, the data we are working with show this. A 2008 study reviewed 33 peace negotiations, of which women for 4% of the participation in them, and the 7% in government delegations, these being superior to the representation of women in non-state armed groups.

In a UN Women sample⁶, in which 31 peace processes between 1992 and 2011 were analyzed, the data showed once more the lack of women's participation in peace processes. Women represent only a 4% of the signatories, 2.4% of the main mediators, the 3.7% of witnesses and 9% of negotiators. This data has to be analyzed in the context of the Oslo negotiations on the Philippines. Thus, these negotiations had a higher than usual percentage of female representation, being 33% of signatories and a 35% of women in negotiating delegations (2011). Without this data, the average in previous cases would fall, being a 3% the percentage of women signatories and a 7.5% of negotiators.

² Among the eight MDG goals are three that address, either in their wording or in the targets to be achieved, the promotion of gender equality and differentiated attention to women. These goals are: goal 2 "achieve universal primary education"; goal 3 "promote women's equality and empower women"; and goal 5 "improve maternal health".

³ These are considered implementation because they are those goals that are associated with the national mobilization of resources (CONPES 3918, 2018).

⁴ U.N. Doc. S/RES/1325 (2000) of October 31, 2000, paragraphs 10 and 11.

⁵ Resolution 2467 reveals the inauspicious context for the Women, Peace and Security agenda in the world. Three of the members of the Security Council (USA, Russia and China) were strongly opposed to the creation of new formal mechanisms, in addition to the rejection of the use of "sexual and reproductive rights" which had to be removed from the text (Solanas, 2020).

⁶ The gender approach from a broad conception, since it also refers to the LGBTBI+ population.

However, the lack of women in formal spaces must not be interpreted as lack of motivation because in the face of exclusion in the processes, women have generated their own parallel processes, where they claim their requests and sometimes agreements have been reached in this way (Castillo and Tordjman, 2012). The organization of these processes is one of the most common methods used by women's organizations, and is generated by reacting to exclusion from formal processes.

3. Women's participation in peace agreements in Colombia: a story of absences and transformations

Women's participation in peace agreements in Colombia have been characterized by a story of absences. When reviewing the different agreements developed over the last three decades, from Belisario Betancur (1982) to the peace agreements with the FARC-EP (2016) signed by Juan Manuel Santos, the participation of women, although far from being equitable has been increasing and different specific measures have been adopted to address gender issues. This fact has shown the peace negotiations with the FARC-EP to be an international benchmark. Not only for increasing the number of women in decision-making bodies, but also for the creation of their own space, such as the gender sub-commission, and the mainstreaming of the gender and ethnic-racial approach in the peace agreements.

In order to evaluate women's participation, the first section of this paper looks at the different peace agreements signed in Colombia. In the second, we will look more specifically at the 2016 agreements between the government of Juan Manuel Santos and the FARC-EP, which will show how, after a masculinized beginning, feminist and women's organizations in Colombia managed to transform these spaces into a greater participation of women.

3.1 Balance about women's participation in the peace processes in Colombia.

When carrying out a review about women's participation of Colombian women in the peace processes, it can be observed a role of diversity occupied by women who have shown a great capacity to play. One of the leading female negotiators in Colombia is Carmenzana Cardona Londoño, known as "La Chiqui" (member of M19). Her role carried out in the seizure of Dominican Republic embassy (1980) was a clear reference point for the role of women as negotiators. Nevertheless, the participation of "La Chiqui" in the takeover of the embassy was conditioned by her gender position. Thus, Rosemberg Pabón Pabón, known as Comandante Uno, noted in his book *Así nos tomamos la embajada*⁷, the discrimination suffered by

"La Chiqui! on the part of the government representatives, having to negotiate with a woman: What hurt the government representatives most was talking to short, chubby, hooded, short women. But you... can you decide? They said as if mocking. They were waiting for Comandante Uno". (Pabón, 1984:71-72)

However, if the role of "La Chiqui" has been shown as a reference point forming part of the collective imaginary in Colombian society, it is an isolated fact. The subsequent peace accords show a map characterized by the absence of women's participation in governmental and institutional decision-making spaces (Velásquez, 2009). When Belisario Betancur became president in 1982, the National Commission for Dialogue and Negotiation was established (Velásquez 2009). This was significant, as it was the first time that women participated at the highest levels of negotiation, as well as in the occupation of vice-ministries in the government cabinet (Velásquez, 2009). However, when women's participation in the various peace agreements between the government of Belisario Betancur (1982-1986) and the guerrilla groups is recorded, only four women⁸ (7.14%) appear in the four agreements reached (Chaparro and Martínez, 2016).

Subsequently, in the government of Andrés Pastrana, 149 men and 3 women (1.97%) appeared in the 18 agreements reached; but the lack of women's participation was even more evident in the period of Álvaro Uribe (2002-2010), where there were 12 agreements negotiated with 64 men and not a single woman (Chaparro and Martínez, 2016). The facts demonstrate that women—as government signatories and/or demobilized persons—do not appear at the negotiation tables or in those spaces such as forums and institutional councils where peace is negotiated. According to the review⁹ submitted by Londoño and Nieto, only 15 women out of 280 men appear as signatories to the agreements (Londoño and Nieto, 2006).

The beginning of the peace process with the government of Juan Manuel Santos and the FARC-EP would be characterized by the lack of inclusion of women in it, thus, thanks to the vindication of women's organizations¹⁰ The participation of women as negotiators in this process increased, 43 men and 8 women, establishing a participation of 15.69% (Chaparro and Martínez, 2016).

⁷ This book includes texts from Carmenza Cardona Londoño's diary.

⁸ The four agreements include the participation of 52 men and 4 women; this ratio shows a female participation of 7%.

⁹ The review is carried out through "twenty-five agreements, two joint declarations, a commission report, a commission minute and an agenda (including the (...) agreements with the paramilitary groups in Santa Fe de Ralito)" (Londoño and Nieto, 2006:62).

¹⁰ The nine women's organizations were the following: Casa de la Mujer, Ruta Pacífica de las Mujeres, Red Nacional de Mujeres, Mujeres por la Paz, Colectivo de Pensamiento y Acción Mujeres, Paz y Seguridad, Grupo de Seguimiento de la Resolución 1325, Conferencia Nacional de Organizaciones Afrocolombianas (CNOA), Iniciativa de Mujeres Colombianas por la Paz (IMP) and the Asociación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas, Negras e Indígenas de Colombia (ANMUCIC).

3.2. The other tables: women as agents of change

One of the first milestones that reversed the process of dialogues, which started out masculinized, was the "I National Women's Summit" (October 2013). Different women's organizations urged the need for women's participation in the peace accords and the incorporation of a gender perspective in them. The National Summit took place on 23, 24 and 25 October 2013 in Bogotá, at the initiative of nine women's organizations and with the technical accompaniment of the United Nations System in Colombia, led by UN Women, as well as the support of cooperation from Sweden, Norway, Switzerland and Spain (I National Summit of Women and Peace, 2013).

The high percentage of women's participation in the peace commissions that are part of the current peace agreements is evidence not only of women's interest in the peace negotiations (Vargas and Fajardo, 2015), but also of their capacity and willingness to participate. However, this participation is biased, as once again they are contemplated in those spaces with less power (as in the case of the participation forums), or in the areas that are generated around gender analysis (such as the issue that only affects women, which would be the case of the gender sub-commission). Likewise, when addressing women's participation in the agreements from the support work in different commissions, we can observe not only the increase in the percentage of female participation with respect to the participation of women as signatories, but also that in some cases the percentage of women is higher than that of men. In this line, we can observe a percentage of 62.92% female participation with the government of Andrés Pastrana, and 65.78% with the government of Juan Manuel Santos (Table 1).

Table 1: Presence of men and women in Negotiation Support Commissions

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Belisario Betancur	92.29	9.71
Andrés Pastrana	37.08	62.92
Álvaro Uribe	61.54	38.46
Juan Manuel Santos	34.22	65.78

Source: Tomado de Chaparro y Martínez (2016:79)

The biased participation of women in peace negotiation processes has been a national and international constant, conditioned by a view of their role in society and in peacebuilding. Thus, in this context, the gender sub-commission incorporated women's participation in the Final Agreement in the second point on 'Political participation: democratic opening to build peace' (Mesa de Conversaciones, August 2016: 30). In this section, the need for women's participation is pointed out, given that "they face greater social and institutional barriers to the exercise of their political participation as a result of profound discrimination and inequalities" (Mesa de Conversaciones, August 2016: 30).

In this sense, a commitment is made to promote and guarantee the participation of women as political subjects, urging the government and institutions to strengthen feminist and women's organizations (youth and LGBTI+ organizations are also mentioned). Specifically, point 2.3.7 of the Agreement develops the above idea by stating that "the National Government and the FARC-EP recognize the important role played by women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and the need to promote and strengthen women's political and civic participation" (Mesa de Conversaciones, August 2016:48).

The gender sub-commission has been a reference point for the peace process in Colombia: although it is true that, by itself, it does not necessarily represent a transformative path, it is an important historical milestone. For the first time in Colombia, a technical and flexible space has been created with the contribution of women's organizations. The slogan put forward during the National Women's Summit "we want to make agreements and not be negotiated" is seen to have been achieved in part due to the inclusion of the gender sub-commission and the work carried out to incorporate a gender perspective and various points in the Final Accord.

Although the agreements with the FARC-EP are marked by greater female participation, this is still far from equitable. The gender sub-commission is one of the most transformative spaces that has managed to mainstream gender in the different points agreed between the government and the FARC-EP.

Women's organizations in Colombia led a political change, however, women's participation is still far from equitable. Participation in the FARC-EP agreements was 15.69% at the negotiation tables and 65.78% at the support tables. This data shows that, although women are referents in peacebuilding and are participants in the work forums, they continue to be relegated from the negotiation spaces (Chaparro and Martínez, 2016).

This advance towards the incorporation of the discourse of women's organizations has highlighted reactionary reticence towards change. The No to the plebiscite campaign agglutinated the rejection of the gender approach, understood as part of the so-called "gender ideology". Apart from these positions defended by religious and conservative groups, the gender approach has been shown to be necessary and essential for the achievement of peace, and has therefore been maintained in the negotiations following the plebiscite.

4. Colombia: post-conflict mechanisms in a conflict scenario

As developed in the previous section, women's participation has varied over the different decades of Colombia's armed conflict. It is in the agreement between the government of Juan Manuel Santos and the FARC-EP where a qualitative change was observed, due to the promotion of greater participation of women and the incorporation of a gender focus, which became an international milestone in the agreements signed.

However, after the change of government in Colombia,¹¹ it is necessary to review how the implementation of the agreements and the peacebuilding processes outlined in the Women, Peace and Security agenda, as well as those derived from the SDGs mentioned above, are being carried out.

In this sense, it must be taken into account that the conflict is still latent, therefore, post-conflict mechanisms are being carried out in a scenario of conflict. This situation generates a greater vulnerability for women, since, although their participation as agents of change continues to be a constant in the country, the violence¹² suffered by women leaders and human rights defenders continues to be a constant. These risks are added to the different forms of violence they suffer in a structural manner and are specifically targeted at women as political subjects.¹³

However, the increased participation of women's and feminist organizations, with the support of the international community through the objectives, targets and indicators of the aforementioned agendas, show an enabling analysis scenario in order to identify the achievement of a just and equitable society. For this reason, this heading is divided into two sections that can show, on the one hand, opportunities, achievements and progress; and, on the other hand, the obstacles and challenges that Colombia faces.

4.1 What's being done right? Opportunities, achievements and progress

Colombia has emerged as a case in point in the incorporation of the gender approach in peace dialogues (Navarro et al, 2020). The creation of a gender commission and the integration of the gender approach has been an international milestone, reflecting the commitments of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. In this regard, different opportunities and achievements in achieving equitable peace-building in Colombia can be noted.

Among the opportunities that it has generated that one can speak of an international reference, one could point to two main ones. First, the agency of women's organizations. As noted above, it is through the 1st National Summit of Women (23, 24 and 25 October 2013) at the initiative of eight women's organizations¹⁴ and with the support of the international community (I National Summit of Women and Peace, 2013), where the government was urged to reverse the initially masculinized process of peace dialogues. The work of women's and feminist organizations 14 in Colombia has been characterized by work in two ways: its incidence, mobilizations and advocacy; as well as the proliferation of analysis and follow-up reports on violence and inequality among women.

Proof of this can be found in the Report on the Peaceful Route of Women, entitled "The Truth of Women Victims of the Armed Conflict in Colombia. Report of the Truth and Memory Commission." This study is a reference in the analysis of women victims, due to its magnitude, as well as its importance; as one of the most comprehensive studies on sexual violence; and, in addition to the data obtained through the study, because it is created as part of a feminist demand to give voice to women victims (Peaceful Route of Women, 2013).¹⁵

¹¹ The peace agreements with the FARC-EP and the previous negotiations with the National Liberation Army (ELN) were promoted by the government of Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018). In August 2018 he was preceded by Iván Duque who has been characterized by the continuity of Álvaro Uribe's project, along the lines of confrontation with guerrilla groups and the breakdown of negotiations with the ELN in January 2019.

¹² This type of violence is used as a coercive mechanism to coerce women who deviate from the norm or transgress the female gender role. In this case, it is carried out against women who break out of the traditional roles of passive subjects, as in the case of women leaders, activists or human rights defenders.

¹³ This situation has been included in the Action Plan of the Comprehensive Program of Guarantees for Women Leaders and Human Rights Defenders (2019-2022). And previously pointed out by the Constitutional Court through orders 092 of 2008, 098 of 2013 and 009 of 2015.

¹⁴ The nine women's organizations were the following: Casa de la Mujer, Ruta Pacífica de las Mujeres, Red Nacional de Mujeres, Mujeres por la Paz, Colectivo de Pensamiento y Acción Mujeres, Paz y Seguridad, Grupo de Seguimiento de la Resolución 1325, Conferencia Nacional de Organizaciones Afrocolombianas (CNOA), Iniciativa de Mujeres Colombianas por la Paz (IMP) and the Asociación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas, Negras e Indígenas de Colombia (ANMUCIC).

¹⁵ From September 19 to 21, 2016, a II National Women's Summit was convened (II Cumbre Nacional de Mujeres, 2016). Both summits have formed a platform also called the National Women's Summit. The eight organizations that make up this space are: Alianza Iniciativa de Mujeres Colombianas por la Paz, Asociación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas, Negras e Indígenas de Colombia (ANMUNIC), Casa de la Mujer, Colectivo de Pensamiento y Acción- Mujeres, Paz y Seguridad, Confederación Nacional de Organizaciones Afrocolombianas (C.N.O.A), Limpal Colombia, Mujeres por la Paz and La Ruta Pacífica de las Mujeres.

There are also, among other publications, a series of annual reports by the Human Corporation following Resolution 1325/2000. The appropriation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda has been evidenced in the use as a tool of advocacy and transformation of women's or feminist organizations in Colombia, that is, as a political tool.

In second place, the favorable national and international context. On the one hand, the role of the international community has contributed through the legal tools generation, participation with third countries in negotiations, as well as through the support and strengthening of development programmes, many aimed at social organizations in the country. On the other hand, the national context, a favorable political climate, following the advocacy of women's organizations and the international community, in the incorporation of specific spaces and the approach to the gender perspective.¹⁶

This context of opportunity has offered a series of achievements that have made Colombia a benchmark in gender mainstreaming, both in the dialogues and in the government's implementation of national mechanisms. The first achievement was the creation of a gender sub-commission, although it is true that, by itself, it was not a transformative path, it is an important historical milestone; for the first time in Colombia, a technical and flexible space was created with the contribution of women's or feminist organizations. The work of this space was reflected in a second achievement, the integration of a gender, ethnic-racial and intersectional approach, which is specifically and transversally established in the different points of the peace agreement.

A third achievement, which is no less a product of the previous ones, has been the assignment of competencies, the generation of institutions and the creation of legal tools for the monitoring of the fulfillment of gender objectives. These include the creation in 2019 of the National Government's¹⁷ High Instance for Gender, whose mission is to coordinate, harmonize, promote and monitor the implementation and mainstreaming of the gender approach; and the formulation of CONPES 3931¹⁸ and CONPES 3918.¹⁹

These achievements have led to a series of advances in the incorporation and creation of governmental mechanisms for the reparation of victims and the participation of women. Among the participation mechanisms that have been incorporating a gender perspective are the following (Mercado and GPAZ, 2019):

- The creation of spaces or mechanisms to promote the generation of proposals or inputs to the Statute of the Opposition.
- The inclusion of a differential territorial and gender focus in the Early Warning System.
- The creation of the National Council for Reconciliation and Coexistence, with representation of women and ethnic minorities.
- The promotion of gender-sensitive participatory local budgets and the political participation of women in the shaping of the peace agreement bodies.
- The strengthening of political training institutions for women,²⁰ to promote leadership and capacity for political advocacy.
- The creation of the Special Commission for the Truth (CEV), which has included a gender perspective from its inception, has a specific working team that works towards gender mainstreaming²¹ (Gómez, 2020).

Progress has been made in material and psychological reparation policies for victims, as well as in the generation of guarantees, justice and reparation. With regard to material reparation, target 16.3 of the SDGs seeks to "promote material and psychological reparation for victims of the internal conflict" in order to "guarantee access to justice and reparation for the vulnerable population" (DNP, 2019:22). Under this indicator, it can be seen that 962,815 compensation payments have been made to victims of the armed conflict, meeting the target of 952,399 set for 2018 (DNP, 2019). Progress in generating guarantees of justice and reparation can be seen in the measures adopted in the CEV (Mercado and GPAZ, 2019):

- CEV that addresses the impact of the conflict and specific gender-based violence. In addition, the CEV promotes territorial coexistence that transforms gender relations.
- The composition of the commissioners is based on equitable criteria between men and women.
- The creation of a committee to follow up and monitor the implementation of the recommendations.
- The formation of the Special Jurisdiction Tribunal for Peace (SJTP) through equal participation. These

¹⁶ The government of Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018) carried out a policy of rapprochement and dialogues with the guerrilla groups, in view of the break with the harder line of Álvaro Uribe. However, with the change of government in 2018 with Iván Duque, a less favorable governmental context is evident.

¹⁷ It is made up of the Presidency of the Republic, represented by the High Counselor's Office for the Post-Conflict, the Presidential Counselor's Office for Women's Equity, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the National Planning Department (DPN), the Administrative Department of the Civil Service, the Agency for the Renewal of the Territory and the Agency for Reincorporation and Normalization. For more information, please visit the Colombian government's web page at: <http://www.equidadmujer.gov.co/prensa/2019/Paginas/Instalacion-Alta-Instancia-De-Genero-Del-Gobierno-Nacional.aspx>

¹⁸ The document outlines gender mechanisms in the policy for the social and economic reincorporation of former FARC-EP members.

¹⁹ Articulates the goals and indicators for the achievement of the SDGs in Colombia.

²⁰ As of 2019, the Ministry of Interior has reported the participation of more than 830 women.

²¹ This working group is responsible for the commission's methodologies to generate research tasks and the preparation of hearings.

chambers of the SJTP are made up of a minimum of 6 judges, with equitable criteria.

- It has an investigation team that deals with cases of sexual violence in accordance with the provisions of the Rome Statute.

Finally, in terms of participation, it is possible to analyze two ways of participation: individual or collective. Individual participation would be the participation of individual women in political groups. These can be analyzed through a percentage count of women, their hierarchical position in power and the inclusion of gender-specific agendas.

Through the SDGs, the projection for 2030 of target 5.5. to "Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all decision-making levels in political, economic and public life" is projected at 50%, seeking equal participation between men and women (CONPES 3918, 2018:59). The percentage of women holding national leadership positions in Colombia was 44% in 2018, noting a considerable increase that makes it feasible to achieve the target of 50% by 2030 (DPN, 2019).

With regard to women's positions of power, representative women include Claudia López, mayor of Bogotá; Virna Johnson Salcedo, mayor of Santa Marta; and Elsa Noguera, governor of Atlántico. In addition, they have articulated inclusive agendas in the generation of 'strategies for the elimination of violence, care economy and participatory budgets with a gender perspective' in Bogotá; the 'empowerment of women and girls' in Atlántico; and the creation of a Women's Secretariat in Santa Marta (Leguizamón, 2020:15).

As collective partisan proposals, there was the creation of the political movement *Estamos Listas*, which was born in Medellín, after the No to the plebiscite, when observing the need to influence the importance of the gender approach (Leguizamón, 2020). In this sense, the No meant a setback on peace in the country, since it denied a peace process that for the first time constituted a gender subcommission that integrated a gender and intersectional approach, and sought mechanisms for an equitable and inclusive participation (Espinal, 2019). Besides, the participation, as permanent guests, of two women's organizations in the National Commission for Security Guarantees (CNGS) can be noted. The inclusion of the National Summit of Women and Gender and PEACE (GPAZ)²² has entailed the creation of a specific gender working group and the reactivation of the Intersectoral Commission for Women's Guarantees (Kroc Institute, UN Women, FDI and Sweden, 2019; Procuraduría General de la Nación, 2019).

4.2. What could be done better? Obstacles and challenges

Although several opportunities have been added and achievements in Colombia, it's important to take into account the challenges and obstacles that prevent a good attainment and implementation of the achievements and objectives planned. After the first year of Ivan Duque's government, it can be omitted that some key issues show a slowdown in the implementation of the gender approach in the peace agreements.

Among the obstacles encountered would be the lack of political commitment²³ in the implementation of the measures, shown by different factors: such as disarticulation, the lack of knowledge and the misrepresentation of the institutions in the implementation of the gender approach, as well as a gamble in budgetary funding (Women's Special Instance for the Gender Approach in Peace, 2019).

The gender approach, one of the great achievements, has been diluted as a central axis of the implementation of the agreement (Instancia Especial de Mujeres para el Enfoque de Género en la Paz, 2019; Navarro et al, 2020:29). In this line, the approach has been reduced to a binary vision, leaving aside the diversities of gender orientation and identity. This can be seen in the elimination of the specific chapter on LGBT population from the National Development Plan and less reporting on the advances in inclusion measures towards the LGBT population (Mercado and GPAZ, 2019). The rejection towards the LGBT perspective is closely related to hate speeches around "gender ideology", which demonizes the movements and claims of LGTBI+ people.

In addition, there is a delay in the implementation of gender-focused measures. As of August 2019, 27% of the overall commitments of the agreement had not been initiated, of which those that included the gender approach accounted for 42% of those not initiated (Kroc Institute, UN Women, FDI and Sweden, 2019). Thus, 54 measures have been excluded from gender implementation (Mercado and GPAZ, 2019). Only 8% of the gender measures have been completed, compared to the 25% in general (Kroc Institute, UN Women, FDI and Sweden, 2019).

Finally, the lack of budgetary funding is showing a series of generalized shortcomings throughout implementation. An example of this can be seen in the regional and local work. Although important work is being done by the National Planning Department (NPP) to articulate departmental information, it is necessary

²² GPAZ is a working group made up of feminists, LBT, academics, victims and women defenders for peace, composed of the following organizations: Red Nacional de Mujeres, Dejusticia, Colombian Commission of Jurists, Sisma Mujer, Humanas, Women's Link Worldwide, Red Nacional de Mujeres Defensoras and Colombia Diversa.

²³ As mentioned, around the Plebiscite the pro-No sectors associated the Peace Agreement with "gender ideology"; a fact that, although it has not compromised the elimination of the gender approach from the different points of the peace agreement, it has had to be negotiated among the elites (Gómez, 2017).

to expand these teams, with permanent seats in the regions and at the local level, the so-called: localization of the agendas. In addition, it would be necessary to strengthen the gender working group of the Truth Clarification Commission (TCC) which, despite being a great achievement, is small (it only has six people) and is overwhelmed with work (Gómez, 2020).

These obstacles have shown a number of challenges to be addressed for a good implementation. In line with the funding obstacle, it is key to have an adequate budget in the implementation of work plans, ensuring a greater territorial scope (Mercado and GPAZ, 2019). Among the measures that have not been advanced or information on them is not available would be (Mercado and GPAZ, 2019):

- Strengthening and supporting with legal and technical assistance women's organizations and movements, or discriminated groups.
- The promotion of networks of organizations and social movements to make them visible and generate spaces for dialogue with the public authorities.
- Carrying out awareness campaigns, as well as workshops on participation in democracy.
- Promoting and guaranteeing the participation of women in collective reparation processes, implementing measures with a gender and differential approach in the Psychosocial Rehabilitation Plan for coexistence and non-repetition.

Thus, strengthening the social fabric (women's, feminist or LGBTI+ or ethnic-racial organizations) is fundamental to recognize the role of women as political subjects and agents of change, not only as victims of violence. Economic support and feedback with these organizations are cardinal elements for social transformation, through awareness-raising and advocacy. However, women's participation, like that of many leaders who defend human rights, is conditioned by a context of insecurity.

In 2019, the highest number of attacks against human rights defenders in the last decade has been reported (Mercado and GPAZ, 2019). Between 2013 and 2019, 84 murders of female leaders and 1,132 cases of threats were recorded (Somos Defensores, 2020). For this reason, different women's organizations mobilized, especially GPAZ and Narrar para Vivir, and the Action Plan for the Integral Protection of Women Leaders and Human Rights Defenders was developed (Instancia Especial de Mujeres para el Enfoque de Género en la Paz, 2019).

For all of the above, women's political participation is seen as one of the most complex and important challenges to achieve. In this sense, it is recommended to increase the coverage of women's participation in control and citizen oversight mechanisms in each department (Instancia Especial de Mujeres para el Enfoque de Género en la Paz, 2019; Mercado and GPAZ, 2019). As well as a greater integration of the contributions and recommendations of the organizations towards the public instances (Instancia Especial de Mujeres para el Enfoque de Género en la Paz, 2019). Additionally, although the point of reparation for victims is one of the areas that has made the most progress, it is recommended that the mechanisms and spaces for women's collective participation be strengthened (Consejería presidencial para la Equidad de la Mujer, 2020:59).

With respect to the progress of indicator 5.5 of the SDGs, it only observes the participation of these as candidates, leaving aside other types of institutions and territorial decision-making processes in peacebuilding. Furthermore, in the development of CONPES Document 3918, target 16.7 does not have a numerical indicator that can establish quantifiable targets for its development.

Thus, equitable representation in the mechanisms of the Peace Agreement is still seen as a distant goal. Francia Márquez is the first black woman elected president of the National Council for Peace, Reconciliation and Coexistence and its National Committee in July 2020 (Barometer Initiative, Peace Agreement Matrix, Kroc Institute, 2020). Although 6 of the 10 members of the Committee are women, they only correspond to 23% of the members (97) of the Council (High Commissioner for Peace, 2020). On the other hand, participation in the decision-making mechanisms has not been equal either, these would be: the Commission for Follow-up, Impulse and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Agreement (CSIVI) and the National Commission for Security Guarantees (Barometer Initiative, Matrix of Peace Agreements, Kroc Institute, 2020).

Finally, of the 130 gender provisions established in the Peace Agreement, of these, 32% have not yet been initiated, this rate being 21% for general provisions (Iniciativa Barómetro, Matriz de Acuerdos de Paz e Instituto Kroc, 2020). However, this gap has narrowed in the last year, thanks to the approval of plans and the statistical breakdown in the studies (Iniciativa Barómetro, Matriz de Acuerdos de Paz e Instituto Kroc, 2020).

Conclusions

The analyzed process shows an incipient transformation of the state framework, which is supported by the community and the international agendas mentioned above. The equitable participation of women in political spaces of decision, and the attention to the gender category in public policies, become irresolvable facts for a true democratic pact. Therefore, political intervention in a context of armed conflict must be approached considering women as political subjects and participants in the construction of peace in the country. Three principal issues are established as considerations for the intervention, with a gender approach, in the pursuit of peace in a country: 1) The concept of women as political subjects in the peacebuilding; 2) The support of

the international community during the peace process; and 3) The participation of feminist and women organizations.

International agendas are shaped as tools that are not only legal (urging Member States to assume the commitments they have signed up to), but also become political tools, as they are appropriated, defended and pointed out by women's organizations in Colombia. In this sense, thanks to the consecution of Resolution 1325 (and subsequent resolutions supplementing it) the empowerment of women organizations for peacebuilding in Colombia has been favorable. Therefore, it is essential to transfer the SDGs to communities, from different spheres (local, departmental, national) and in different spheres (civil society organizations, universities, among others). Both agendas are fundamental for the achievement of development in the country, therefore, coordination and synergy measures must be promoted between them.

Colombia is observed as a historical fact in the participation of women in the negotiations and peace building with the FARC-EP (2016). This derives from a historical accumulation that is making its way and that gathers learning from other places.²⁴ This learning is shared, mainly by the international community that has favored, through the aforementioned agendas, spaces for meeting and support in the articulation of women's or feminist organizations in the country.

However, the implementation of the gender approach in peace agreements still shows a lack of political commitment that generates a social transformation.

There continues to be greater progress in those measures that refer to women as victims, the achievement of the Truth Commission, and fewer measures that reinforce the participation of women not only as candidates but also through the participation of feminist or women's organizations for the construction of peace in the country. This scenario shows us the vision of women as victims and not as agents of change. In this sense, the gender approach as a broad framework where the realities of the LGTBI+ population can also be addressed, which has been left aside in a biased vision, limiting the gender approach from the binary and simplifying construction of gender. In addition, the intersectionality of race, as a factor to be taken into account, since it operates as a discrimination that aggravates violence on diverse bodies, although it is accepted and recognized, it is not internalized. Similarly, guarantees must be generated for participation, pursuing the specific violence suffered by human rights defenders, especially the increase in femicides or threats suffered by Colombian women leaders.

Nevertheless, the role of women as agents of change in Colombia has not been granted from the, but it has been fought from the bottom, from the different organizations. Women's peace organizations have achieved the focus on the problem and to make it visible by incorporating a gender-sensitive approach to peace processes. For that, it is necessary to favor empowering spaces of women organizations as agents of change, where the construction of shared accounts derives from the collective demands about the situation of women in war. It is through them where a change from discrimination against women to social empowerment can be generated. It's in the role of political subjects that social change may be possible: women's participation in post-conflicts and negotiations are essential for the consecution of a democratic and inclusive society.

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²⁴ It should be taken into account that there have been many other peace agreements in other places where lessons have been learned, as in the case of Sri Lanka (where there was a gender subcommission), South Africa, Guatemala, Peru or Sierra Leone, among others (Mendiá, 2020).

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