Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

ADVERTIMENT. L'accés als continguts d'aquesta tesi doctoral i la seva utilització ha de respectar els drets de la persona autora. Pot ser utilitzada per a consulta o estudi personal, així com en activitats o materials d'investigació i docència en els termes establerts a l'art. 32 del Text Refós de la Llei de Propietat Intel·lectual (RDL 1/1996). Per altres utilitzacions es requereix l'autorització prèvia i expressa de la persona autora. En qualsevol cas, en la utilització dels seus continguts caldrà indicar de forma clara el nom i cognoms de la persona autora i el títol de la tesi doctoral. No s'autoritza la seva reproducció o altres formes d'explotació efectuades amb finalitats de lucre ni la seva comunicació pública des d'un lloc aliè al servei TDX. Tampoc s'autoritza la presentació del seu contingut en una finestra o marc aliè a TDX (framing). Aquesta reserva de drets afecta tant als continguts de la tesi com als seus resums i índexs.

ADVERTENCIA. El acceso a los contenidos de esta tesis doctoral y su utilización debe respetar los derechos de la persona autora. Puede ser utilizada para consulta o estudio personal, así como en actividades o materiales de investigación y docencia en los términos establecidos en el art. 32 del Texto Refundido de la Ley de Propiedad Intelectual (RDL 1/1996). Para otros usos se requiere la autorización previa y expresa de la persona autora. En cualquier caso, en la utilización de sus contenidos se deberá indicar de forma clara el nombre y apellidos de la persona autora y el título de la tesis doctoral. No se autoriza su reproducción u otras formas de explotación efectuadas con fines lucrativos ni su comunicación pública desde un sitio ajeno al servicio TDR. Tampoco se autoriza la presentación de su contenido en una ventana o marco ajeno a TDR (framing). Esta reserva de derechos afecta tanto al contenido de la tesis como a sus resúmenes e índices.

WARNING. The access to the contents of this doctoral thesis and its use must respect the rights of the author. It can be used for reference or private study, as well as research and learning activities or materials in the terms established by the 32nd article of the Spanish Consolidated Copyright Act (RDL 1/1996). Express and previous authorization of the author is required for any other uses. In any case, when using its content, full name of the author and title of the thesis must be clearly indicated. Reproduction or other forms of for profit use or public communication from outside TDX service is not allowed. Presentation of its content in a window or frame external to TDX (framing) is not authorized either. These rights affect both the content of the thesis and its abstracts and indexes.

Piotr Wójciak-Pleyn

Security dynamics and state responses in two regions of Colombia in the early aftermath of FARC-EP demobilization (2017-2018): Stabilizing post-demobilization tremors

PhD in Politics, Policies and International Relations at

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Supervisor: Dr Rafael Grasa

December 2022

Table of Contents

TABLE OF FIGURES 6
INTRODUCTION 7
CHAPTER 1. CONTEXT I: COLOMBIAN ARMED CONFLICT AND PEACE NEGOTIATIONS 13
1.1. Antecedents (1920s) 13
1.2. *La Violencia (1948-1958)* 15
1.3. National Front (1958-1974) 19
1.4. Guerrillas (1960s) 23
1.5. Drug Boom (1970s) 26
1.6. War on Drugs in Colombia (1980s) 29
1.7. Paramilitaries (1980s) 32
1.8. 1991 Constitution 34
1.9. Uribe's Democratic Security (2002-2010) 37
1.10. Last phase of armed conflict (2010-2016) 40
1.11. Some preliminary remarks: Security legacies of the armed conflict 41
1.11.1. State absence 41
1.11.2. Criminal economies 43
1.11.3. Non-state armed groups 44
1.11.4. Public Force 45
1.11.5. Corruption 47
CHAPTER 2. CONTEXT II: FARC AND HAVANA NEGOTIATIONS 49
2.1. FARC 49
2.1.1. Origins of FARC 49
2.1.2. Expansion 52
2.1.3. Strategic Plan for taking of power 54
2.1.4. From *Plan Renacer* to Havana negotiations and final demobilization 57
2.2. Negotiations and 2016 Peace Accord 59
2.2.1. Lead-up to Havana Peace Negotiations 59
2.2.2. Final Agreement 62
CHAPTER 3. LITERATURE REVIEW 70
3.1. Rebel governance 70
3.1.1. Why do non-state armed groups govern? 71
3.1.2. How do non-state armed groups govern? 75
3.1.3. Coercion and consensus in governance by non-state armed groups 77
3.1.4. The effect of territorial competition on governance by non-state armed groups 81
3.1.5. The effect of territorial consolidation on governance by non-state armed groups 84
3.2. Security in peacebuilding and post-accord 86
3.2.1. Engaging spoilers 87
3.2.2. Disarmament, Demobilization & Reintegration (DDR) 89
3.2.3. Security Sector Reform (RRS) 90
3.2.4. State-building 91
3.2.5. Stabilization 93
3.2.5.1. Definition and goals of stabilization 93
3.2.5.2. Theory of stabilization 96
3.2.5.3. Stabilization in practice 102
3.2.5.3.1. Security 102
3.2.5.3.2. Development 103
3.2.5.3.3. Governance 105
3.2.5.4. Criticism of stabilization 106
CHAPTER 4. METHODOLOGY AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR CASE STUDIES 114
4.1. The goal and research questions 114
4.2. Case study: justification, selection of cases, timeframe 118
4.2.1. Justification 118
4.2.2. Selection of cases 119
4.2.2.1. Colombian Peace Process 119

4.2.2.2. Tumaco & South Tolima 120
4.2.3. Choice of timeframe of post-accord 123
4.3. Field research and data collection 124
4.4. Analytical framework for case studies 126
CHAPTER 5 CASE STUDY 1: TUMACO 131
5.1. Background 131
5.2. Tumaco pre-FARC demobilization 133
5.2.1. Origins of conflict in Tumaco (1980s) 133
5.2.2. Non-state armed actors in Tumaco (1980s-2016) 134
5.2.3. FARC governance in Tumaco (2000-2016) 136
5.2.4. State interventions in Tumaco (2000s-2010s) 137
5.2.5. Last years of FARC hegemony (2008-2016) 139
5.3. Tumaco post-FARC demobilization 140
5.3.1. Security dynamics 140
5.3.1.1. FARC Demobilization 140
5.3.1.2. Security benefits of FARC demobilization 142
5.3.1.3. Power vauums 143
5.3.1.4. Illegal armed groups in post-demobilization Tumaco 146
5.3.1.4.1. Gente del Orden & Guerrillas Unidas del Pacifico 147
5.3.1.4.2. Frente Oliver Sinisterra 148
5.3.1.4.3. The Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia 151
5.3.1.4.4. The Contadores 153
5.3.1.4.5. The ELN 153
5.3.1.5. Statistics on violence and crime in Tumaco 155
5.3.2. Stabilization 159
5.3.2.1. Public Force response to security challenges 160
5.3.2.2. Civilian government response to security challenges 164
5.3.2.3. Community response to security challenges 168
5.4. Discussion of findings 171
5.4.1. Security dynamics 171
5.4.2. Stabilization 176
CHAPTER 6 CASE STUDY 2: SOUTH TOLIMA 183
6.1. Background 183
6.2. South Tolima pre-FARC demobilization 185
6.2.1. Origins of conflict in South Tolima (1964-1980) 185
6.2.2. Non-state armed actors in South Tolima (1970s-2016) 186
6.2.3. FARC governance in South Tolima (1990s-2016) 189
6.2.4. State interventions in South Tolima (2000s-2010s) 191
6.2.5. Last years of FARC hegemony (2008-2016) 193
6.3. South Tolima post-FARC demobilization 195
6.3.1. Security dynamics 195
6.3.1.1. FARC Demobilization 195
6.3.1.2. Security benefits of FARC demobilization 197
6.3.1.3. Power vacuums 200
6.3.1.4. Illegal armed groups in post-demobilization South Tolima 202
6.3.1.4.1. FARC dissident groups 203
6.3.1.4.2. Other non-state armed groups 206
6.3.1.5. Statistics on violence and crime in South Tolima 208
6.3.2. Stabilization 212
6.3.2.1. Public Force response to security challenges 212
6.3.2.2. Civilian government response to security challenges 215
6.3.2.3. Community response to security challenges 219
6.4. Discussion of findings 221
6.4.1. Security dynamics 221
6.4.2. Stabilization 226
CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSIONS 231

CHAPTER 8 BIBLIOGRAPHY 248
CHAPTER 9 APPENDIXES 274
Appendix 1 List of interviews for Tumaco case study 274
Appendix 2 List of interviews for South Tolima case study 275
Appendix 3 Semi-structured questionnaire used in the interviews in Tumaco and South Tolima 276

Table of figures

Figure 1 Homicides in Tumaco, 2013-2018 (Source: Colombia’s National Police) 155

Figure 2 Displacement in Tumaco 2013-2018 (Source: Colombian Victims Unit) 155

Figure 3 Violent incidents related to armed conflict in Tumaco, 2013-2018 (Source: Own compilation based on data from Colombia’s National Police and the Colombian Victims Unit) 155

Figure 4 Crime in Tumaco, 2013-2018 (Source: Own compilation based on data from Colombia's National Police and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime’ Monitoring System for Colombia) 159

Figure 5 Law enforcement activity in Tumaco, 2013-2018 (Source: Own compilation based on data from Colombia's National Police) 178

Figure 6 Homicides in South Tolima, 2013-2018 (Source: Colombia’s National Police) 209

Figure 7 Displacement in South Tolima, 2013-2018 (Source: Colombian Victims Unit) 209

Figure 8 Violence related to armed conflict in South Tolima, 2013-2018 (Source: Own compilation based on data from Colombia’s National Police and the Colombian Victims Unit) 209

Figure 9 Crime in South Tolima, 2013-2018 211

Figure 10 Law enforcement in South Tolima, 2013-2018 (Source: Own compilation based on data from Colombia's National Police) 227

Figure 11 Victims in South Tolima and Tumaco, 2013-2018 (Source: Own compilation based on data from the Colombian Victims Unit) 231

Introduction

Upon the signing of the peace deal with the country's largest rebel group, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, FARC, in November 2016, Colombia's government put an end to more than five decades of conflict that cost upwards of 200,000 lives and displaced an estimated seven million people. The ambitious scope of the "Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace," painstakingly negotiated over the course of four years in Havana, Cuba, generated high hopes in a society weary of protracted violence. Aside from calling a halt to armed hostilities with the guerrilla, the Peace Accord promised to usher in a transformation of the country.

The 2016 Peace Accord was the main motivation behind the decision to pursue a PhD in Political Science, Public Policies and International Relations at Autonoma University in Barcelona. I had nurtured a long-lived interest in Colombian history and politics ever since enrolling into a Master's Program in Latin American Studies at Stockholm University. As I was writing my Master's Thesis on left-wing political movements in Colombia, the Colombian government and the FARC guerrilla were in the process of negotiating peace. I followed the events in Havana with a lot of attention. During my stay in Medellin in 2015, where I worked as a journalist, I gained a much deeper understanding of all the implications of this new attempt at peace in the country. Thus, once the two sides put the pen to the paper on the treaty, I saw in it a unique opportunity to continue studying Colombia. From the very beginning, I was impressed with the innovative and comprehensive nature of the Accord. Nevertheless, the aspect that I found the most intriguing was the security challenge accompanying the demobilization of the rebel group. Aware of the scale of the FARC's control over large territories of Colombia, I realized that demobilizing the guerrilla was just the first step towards lasting peace. Although, in theory, the 2016 agreements seemed equipped to overcome the challenge of post-conflict violence, from early on the news coming out of Colombia was alarming. Following the demobilization of the FARC, many of its former strongholds witnessed a deterioration of security conditions. In spite of its undeniable achievements, it looked as though the chapter of violence in Colombia didn't come to an end with the signing of the peace treaty.

Thus, in broad terms, the following thesis attempts to shed more light on the reasons why the vision of stable and lasting peace came crashing against the hard reality of incessant armed

conflict across rural Colombia. In other words, this study intends to contribute to explaining why, years after the singing of the Accord, instead of territorial peace we continue to observe more conflict in Colombia.

In order to achieve the overarching goal, this exploratory case study research brings into focus two regions that can be described as "post-demobilization" zones, (i.e., territories in which the FARC had exercised the role of *de facto* authority until its demobilization in 2017): Tumaco on the Colombian Pacific coast and South Tolima in the centre-west of the country. Having been afflicted by the full spectrum of security legacies of the armed conflict—from state weakness, presence of non-state armed groups, illicit economies, abusive security apparatus, and corruption—these two regions found themselves among the territories prioritized by the implementation of the transformative agenda of the Peace Accord. But the selection of Tumaco and South Tolima as case studies was not solely due to the fundamental similarities between them. Salient contrasting characteristics and historical patterns suggested that the two territories were likely to experience the period of post-demobilization differently.

Instead of accounting for the entirety of the post-accord (*post-acuerdo*) in Colombia, the research sets its time frame to the first two years (2017-2018) following the demobilization of the FARC. The reasoning behind this decision is that the deterioration of security in these zones was a rapid process. Hence, the factors that affect the current circumstances in former guerrilla zones likely originated already in the period directly after the FARC's departure. In that sense, the term "post-demobilization" doesn't just refer to territories, but to the period in the immediate aftermath of dismantling of a governing non-state armed group, in which major changes in security dynamics occur.

Against this background, the study digs into the two cases with the aim to answer two principal research questions: What short-term impact did the demobilization of the FARC have on security in these two territories? How effective was the response of the Colombian government to the security challenges generated by the demobilization of the FARC?

The above research questions indicate the two focal points of the study. On the one hand, the study explores the security dynamics that came about in the aftermath of the FARC's laying of arms, in an attempt to understand the practical implications a demobilization of a hegemonic non-state armed group engaged in governance has on human security. By looking at the two contrasting cases in more depth, the research expects to, first, establish the most prominent patterns of security trajectories in post-demobilization territories and, second, examine what

factors determine the particular patterns. Thus, it offers preliminary conclusions on certain universal security outcomes of a demobilization of a governing non-state armed actor, while at the same time pointing to the individual factors with the most power to explain the differences between the patterns.

In order to set the stage for the exploration of post-demobilization zones in Colombia, the study turns to the dynamically growing body of research on rebel governance for clues about what follows in the aftermath of rebel orders. The literature on rebel governance was deemed advantageous for this research insofar as it offers insight into the behaviour of non-state armed actors and, more importantly, the modes of their interactions with civilians. Differently put, the review of literature on rebel governance helps identify the factors determining the security dynamics after demobilization of non-state armed groups engaged in governance. Interpreting the patterns of behavior by non-state armed groups, along with their determinants, may be a source of knowledge on the level and the kind of violence and crime observed in post-conflict and post-demobilization scenarios.

As for the other focal point, the study takes a critical look at the state's role in the shaping of security dynamics in the post-demobilization context. To achieve the above objective, it analyses the Colombian government's approach to the security challenges in the old FARC strongholds in the first two years after the guerrilla's demobilization. Based on the theoretical discussion on state-level security approaches at the end of conflict, a hypothesis is proposed: due to its emphasis on rapid, multidimensional, and integrated approach, stabilization constitutes a well-suited policy sphere to mitigate short-term security challenges characteristic to post-demobilization. In other words, the study identifies stabilization as uniquely positioned to prevent the resurgence of violence in early post-demobilization by providing a rapid boost in state presence, both in military and civil dimension, and by bridging the gaps in security, capacity, and legitimacy in a territory formerly controlled by a non-state armed group. Against this background, the study assesses the stabilization strategy implemented by the Colombian government in post-demobilization. What guides the assessment are the criteria that, as suggested by previous research, make for a successful stabilization strategy. The Colombian approach is then placed in the context of a larger theoretical discussion on security in post-conflict.

Considering the Colombian example, a conclusion can be made that understanding the security dynamics inherent to the period referred to in this study as post-demobilization is essential if the aim is to contain the spread of spoiling actors, put an end to violence, and protect the

accomplishments of peace. For the above reasons, this study theorizes "post-demobilization" as a distinctive stage with its own idiosyncrasies, concrete security challenges, as well as its unique opportunities. Likewise, it contributes to the on-going debate in literature regarding the necessity to expand the stabilization framework to include civilian-led security, quick-impact development, institutional strengthening, and promotion of good governance in the short-term. Finally, the study recommends that future research further explores state level approaches that fill in the conceptual gap between counterinsurgency and the long game of peace-building. Without such a medium-term strategy, overcoming the security challenges in post-demobilization may just prove to be an impossible task.

From the methodological standpoint, the study has a qualitative design and relies on both primary and secondary data in answering the research questions. The data was collected through desk-based research (used in the study are books, reports compiled by a wide range of NGOs, news articles, scholarly articles, and official documents and databases released by the Colombian government), as well as via fieldwork carried out in Colombia on three occasions, in the early months of 2020, in the summer of 2021, and spring of 2022. As part of the fieldwork, a good amount of semi-standardized interviews was conducted with subjects from Bogota, Tumaco and South Tolima. Although I was based out of Bogota and spent most of my time in the capital city, I made the trips to the two zones of interest for the study in March, 2020 (Tumaco) and July, 2021 (South Tolima). During my stay in the two regions, I networked extensively, amassing contacts that allowed me to continue conducting interviews after my departure. Among the interviewees consulted were: ordinary citizens, civil society leaders, representatives of local and regional authorities, ex-FARC combatants, members of the Public Force[1] (*Fuerza Publica*), etc. In the interviews two major themes were touched upon, reflecting the twofold approach espoused by this study: the experience of security in the time frame chosen (2017-2018) and the perception of the government's efforts to stabilize the two regions in the said time frame. Even though the interviews followed a fairly specific structure, a degree of flexibility was welcome in the conversations. Transcripts from the interviews were then analyzed thematically. Additionally, some quantitative data on violence and crime in Tumaco and South Tolima was also gathered to corroborate the trends extracted from the interviews.

[1] Although independent entities, the National Police and the Military Forces of Colombia (Army, Navy, and Air Force) are controlled by the Ministry of Defense and are referred to in Colombia as the Public Force. Therefore, the study employs the same terminology throughout.

The thesis is structured as follows. In the first context chapter, the reader will find an overview of the history of the Colombian Armed conflict. This extensive historical account lays emphasis on the events, actors, and processes with bearing on the longevity, intensity and heterogeneity of the war in Colombia. In addition to providing the necessary background, it highlights the critical security legacies of the five decades of armed conflict. In the second context chapter, a closer look is taken at the history of the FARC and the modes of rebel governance it employed in a large part of the Colombian territory. Likewise, the chapter sketches out the background of the 2016 peace process. The purpose of this section is to signal the implications of the FARC demobilization process, as well as to sound out how the issue was addressed by the Colombian peacebuilders. Next comes the literature review chapter (Chapter 3) that explores two threads of literature of relevance to security in post-demobilization zones: the literature on rebel governance and the literature on stabilization. The subsequent chapter (4) lays out the methodology and the analytical framework for the case studies. In the latter part, the selection of the case design is elaborated on and justified. After that come the two case studies, Tumaco (Chapter 5) and South Tolima (Chapter 6) respectively. The case studies are structured equally. First, they provide background information on the territory in question. Next, they outline the history of the armed conflict in the region with the view to map out the security context pre-FARC demobilization. Then, findings on security dynamics and stabilization efforts in the post-demobilization period are reported by way of the most important themes identified in the data. The case study closes with a discussion of the findings for each region. Finally, the interpreted findings from Tumaco and South Tolima are compared and contrasted, and turned into conclusions in the closing section of the study (Chapter 7). What follows are bibliography (Chapter 8) and annexes (Chapter 9).

In the first place, I would like to express my gratitude to professor Rafael Grasa for his guidance and support throughout the process. Special thanks also go to all the people in Colombia who facilitated my field trips to the country. In Bogotá, I would like to thank the Center for Research and Popular Education/Peace Program (CINEP/PPP), especially Victor Barrera and Andrés Aponte for acquainting me with the case of South Tolima. My trip to Tumaco wouldn't have been possible without the assistance from Germán Nicolás Pataquiva from the Presidency of the Republic of Colombia. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the commanders of the Task Force "Hercules" for allowing me to attend the headquarters, as well as to the members of the Tumaco-based unit of the Truth Commission for agreeing to a conversation. As for my visit to South Tolima, it was made possible thanks to the efforts by Luis Enrique Galeano and

his colleagues from Educapaz (Education Initiative Network). Their cooperation in arranging of interviews in the region was invaluable. I'd also like to thank the Ombudsman Office in both Tumaco and South Tolima for providing me with all necessary data. I'm especially grateful to all my interviewees from Tumaco and South Tolima, and elsewhere in the country, for their time and willingness to cooperate and share their thoughts with me. Last but not least, I'd like to thank my family and friends for their unconditional support and a loving presence in my life.

Chapter 1. Context I: Colombian Armed Conflict and Peace Negotiations

The purpose of the following chapter is to provide the context necessary to understanding of the issues covered in the thesis. In its first part, an in-depth overview of the Colombian Armed Conflict is presented. All the main protagonists and their role in the shaping of the conflict throughout time are discussed. The key threads running through this overview are: the phenomenon of state absence, illicit economies, and non-state armed groups. The chapter follows a chronological order. The first part of the chapter ends with the summary of the most important security legacies of the Colombian Armed Conflict. In the second part, the history of the FARC rebel group is recounted. Next, the events that led to the signing of the 2016 Peace Accord between the Colombian government and the FARC are described. Finally, the most relevant chapters of the Peace Accord are outlined.

1.1. Antecedents (1920s)

Although pointing out the exact moment when the war in Colombia began is a daunting task, there exists some consensus with regards to its most significant historical antecedents. Many historians agree that the agrarian disputes of the 1920s constitute a valid cutoff. While comparatively small-scale, the events of the era set the stage for a series of future conflicts in the country. Most importantly, they brought to the fore two of the war's fundamental causes: inequitable land distribution and state weakness in a geographical and functional sense (Bejarano & Pizarro, 2004). The 1920s also represented a formative moment for the conflict's leading protagonist, the guerrillas. Indeed, the issues at the heart of the agrarian conflicts remain a bone of contention in Colombia until today. It suffices to mention, that both land inequality and state absenteeism featured heavily in the document of the Accord signed in 2016 between the Colombian government and the FARC.

Before venturing further, a concise historical tangent is required. For neither were inequitable land distribution nor state weakness new phenomena at the beginning of the 20th century. On the contrary, they have constituted the kernel of Colombian political history since inception. Likewise, violence as both a byproduct and driver of the above conditions has been a constant theme (Patiño, 2010). This is perhaps why the better part of the country's past has featured violence as a predominately rural phenomenon.

For over two centuries, the independent Colombian state has failed to control the entirety of its territory, establish the monopoly of violence or fulfill its duties vis-á-vis the population as they are stated in the constitution or the law. For reasons ranging from challenging geography, weak economy and identity divisions, the State had remained "small, poor and weak," (Bejarano & Pizarro, 2002, para.12). In fact, Colombia has been a country of structural inequality virtually by design, as much of the center-periphery territorial division observed today was sketched out already under the Spanish colonial rule. Since the colonial times, the peripheries were inhabited by marginalized groups, such as mestizos, Afro-Colombians or poor whites, who saw themselves pushed towards the margins as a form of social exclusion (Gonzalez, 2004). The state showed little capacity and interest in expansion. If it made its presence known, it was reduced to violence and exploitation.

The recently colonized zones, in which the state had limited presence, have been the stage for social tensions and open conflicts since at least the 19th century. Gonzalez (2004) explains that, in the early days of the Colombian republic, the scope of violence was contingent on the differing degree of consolidation of state institutions. In zones where the state was precarious and the mechanisms of social regulation inexistent, "there was no clear dominant actor but instead a struggle for territorial control," (p.14).

Thus, manifold conflicts had smoldered in the Colombian countryside for decades mirroring the same old pattern: landless settlers, the *colonos*, expanded the agricultural border by putting uncultivated public land to use, only for their plots—now with enhanced value—to be usurped by powerful private landlords via the use of "legal manipulation, threats and violence" (Sánchez, 1977, p.124). As the colonos attempted to fight back, the state was either conveniently absent or actively involved in land dispossession practices. The police and rural guards were often hired by the *hacendado* as enforcers (Wickham-Crawley, 1987).

Jumping forward to 1920s, the rise of the export economy and the subsequent first period of coffee expansion considerably stimulated the demand for land in the first decades of the 20th century (Sanchez, Lopez-Uribe & Fazio, 2010). Intensified land dispossession campaigns mounted by large landowners (now including international actors, the likes of the United Fruit Company) threw masses of Colombian campesinos into a spiral of destitute that would prove impossible to recover from in the coming decades. Gaping loopholes in Colombia's property rights benefited land entrepreneurs encroaching on terrains previously cleared and cultivated by frontier settlers (LeGrand, 2003). To make matters worse for the small farmers, the state had no capacity to execute the existing land laws on the local level. As a consequence, the

1920s saw a rapid increase of legal disputes over property rights between landowners and peasant settlers. The difficult socio-economic circumstances put the campesinos at a clear disadvantage in trying to recover their lands via intricate legal channels (Vega, 2004). Where legal recourse became exhausted, violent means were called upon. Yet, just as in the courtroom, the colonos stood no chance against the landowners defended by private security forces and the military (LeGrand, 1984). Thus, the uncompensated loss of livelihood generated a sense of grievance among the majority of Colombian peasants.

Defeated and expelled from their lands, a large share of campesinos had no option but to convert into tenant farmers (thus, the landlords acquired the labor force along with the land). Others were obliged to migrate and extend the agricultural frontier even further. By the same token, the above process continually expanded the territory where the state had a limited reach. With little to no support from the authorities, the Colombian peasants took to organizing in self-defense movements, the so-called campesino leagues (*ligas campesinas*) (Sánchez, 1977). Founded in 1930, the Communist Party of Colombia was among the organizations providing patronage to the campesino movement. It played a significant role in the arousal of class consciousness among peasants and their emergent allies: the petty bourgeoisie and urban workers. In the following decades, the combative wing of the Communist Party would gradually transform into the FARC. Therefore, it can be argued that grievance accumulation, and the expansion of the agricultural frontier, were two key factors in the later emergence and consolidation of insurgencies in Colombia (González, 2004; Lopez-Uribe & Sanchez, 2018). In the short-term, the above period was a precursor to the first cycle of violence that swept the country in mid 20th century.

1.2. *La Violencia (1948-1958)*

In spite of some attempts by the government to mitigate social tensions, the slow-burning, localized agrarian conflicts gradually crescendoed into all-encompassing, nationwide violence towards the mid-twentieth century. The historical period known simply as *La Violencia* is considered "one of the most intense and protracted instances of widespread civilian violence in the history of the twentieth century," (Whittaker, 2002, p.216). Spanning over the period of ten years (1948-1958), the bloody event cost an estimated 200,000 lives. Whilst not a stage of the Colombian Armed Conflict, La Violencia is widely interpreted as the harbinger of the blood-stained decades to follow. By the time the hostilities reached their conclusion, the blueprint for many future conflicts in Colombia had been drawn. What's more, various of the

themes that characterized La Violencia have carried through until today (perhaps most of all the seamless blending of political and criminal violence).

To an extent, La Violencia was the apotheosis of many a civil war fought by the Colombians under the banners of the Conservative and Liberal parties until then. Hence, for a full grasp of the event, it is necessary to briefly examine the historical role the two traditional parties played in shaping Colombian politics. In short, the two dominant political forces bear a fair share of responsibility for the endemic violence in the country. Not only did the political establishment directly incite civil conflict on several occasions in the past, but its inability to build up legitimacy and impose the monopoly of violence in the Colombian countryside made spontaneous and prolonged episodes of violence all the more likely. Differently put, the perennial state weakness as a condition that exacerbated social tensions can be attributable to the political standards exercised by the two traditional parties (Oquist, 1980; LeGrand, 2003).

To be sure, the system whereby the central administration lacks the capacity to control the national territory, and so delegates governance functions to regional powerholders (formerly consisting of local noblemen and members of the clergy, now diverse political chiefs or *gamones*) was the fledgling republic's inheritance from colonial times. Nevertheless, rather than circumventing these feudalistic regional power centers in an attempt to create a strong central state, the nascent Conservative and Liberal parties integrated them into their national frameworks and state institutions. That being so, the overt clientelist networks based on the exchange of goods and services for electoral support were cemented as the bedrock of the Colombian political system (Gutierrez & Dávila, 2000).

Thus, it can be argued that consolidation of a neutral state in accordance to a coherent project, above and beyond the partisan Manichaeism and zero-sum game, was never a priority for either of the parties. Instead, first and foremost, the political establishment saw to the preservation of the prerogatives of the ruling classes (Mauceri, 2001). What emerged was an eco-system in which "partisan attachments and antagonisms, with specific regional expressions, were primary; clientage networks within each party channeled political ambitions and access to resources, permeating, debilitating and, in some ways substituting for the state," (LeGrand, 2003, p.171). To put it simply, the parties, together with their clientelist networks, have always presupposed the existence of a neutral state in Colombia (Pecaut, 1987). In an analogous way, avid bipartisanship trumped the formulation of a unified nation (Wills, 2015). Hence, partisan violence was far from a chance occurrence, a historical force majeure, but rather a congenital form of making politics in Colombia.

When a more expansionist state model was favored by the government, it was met with strong resistance from the country's economic elites. Heavy industry, as well as the flourishing coffee sector, advocated against economic institutionalism (Ocampo, 2015). Such was the case between 1930 and 1946, in the so-called "Liberal era." Following the mounting demands by the growing rural and urban working classes, the Liberal Party government responded with a series of laws that aimed at strengthening the role of the state, particularly in regulating the relationship between labor and capital. Among the progressive socio-economic legislation, the government enacted what became known as Colombia's first land reform (Oquist, 1980). Thus, the Liberal Party was slowly becoming the party of the masses. However, the arrival in power of the Conservative Party in 1946 brought the reformist spirit of the previous decade to a screeching halt. Backed by large landowners and private sector, the conservative elites were hellbent on quashing the progressive movement. The atmosphere of polarization precipitated violent persecution campaigns led by local conservative chiefs, in cahoots with the Public Force, against the Liberals (Hobsbawm, 1963).

La Violencia began on the 9th of April, 1948, with the assassination of Jorge Eliécer Gaitan, perhaps the most popular Colombian politician at the time and a likely candidate for presidency. The figure of Gaitan ties La Violencia with the agrarian conflicts of the 1920s. Gaitan, who stood at the helm of a dissident wing of the Liberal Party, was heavily involved in the campesino struggles two decades prior. The diverse populist movement that surfaced since then helped him ascend to national prominence (Safford & Palacios, 2001). He was expected to break with the age-old monopoly of oligarchic bipartisanship and provide a political outlet for the emergent social sectors (Hoskin, 1998). His left-leaning rhetoric juxtaposed the "national country"—all citizens in need of improved socioeconomic conditions and political expression—with the "political country"—an airtight union of political elites and oligarchs. Gaitan's message was a unifying one in that it broke with the bipartisan divisions cultivated by the ruling class for decades. It is hardly surprising, then, that his assassination was seen by Gaitan's faithful as a plot organized by the Conservative establishment.

The riots that followed the murder, incited by his supporters and referred to as the *Bogotazo*, left the capital in ruins before spreading like wildfire throughout the country. In spite of some political maneuvers to reconcile the two factions, the mutual distrust kept spiraling out of control. Yet, unlike the conflicts of the previous century, La Violencia was more of an informal proxy war, waged not between the parties, but rather their guerrillas and paramilitary units (the Liberal *Cachiporros* and the Conservative *Chulavitos* or *Pajaros*). Over and above that, the

ubiquitous violence trickled down to the bottommost social units—the laborers and employers, the neighbors and townsmen—driven by sectarian loyalties. In other words, while on the ideological plane, La Violencia may have been galvanized by the two clashing visions for the country adhered to by the dominant classes, on the military plane it was an affair of the people (Sánchez, 1983). Moreover, that's exactly how the Conservative government and the Liberal opposition wanted to portray it: a "semi-anarchic wars of family vengeance within localities," (Safford & Palacios, 2001, p.349). Albeit not without a blessing from their political overlords, both sets of informal armies were largely left to their own devices. The violence by these roaming, brutal non-state armed entities affected the well-being of hundreds of thousands of Colombians, leaving a permanent trauma in the collective memory of a nation (Sánchez, 1992). Their *modi operandi*, on the other hand, were to become symptomatic of the conflicts to-come in Colombia, and the many future reincarnations of the Cachiporros and the Chulavitos.

Ultimately, however, the revision of old social antagonisms followed by augmented authoritarianism were a top-down tactical gambit aimed at finishing with Gaitan's unifying legacy. In this regard, La Violencia was the political elites reverting to the old "divide and rule" formula that had kept them in power for years. The controversial elections of 1949, boycotted by the Liberal Party, saw the Conservative candidate Laureano Gómez declared President. Virulently anti-liberal, Gómez proceeded to purge the opposition party members from the public life. The dictatorial ways of the incumbent President and the submission of the state to the will of one party strengthened the resistance among the liberals (Orlando Melo, 2018).

From this point onwards, La Violencia became a catalyst for a process which Paul Oquist (1980) branded as a "partial collapse of the state," characterized by "the crisis and inoperativeness of established institutions, the loss of legitimacy of the state, the state's resort to terrorist tactic which led to a further breakdown of social relations, the physical absence of the state in large areas of the country and the contradictions within the armed apparatus of the state," (p.14-15). This seminal diagnosis, painting a portrait of a state severely lacking in both legitimacy and coercive power throughout its territory, wouldn't lose its relevance over the course of the Colombian Armed Conflict.

Frictions within the Conservative Party weakened Gomez's position, eventually leading to the only military seizure of power in Colombia's modern history in 1953. The author of the coup, General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, justified the move by the necessity to put an end to La Violencia. At first, following the amnesties granted to Liberal leaders in exchange for disarmament, he succeeded in bringing respite to the bloodshed of the previous years.

However, soon after laying down arms, the amnestied Liberal guerrillas found themselves targeted by the military. Remarkably, the increasingly belligerent attitude of the consolidating Rojas Pinilla banded the liberal and conservative political elites together (Agudelo, 2016). Brutal clashes, this time between government forces, and the liberal and communist guerrillas, started anew in 1955, and continued until the unlikely alliance forged by the traditional parties overthrew the despotic general.

In sum, while initially the Rojas' regime served its purpose as a transitional government, it failed to contain violence in the long term. What's more, the Rojas era led to the fortification of bipartisanship that in the following decades "reappropriated all democratic space," (Sanchez, 1992). In addition, campaigns of repression against the communists galvanized the self-defense militias that would eventually convert into FARC (Pizarro, 1989).

1.3. National Front (1958-1974)

Following the ousting of Rojas Pinilla, the now-allied Conservative and Liberal parties proceeded to implement a power-sharing agreement known as the National Front (*Frente Nacional*). Under the accord, the two parties intercalated four consecutive presidential terms over the next sixteen years (from 1958 until 1974). All other positions of state power in the country were equally distributed between the two political communities (Pecaut, 1989). The consociational regime set as its goals to agree and implement peace, generate development programs, and ease in a democratic transition (Gutierrez, 2007). The assessment of the period remains subject to a debate. On the one hand, some scholars credit the period with reconstruction and strengthening the state and its institutions (albeit selectively) (Bejerano & Segura-Bonnet, 1996; Gutierrez Sanin, 2007; Wills, 2015). On the other hand, the National Front is generally considered to have deepened the structural causes that contributed to the outbreak of the Colombian Armed Conflict.

The National Front was a period of restauration of Colombian democracy, which had remained in tatters since 1949. Compared with the military dictatorship, and the years of Laureano Gomez, it can be argued that the National Front restored basic public liberties and brought to a pass a significant democratic opening. Wills (2015) argues that it was under this regime that third parties were kept legal and were allowed to participate in the electoral process (including the Communist Party), women gained the right to vote in presidential elections, while major partisan newspapers reopened. The regime boasted with a stable and institutionalized

succession of power at the time when many Latin American countries experimented with dictatorships (Gutierrez, Acevedo & Viatela, 2007).

Furthermore, considering the relatively short time-span, the National Front brought about a significant modernization and growth in the economic and bureaucratic sense. As pointed out by Melo (1978), the political elites of the era wielded development as a peace-making instrument: the improved socio-political conditions were to deter the workers and peasants from engaging in violence. On the whole, public spending considerably increased during the National Front. The period saw large quotas of Colombians gain access to high quality education and healthcare, among other public services (transport, energy, water, etc.). Infrastructure, particularly urban development, improved in response to the waves of migration of rural populations displaced by violence (Melo, 2018).

The scope of the National Front's transformative ambitions was extensive. The administrative apparatus, for instance, underwent a series of reforms calculated to depoliticize it, thereby putting an end to the potentially noxious competition for public posts (Groves, 1974). Another key reformist project intended to reduce tensions in Colombia was a renewed attempt at an agrarian reform. Sponsored largely by the U.S. foreign aid program, the Alliance for Progress, and enacted by the Liberal President Lleras Camargo (1958-1962), the reform aimed at solving the issue of land tilting and modernizing agrarian economy (Richani, 2002). At the same time, it sought to strengthen the presence of the state in the countryside via public funding for high-visibility rural development projects.

Conceived in part as a peace process, the National Front insisted on replacing violent confrontation for power with the frameworks of democratic competition. To an extent, it was a successful maneuver, even if the price paid was total impunity for the perpetrators (Gutierrez, Acevedo, Viatela, 2007). The indiscriminate violence of the preceding period was curtailed during the National Front era (e.g., homicide rates fell sharply). According to Oquist (1980), the period saw a gradual recovery of control by the state in strategic and central areas of the country. This was made possible in part due to modernization and expansion of the military apparatus. In addition, a new doctrine depoliticized the military—rather than to the parties, it now swore allegiance to the state (Leal Buitrago, 2011). The arrangement was mutual, inasmuch as the military would not take sides in partisan quarrels in exchange for a largely neutral stance of the political class towards the military.

In spite of the above achievements, during the National Front era Colombia was a limited democracy at best, plagued by clientelism, political fragmentation, exclusionary practices and illegitimacy. While, in theory, it may not have banned third party participation outright, in practice, they were swallowed and rendered ineffective by the rigid system of bipartisan parity. When an outsider party, Rojas Pinilla's National Popular Alliance (ANAPO), came close to disputing the presidency in 1970 with his anti-oligarchic ethos, the former dictator ended up losing to a Conservative frontrunner in what many considered to be fraudulent elections. On sub-national level, the two traditional parties traded violent sectarianism of the past for rampant clientelism as the source of reproduction of the political system (Kline, 1995). The Liberal and Conservative parties continued to substitute the functions of the faltering state and remained synonymous with all political processes in the country (Leal Buitrago, 1989). Furthermore, the National Front failed to assuage the deep regional inequalities hardwired onto the country's map since the colonial time. Falleti (2005) provides evidence for the structural inequality coming from the very top: in 1972 three major cities (Bogota, Medellin and Cali) „absorbed 72% of all central government spending, while the remaining 28% was distributed between the other 900 municipalities in Colombia at the time," (p.338).

The more daring attempts at social reforms during the National Front era were typically destined to fail due to the delicate compromise—two-third of the votes—required for any bill to pass into law (Gutierrez, Acevedo & Viatela, 2007). The round-the-clock negotiations with both parties' increasingly more heterogenous factions tended to blunt the legislation's radical edge (Gutierrez, 2015). Even if a reform advanced, its implementation would be met with resistance from the regional and local powers (Gonzalez, 2014). The aforementioned administrative and agrarian reforms serve as a neat illustration. The former intended to establish independent civil service career, and end with the spoils system, but ultimately failed to eradicate the partisan hold on bureaucracy (Bejarano & Bonnet, 1996). The powerful landowner lobby made sure that the impact of the agrarian reform was just as limited, and a far cry from its original purpose (i.e., to "eliminate and prevent the unjust concentration of agrarian property," [Pecaut, 1989, p.85]). With the reforms frustrated, the promise to combat the leading shortcomings of Colombian democracy—corruption, poverty and inequality—never truly materialized.

Another reason for the failure of the reformist agenda was the staunch refusal, particularly by the archaic Conservative Party, to embrace any form of a popular alliance by the National Front elites. The incorporation of populist movements into politics was in vogue at the time on the

South American continent. However, the National Front continued the mission of Colombia's traditional political classes: nipping in the bud any popular movement, denying the possibility of a more inclusive social pact or public policies aimed at relieving inequalities. According to Marcos Palacios (2001), the lack of a populist experience in Colombia paved the way for the eruption of political violence in the years to come.

The suppression of violence wasn't without blemishes. Bejarano & Bonnet (1996) suggest that the National Front governments' rush to pacify the country plunged in La Violencia, and to bring the territory under the state's control, led them to promote a deeply militarized security paradigm, by which public order was seen simply as "repression of disorder," (p.33). With a Cold War-era anticommunism at the ideological basis, the government abused the state of siege, consistently criminalizing any form of strike, dissent or social protest, which it interpreted as dangerous subversion. The military, unencumbered by the interference of civil authorities, applied its heavy-handed responses to delicate social issues (Leal Buitrago, 2011). Unsurprisingly, the extraordinary powers and autonomy granted to the armed forces in managing the public order led to severe abuses by state agents (Agudelo, 2016).

Furthermore, while a major investment was made into the coercive and military apparatus of the state, mechanisms regulating the internal order, such as justice and policing, received negligible attention from the authorities. A virtual lack of upgrade to the justice system meant that there remained a dearth of public space for the settlement of legal disputes. Without adequate justice and policing mechanisms, the state could not fulfill the obligation to protect its citizens under the National Front.

As a result of the above, unrest still bubbled beneath the surface in the Colombian countryside, aggravated by rapid accumulation of capital, multiplying conflicts over land, and the prevailing sense of vengeance. Hence, violence became an economic enterprise that thrived against the persistent institutional weakness of the state (Safford & Palacios, 2001). Aside from an immeasurable collective trauma, a salient legacy of the blood-spattered 1950s decade was the proliferation of the complex phenomenon of *bandolerismo* (brigandage). As a result of the truce in the form of the National Front, those diverse rural guerrillas were converted, almost overnight, from private partisan armies into hired guns. One element that remained unchanged was the terror these armed bands inflicted on the Colombian countryside, only this time not in the name of bipartisan discord but rather on behalf of individual, mostly economic, interests. The orphaned bandoleros were recruited by regional political, economic and criminal sectors as means of disruption and protection from the interference of the state with its centralizing,

expansionist framework. Others set up their own criminal operations (Safford & Palacios, 2001; Sánchez & Meertens, 1983).

Beginning with the 1970s, the Colombian society underwent a profound transformation as a result of rapid urbanization, improvements in education and health, social mobility, secularization of the middle class, etc. (Gaviria, 2010). At the same time, the National Front regime proved incapable of adjusting to the rapid current of change. The crisis of political representation became palpable, perhaps best reflected in the growing electoral abstention rates. Inevitably, the restricted nature of the democratic regime, and the built-in system of repression under the National Front, "encouraged armed insurrection: since legal channels for protest and representation were closed to the opposition, sectors in the unions, the universities, and in the peasantry decided to radicalize their actions, taking up arms as was then the trend in Latin America," (Mejía, 1998, p.115). At the same time, if the state indeed strengthened during the National Front era, it was only in hand-picked facets and predominately in central territories. The unresolved agrarian problems meant the process by which agricultural frontier expanded, increasing the territories outside of state control, continued.

In short, the National Front was undoubtedly a period of relative stability when compared to the preceding years. However, in spite of the reformist ambitions, its rigid confines prevented the kind of transformations that were required. As large sectors of the society began questioning the legitimacy of the obsolete regime, as well as its will to reform, a new chapter in the history of political violence in Colombia began (Leal Buitrago & Dávila, 1990).

1.4. Guerrillas (1960s)

Regardless of the assessment of the period, the historical narrative dictates that the Colombian Armed Conflict had its origin during the National Front era. At first, it was fought between the state and the various left-wing rebel organizations, most importantly the FARC, the ELN and the EPL, that cropped up across rural Colombia in the 1960s. It must be noted, however, that during the National Front era, the intensity of the conflict was comparatively low as the government forces overpowered the emerging guerrillas.

The rebel groups, composed mainly of impoverished *campesinos*, unionist and radicalized university students, united in defiance of the perceived illegitimacy of the political system, advocated armed struggle as the only tool left to combat state oppression. For reasons of military strategy, their natural habitat were vast, isolated refuges where institutional presence was in name only, while local populations demonstrated antagonistic, or, at the very least,

reticent, attitudes towards the state. In these remote areas, the insurgents engaged in diverse forms of social organizing and governance, patiently awaiting the right moment to take the offensive.

The FARC was the original Colombian rebel organization. After the Liberal Party largely abandoned its guerrillas early in the National Front era, the only non-state armed groups with significant political agenda left were those under the aegis of the Communist Party in regions of intensive land conflicts. Many disaffected liberal guerrilleros, with experience in armed combat dating back to La Violencia, joined in the cause. Disillusioned with the lack of a genuine transformation of Colombian peasantry's socio-economic circumstances under the National Front, these structures "stimulated class confrontation in the countryside, promoted campesino protest and helped form a better-defined class consciousness," (Melo, 2018). In other words, guerrilla activity was but one of the "forms of struggle" of the Communist Party at this point in time. The party leadership explicitly recommended that the guerrillas operated as strictly self-defense units, only called into action in response to the harassment of the subaltern classes by state forces (Pizarro, 1989).

Nevertheless, by the early 1960s, the Colombian State had already fully embraced counterinsurgency as the axis of its security doctrine. The U.S.-inspired Plan Lasso had as its objective eradicating the communist guerrilla cells in the country via combination of civic and military action. The early assignment was to pre-emptively eliminate the so-called "independent republics"—enclaves in rural Colombia governed by peasant organizations. In 1964, the first such attempt was made in a major operation against the guerrillas in Marquetalia. Nevertheless, the attack had only limited short-terms success and, in the long-run, proved a Pyrrhic victory (Pizarro, 1989). The unintended consequences of the operation were such that the bandoleros, majority peasants, fled Marquetalia only to regroup in dispersed mobile units, under the new name, the FARC. By adopting guerrilla tactics, these new military factions, known as blocs, were to change the dynamic of the military confrontation in the country. Thus, the indiscriminate campaigns by the military throughout the 1960s gave some credence to the claims that the FARC was, in fact, created in response to the aggression by the state. In any case, the attack on Marquetalia tends to be considered the exact moment when the modern conflict began in Colombia.

In the following years, the battlefield became increasingly crowded, as other guerrillas joined the fray. The second largest rebel group, the ELN, differed from the FARC in that it lacked the campesino pedigree. It consisted predominantly of university students, who initially struggled

to attract the following from the proletarian masses. Unlike the Soviet loyalties of the FARC, the ELN drew inspiration from the Cuban revolutionaries. The third strongest peasant guerrilla, the EPL strove to reproduce the Chinese revolution. With time, the ELN and the EPL began to recruit from bandoleros with origins in La Violencia, just as did the FARC. In 1972, a slightly different phenomenon was born in Colombia—the urban guerrilla. Formed by middle class militants from the cities, the M-19 had as its founding myth the 1970 ANAPO electoral loss. In terms of ideology, it was a rare breed: a nationalistic, Bolivarian and social democratic guerrilla. Its modus operandi was likewise distinct, inasmuch as it operated in urban settings and had a penchant for acts with high theatrical and mediatic impact. With that, it appealed to the disenfranchised social sectors in the city (Chernick, 1989).

While the number of guerrillas grew, their military and political momentum stagnated during the National Front era. Effective counterinsurgency operations by the government, combining military operatives and investments in public works and social programs, together with a withering international support, had the rebel organizations in a chokehold (Offstein, 2003). The aforementioned urban migration was another reason why the guerillas struggled to recruit and raise capital. Finally, the groups were victims of internal divisions and schisms. As a result, during the early years (1964-1974), the guerrillas were minuscule, clustered in remote territories, and constituted little disruption to the political life of the country. Indeed, the ELN and the EPL came close to extinction. The result may seem paradoxical: while the war might have started, its early days remained relatively peaceful, especially compared to what was to come. And yet, although the National Front managed to contain the rebels, they were by no means extinguished (Gutierrez, 2015).

Both the emergence and resilience of rebel groups provide, in of itself, further evidence of state precarity in Colombia (Wickham-Crowley, 1987)[2]. The hermetic political system of the National Front produced a mindset in which politics was no longer interpreted as a vehicle to solve conflicts via debate and discussion (Pecaut & Gonzalez, 1997). Before reaching for state power, the FARC, along with the ELN, the EPL and, to a lesser extent, the M-19, took it upon themselves to fill in for the absent central government by installing its proto-statal institutions

[2] In his comprehensive study on the subject of Latin American guerrillas, Wickham-Crowley wrote: "the more extreme the decline or absence of legitimate authority in a region, the more populace becomes 'virgin territory' for those who would become a 'counter-state' or alternative government. Corollary: The more that legitimate authority persists in a region, the more likely that the populace will reject the claims of the challengers," (p.478).

in abandoned territories. Covering for the state's incapacity to solve social conflicts and protect its citizens allowed the consolidation of non-state actors in Colombian peripheries.

Additionally, the fact that the guerrillas survived the early onslaught from the government forces is a symptom of the state's continuing indolence to secure the monopoly on violence, even despite the undeniable gains by the armed forces in the period discussed. Having no capacity, and showing no will, to reach into these remote zones, the state contented itself with keeping the non-state armed groups at a safe distance from the economic and political centers of the country. Hence, at least at the early stage, it "behaved towards the guerrillas not like the classical Weberian monopolist, but like an oligopolist leader," (Gutierrez, 2004, p.276).

The natural spheres of influences of the guerrillas, the territories of abandonment, were signaled by the state as "independent republics" or, later, "red zones"—"distinct spaces, marked by the war, different and hostile, which merited special treatment," (Uribe, 1999, p.34). Ironically, in many cases this was the first instance that the central government showed any interest whatsoever in these vacuums of power. Unfortunately, in the decades to come, the state understood the phrase "special treatment" as military operations, counterinsurgency tactics, and, only sporadically, public investment or development measures. This misconstrued notion of state interventionism caused it to be regarded as an occupation force, adding fuel to the fire of the anti-state narrative.

1.5. Drug Boom (1970s)

In the late 1970s, Colombia underwent a transformation into a major drug trafficking country in reaction to the growing demand for illegal drugs in the United States. It proved a watershed moment for the guerrillas, until then stuck at an embryonic stage. The isolated territories, where the FARC, ELN and EPL had established their bases, quickly became the focal point of the lucrative illicit industry. The low state presence created perfect conditions for the drug cultivation to accelerate at a frenzied pace (Pecaut, 1997). Offering near-unlimited financial prospects, first marijuana, then cocaine trafficking, responded to social needs in regions where legal financial opportunities were scant. Whereas on micro-level the disenfranchised colonos communities turned to drugs for sustenance, on macro-level, non-state actors took advantage of the riches it produced to consolidate their influence over populations in regions where the state was precarious (Richani, 2003).

While the guerrillas may not have been directly involved in drug trafficking at first, they nevertheless profited from it by exchanging a share of the rents for the protection of the fields,

processing laboratories and export outposts (Offstein, 2003). Aided and abetted by the sluggish response from the state, various drug cartels across Colombia acquired immeasurable wealth and power by controlling every element of the trade, up to distribution in the U.S. (Bagley, 1988). As the business swelled, the marriage of convenience between the rebels and drug traffickers grew ever more tempestuous. Inevitably, the former came to be more openly enmeshed in the racket with the passage of years in an attempt to cut out the cartel middleman.

In this period, drug-trafficking became a major catalyst of violence in the country, aggravating the armed conflict. Put simply, the revenue from drug trade meant bottomless resources for the continuation of war for non-state armed groups (Felbab-Brown, 2011). Owing to the direct access to global markets via drug-trafficking, these organizations grew in stature—e.g., the FARC went from less than 800 combatants 1978 to nearly five thousand in 1982 (Gutierrez, Acevedo & Viatela, 2007). The illicit economies built up their capacity to tighten their grip over territorial control and bolster their administrative capacities, providing social order and economic protection to even larger quotas of the society (Pecaut, 2001). Rebel organizations weren't the only non-state armed actors capitalizing on drugs. Right wing paramilitary groups and strictly criminal organizations joined the oligopoly of violence in Colombia on the back of the immense wealth accumulated via participating in the drug trade. As a consequence, new fronts opened on the increasingly more convoluted battlefront with more civilians caught in the crossfire (Thoumi, 1995).

Aside from inflating the numbers[3], the drugs affected violence in Colombia in qualitative terms (Bagley, 1988). Until this point, there had existed two distinct arenas of violence: the political one (between the army, the guerrillas and the paramilitaries), and the violence articulated around social tensions, whether organized or not. Now, there arrived a third, powerful arena: the violence generated by the illicit drug industry, also referred to as narco-terrorism (Pecaut, 2001). Rather than just between the belligerents in the armed conflict, violence was now regularly applied against the whole society, from the very bottom to the very top. The drug mafias, in particular, engaged in systematic campaigns of terror aimed at hostile government authorities. Paid assassins proliferated across the country and were hired willy-nilly to murder politicians, judges, journalists, police and the military or anyone else who threatened the power of non-state armed groups. Drugs both tapped into the culture of bloodlust dormant since La Violencia and created new violent codes of behavior (Safford & Palacios, 2001).

[3] From 1980 to 1993, homicide rates in Colombia tripled (Safford & Palacios, 2001)

What should be kept in mind is that the explosion of the drug industry in Colombia is not a phenomenon exogenous to politics. As pointed out by Richani (2003), the ubiquity of illicit economy and the accompanying violence in Colombia isn't simply a matter of the right commercial circumstances. A number of other countries in the world with comparable economic indicators didn't mirror Colombia's trajectory. Once again, the reason why Colombia became "one of the principal theatres of contraband and drug-trafficking can be found it the incapacity of the State to extend its authority over its national territory," (Richani, 2003, p.155). Later on, the relationship between drugs and state absenteeism turned into a two-way street. The illicit economies prospered where the state was absent, while at the same time exacerbating the process of state erosion even further.

Indeed, it was during the 1980s that the state experienced what Bejerano & Pizarro (2004) refer to as the "second partial collapse of the Colombian state." In geographical terms, the already precarious reach of the state over its territories was squeezed by the growth of armed challengers with state-making ambitions. These groups threw the gauntlet to the state by effectively replicating the absent state's functions, predominantly protection and justice. In addition, they merciless targeted any expressions of the state.

However, in the second half of the 20th century, drugs penetrated Colombian politics with relative ease on many planes and by various routes. As drug barons sought after political influence that would allow them to protect their vast fortunes, they "created their own electoral machines, participated openly in traditional parties, financed electoral campaigns and wielded enormous power in local elections," (Bejarano & Pizarro, 2002, p. 22). What's more, whenever the circumstances threatened their influence (e.g., via extradition to the U.S.), drug-traffickers fell back on simple and effective criminal tactics, such as corruption, bribery, assassination and outright terror. Drugs contributed to the partial collapse of the Colombian State by compromising some key state apparatuses insofar as they were no longer able to carry out their functions and provide services as stated in the constitution (Bejarano & Pizarro, 2004). By overwhelming and corrupting state institutions (particularly those responsible for reining them in, such as the law enforcement and justice), drugs exacerbated the state's inability to solve private and collective conflicts, often those conflicts generated by the drug trade itself, punish the perpetrators and deliver justice.

Despite the growing scope of knowledge on the topic, state strategies to combat the challenge of illicit drugs have traditionally been inadequate and conceptually naïve. The most blatant source of such weak response was the ubiquitous corruption, made easy by the country's

clientelist political arrangements. Yet, when enacted, the heavy-handed security approach to the issue proved largely ineffective; even when militarized campaigns succeeded in suppressing drug operations in one region, traffickers would simply move elsewhere or return the moment the armed forces withdrew. The real toll incurred by these crusades would be borne, as usual, by civilian populations (Bagley, 1998). The main architects of Colombia's war on drugs, however, weren't found in Bogota, but hundreds of miles north, in Washington, D.C.

1.6. War on Drugs in Colombia (1980s)

The United States have historically played a critical role in Colombia's domestic politics. Such has been the extent of this co-operation that it earned Colombia a reputation of a "subordinate, ally and friend," to the U.S. (Tickner, 2000, p. 373). The *respice polum* ("look toward the north") doctrine, first brought into play at the beginning of the 20th century, came to define the future relationship between the two countries (Tokatlián, 2000). Usurpingly, then, the impact the U.S. has had on the armed conflict in the country is a considerable one. Its involvement in the Colombian war can be divided into four stages corresponding to major foreign policy projects designed in Washington with Latin America, and Colombia in particular, in mind: Alliance for Progress (AFP), Plan Lasso, the War on Drugs and Plan Colombia.

In the aftermath of the Cuban Revolution of 1958, the U.S. President John F. Kennedy grew alarmed with the potential spread of communism throughout the region. In order to avert the dreaded scenario, Kennedy's administration formulated a comprehensive foreign aid program revolving around substantial social and economic reforms in Latin American countries. The decision-makers in Washington believed that promoting development and reducing poverty would help legitimize the democratic governments, and stabilize any social tensions before they lead to another revolution (Elhawary, 2010). One key instrument of the AFP were high-visibility humanitarian projects in areas such as education, housing, and food, intended to paint a picture of a stronger and more proactive state in anticipation of lengthier reforms (e.g., to the agrarian problem) (Fajardo, 2003). In spite of some initial success of the 'quick wins' strategy, the lack of any meaningful reform meant no long-term change in Colombia. Moreover, Kennedy's successors soon adjusted the course; rather than aiming for social transformation the program was now limited to promoting mere macroeconomic stability on the continent. Needless to say, genuine stabilization never came.

The AFP wasn't all that the norther empire had in store for Colombia at the height of the Cold War. The emergence of the left-wing insurgency in the country made Washington particularly

uneasy. Determined to contain the spread of the communist and socialist influence, the U.S. military offered ideological encouragement and practical know-how to its Latin American counterparts. Inspired by the U.S. army manuals, countries in the region eagerly adopted the so-called National Security Doctrine that prioritized security and granted the army the right to decide what lays in the national interest and what is good for the society (Pion-Berlin, 1989). With the threat of communism imminent, the paradigm was used as an excuse for military coups, state terror and 'dirty wars' from Brazil to Argentina and Chile in the following years. Although in Colombia the coup didn't occur, the doctrine left a lasting mark on the army and its dominant role in public policy. Another fruit of the military co-operation between the U.S. and South America was Plan Lasso. Implemented in 1962, it that laid an emphasis on irregular warfare and set the standards of counterinsurgency for decades to come. Via the plan, the U.S. provided steady patronage to the Colombian government in its struggle against guerrillas. Simultaneously, the U.S.-sponsored anti-communist agenda was often an excuse for state terror, thereafter haphazardly applied to sectors of the civil society unrelated to armed rebellion, particularly during the repressive Turbay administration (1978-1982) (Stokes, 2005).

In the 1980s, the flourishing illicit drugs industry in Colombia began to attract serious attention in high places in the United States. The impact of drug-trafficking in North America, coupled with the Colombian government's well-documented failures to tackle the issue at home, pushed Reagan's Administration to seek intervention in countries south of the border (Bagley, 1988). The War on Drugs unliterally conjectured that the crux of the narcotics quandary lays predominantly on the supply side. Hence, Washington placed the responsibility for alleviating the drug problem squarely in the court of Latin American countries and their armies, albeit heavily subsidized by the U.S. Indeed, Peru and Bolivia found a way to eradicate a good deal of its illicit crops. Unfortunately for Colombia, coca cultivation flooded the country instead[4]. Furthermore, after some arm-twisting, the U.S. forced Colombia to extradite its most notorious drug kingpins in a move that significantly undermined the country's sovereignty (Tokatlián, 2000). Reagan's insistence on rewriting the Colombian extradition laws brought the wrath of the beleaguered drug-traffickers on the ailing society. After years of sluggish response and complacency, the assassination of the Justice Minister Rodrigo Lara Bonilla led President Betancourt to declare an all-out war on drug-traffickers, much to the satisfaction of the U.S. (Garcia, 2015). On the one hand, the Colombo-American counternarcotic efforts can be

[4] According to the estimates of the U.S. State Department by 1989, a total of 73% of all cocaine production came from Colombia (Thoumi, 1995).

considered somewhat successful insofar as, by mid-1990s, the chief drug cartels were dismantled and their leaders either imprisoned or killed. Nevertheless, above failed to stop the flow of drugs into the U.S., while the industry didn't wane, but simply decentralized and proliferated (Elhawary, 2010). The so-called Hydra effect was to characterize the War on Drugs regardless of the temporal and geographical context.

With that being said, the rationale for the U.S. involvement in Colombia persisted. Its final act worth mentioning came at the turn of the century. With the Cold War now over, it was drugs, and shortly terrorism, that replaced communism as the central preoccupation of the U.S. foreign policy. In 2000, on the petition of President Andres Pastrana, Washington launched a new ambitious development initiative under the name Plan Colombia. Not unlike the AFP forty years before, the scheme was grounded in the logic that in order to resolve Colombia's predicament, the state needs strengthening and reforms[5] (Tickner, 2000). Or so it did in theory. In practice, however, the lion's share of the aid bolstered the military and law enforcement agencies. The U.S. commitments in Colombia were still vastly earmarked for the drug issue. This changed after 9/11, when counterterrorism was added to the Plan Colombia banner. The militarization of Colombia engineered during this era brought about important strategic victories over the guerrillas, and helped the state recover some of the lost territories. With that said, it also had numerous perverse effects on the armed conflict in the country (Gonzalez, Bolivar y Vasquez, 2003). First of all, it gave nearly unlimited resources for the counterinsurgency movement crusading against what was now conveniently referred to as the narco-guerrilla (in reality, the paramilitaries were arguably more implicated in drug-trafficking at the time) (Romero, 2003). Secondly, when providing funds, intelligence and training, the U.S. turned a blind eye on corruption and grave human rights abuses attributed to Colombia's armed forces (Tickner, 2000). As a consequence, the "prioritization of security has eroded the overall environment for civilian protection and the defence of human rights," (Elhawary, 2010, p.396). Thirdly, the budget allocation skewed heavily towards coercive institutions meant that all other aspects of the country's democratic makeup continued to wither. To make matters worse, the very essence of the plan, i.e., defeating the drug industry (with fumigation of crops

[5] Having arranged renewed peace negotiations with the FARC (on which more later), Pastrana hoped that Plan Colombia would help reframe the problem of drugs in more social terms, thereby linking the development aid with peace (Garcia, 2015). However, this early vision on the Colombian side was remolded into strictly anti-drugs policy on the U.S. side (Gutierrez & Guataqui, 2009).

as the centerpiece of the strategy), not only failed to materialize, but backfired spectacularly (Garcia, 2015).

All in all, the recent U.S. role in Colombia's modern history has been one of a hawk, not a dove. Since the fiasco of the transformative variant of the AFP, its foreign policies have arguably contributed to the weakening of the state in Colombia.

1.7. Paramilitaries (1980s)

Colombia's right-wing paramilitaries were self-proclaimed vigilante militias, brought to life to counter the 1980s expansion of the guerrillas. Their powerful founders—regional elites, from large landowners to emerald traders to drug lords[6]—felt they only had themselves to protect their properties, businesses and lives from the rampant insurgents[7]. Nevertheless, this was just a new iteration of a long-standing phenomenon in the Colombian history. The roots of these second-generation paramilitary organizations can be traced back to the Chulavitas or Pajaros—the La Violencia-era death squads sanctioned by the Conservative government to persecute political opposition. An argument can be made that, while the emergence of the guerrillas can be linked to illegitimacy of the Colombian democracy, their main antagonist, the paramilitaries reflect the State's faltering coercive capacity (Osorio, 2018).

Yet, the ground for the emergence of the paramilitaries was prepared by the government itself, when it passed a 1968 counterinsurgency decree authorizing formation of self-defense detachments across the country (Gray, 2008). What's more, by granting the right to possess firearm to individuals, the government renounced its monopoly of violence, a decision that opened a Pandora's box of proportions difficult to imagine in the 1960s. It wasn't until two decades later that the reactionary movement gained real momentum. Some historians point to the peace negotiations with the guerrillas initiated by the administration of the President Betancourt[8] in the early 1980s as the stimulus for the consolidation of paramilitaries in Colombia (Romero, 2003). For conservative sectors of the society, negotiating with the guerrillas was an unacceptable act of submission. These formidable actors refused to recognize

---

[6] The nexus between paramilitaries and drug-trafficking has been a well-established phenomenon in the past two decades.

[7] One of the paramilitary leaders, Carlos Castaño defined it as "political-military, anti-subversive movement of civil resistance with the right to exercise the legitimate personal and collective defense considering the lack of state protection for life and private property." (1999) cited in Nussio & Howe (2014, p. 855)

[8] The largely unsuccessful process was nevertheless the first "recognition, indeed the failure, of the military solution to the maintenance of public order" (Chernick, 1989, p.53).

the political character of the guerrilla, thus negating the existence of an armed conflict itself, and, by extension, the possibility of a formally negotiated resolution (Leal Buitrago, 2011). Furthermore, in the eyes of the elites, a peace treaty likely entailed a series of threatening reforms of the local and institutional power structures (Romero, 2003).

Although conceived as a stop-gap solution—mere self-defense organizations formed by peasants to halt the guerrillas—these groups quickly abandoned their original positions and proceeded to expand into new territories (Safford & Palacios, 2001). By permitting the privatization and decentralization of the counterinsurgency war (and, in the case of some sectors, by openly supporting it), the Colombian political elites nurtured another powerful belligerent in the conflict (Bejarano & Pizarro, 2004). In reaction to the FARC's reign of terror and Pastrana's peace-seeking politics, a large-scale paramilitary pilot operation was organized in the small town of Puerto Boyaca by local political bosses, merchants, Texaco executives, cattle farmers, members of the police force, intelligence agents, etc. (Peña & Ochoa, 2008). In the following years, right-wing death squads would rapidly spill into the neighboring regions, and throughout the country. Taking advantage of the drug trade, paramilitarism gained sufficient offensive power to multiply its fronts at a pace comparable to that of the guerrillas.

In 1997, the dispersed local components were amalgamated into a single nationwide umbrella organization, the AUC (*Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia*). The rise of the paramilitaries further reconfigured the conflict puzzle in Colombia. Towards the end of the century, the violence levels soared. The formations were generously endowed, trained by foreign military experts, and generally competent in fighting the guerrilla. Hence, considering the army's inability to adjust to the modern warfare, "the paramilitaries appear[ed] to the public to be the only truly effective counterinsurgency force," (Safford & Palacios, 2001, p.364). While the sheer magnitude of the project that was the AUC meant it also experimented with forms of governance in territories under its control (particularly when it initially pursued legitimation), the paramilitaries relied on repression and violence in asserting territorial control more naturally than did the guerrillas (Gutierrez & Giustozzi, 2010). Massacres of entire populations accused of collaborating with the rebels were not infrequent, as were social cleansing campaigns. As the self-defense forces became increasingly infiltrated by drug-traffickers, they became ever more ruthless. Under the guise of resisting communist subversion, they proceeded to exterminate their enemies, from legal political parties, unions, and associations leaders to journalists, intellectuals, and civil servants. At the same time, drug lords took advantage of the conflict by rapidly accumulating the land abandoned by the displaced peasants (Reyes, 1991).

The kinship between the paramilitaries and the Colombian armed forces proved a serious impediment whenever the government took to combatting drugs and organized crime. It also contributed to the longevity of the paramilitary phenomenon. The liaison had been a long one: following Plan Lasso, a number of military manuals from the 1960s explicitly recommended the foundation of anti-communist self-defense organizations. Although the cat had been out of the bag on the paramilitary violence and drug-trafficking by then, similar decrees continued to be issued by the Ministry of Defense well until the 1980s (Uprimny & Vargas, 1990). Having fought side-by-side in the dirty war against the guerrilla for decades made the armed forces complacent, if not liable, towards the crimes committed by the paramilitaries (Leal Buitrago, 2011). It wasn't until 1989, when the government officially condemned the formation of self-defense organizations for the first time. However, the murky relationship between the government and the death squads seems to have shielded the latter from legal responsibility for decades to come.

1.8. 1991 Constitution

The sheer scale of violence that tormented Colombia throughout the 1980s, culminating in yet another high-profile assassination of a presidential candidate, Luis Carlos Galán, in 1989, drove up the demand for a negotiated end to conflict, and a transformation of the political system. In the spirit of an extensive contemporary research, which held the closure of the political system as that the main source of violence in Colombia, an emergent social movement espoused decentralization and democratic opening, *Apertura*, as the antidote (Gutierrez, Acevedo & Viatela, 2007). Backed by a significant proportion of the public opinion, the heterogenous coalition led by university students gathered momentum. It would prove instrumental in initiating multiple peace processes with the M-19, a majority of the EPL, the Workers' Revolutionary Party (PRT), and the *Movimiento Armado Quintin Lame* (MAQL), and, later, the forming of the 1991 National Constituent Assembly. Many social and political sectors, hitherto on the margins of public life, were invited to take part in the debate. The resulting constitution was an important step towards pluralism and participative democracy. It proposed a series of reforms of the electoral system with the aim to boost the representation of the political and ethnic minorities, and to jettison clientelist networks of the past[9]. Based on the

[9] Indeed, there exist numerous merits of the 1991 constitution: the introduction of an ample human rights regime, together with mechanisms to defend them, participative forms of democracy, strengthened justice model, mechanism reinforcing the division of power, etc. (Van Cott, 2000).

logic that peace and democracy are mutually reinforcing, the 1991 Constitution was the most comprehensive attempt at reducing state absenteeism to date (Posada-Carbó, 1998).

However, in an effort to stimulate more civilian participation, the constitution atomized the Colombian political landscape, fragmenting representation, and weakening the party system. Scholars agree that, good intentions notwithstanding, it inadvertently created some of the conditions that allowed for the near complete penetration of drugs into the country's political life. In the meantime, the deep-seated informal political practices remained the guiding principle of the Colombian public life. The foremost shortcoming of the constitutional movement was that, as suggests Ana Maria Bejarano (2001), "the efforts to democratize the state were not accompanied by parallel efforts to strengthen it" (p.70). In addition, the accompanying reforms proved incapable of altering the economic and social structure of the country[10].

What the new constitution did instead was to shift more power and revenue towards the territories that lacked the adequate institutional framework to shoulder so much responsibility. As such, it inadvertently allowed armed actors and the mafia, predominately paramilitary organizations, to capture local institutions and make do with public resources in a phenomenon referred to as *parapolitica*. Meanwhile, the opposite was also true—the central state now lacked the adequate resources and power to assert its control over the territories slipping out of its hands (Bejarano & Pizarro, 2003).

What's more, against its core aspirations, the constitution failed to mitigate the impact of clientelism on Colombian politics. On the contrary, adapting to survive in this new institutional reality, the clientelist model reinvented itself into something more pervasive still (Palacios, 2001). In short, post-clientelism entailed a more direct cooperation between the patrons at the national and local level (in contrast to the clientelism of old, the client was no longer bound by loyalty to the party or the regional boss) (Gutierrez, 2007). Thus, political agreements became more local and more disperse, while negotiations "more and more specific, ephemeral and dependent on the favor of small electoral groups" (Garcia-Villegas & Revelo, 2010, p.29).

In this new era, clientelism and drug-trafficking went hand-in-hand, as demonstrated by the much-publicized case of Ernesto Samper's presidential campaign financing by the Cali Cartel. In reality, the controversy surrounding Samper was the tip of the iceberg of "an extended

[10] According to Van Cott (2000), the democratic ambitions of the 1991 Constitution clashed with aggressive neoliberal economic policies, which contributed to poverty and inequality in Colombia (p.248).

system of relations of protection, complicity and bribery connecting the political class of both parties to the drug traffickers," (Safford & Palacios, 2001, p.340). All in all, Claudia Lopez (2010) provides evidence that between 1990 and 2009, one third of public posts in the legislative and executive branches, both on national and local level, was taken over by illegal armed groups and criminal organizations.

Furthermore, the aftermath of the early 1990s peace processes was by no means straightforward. This is especially true in the case of the EPL. Following their partial demobilization in 1991, former guerrilla members became targets of systematic repressions at the hands of the FARC, the paramilitaries and their former comrades-in-arms. The campaign of terror was made possible as the EPL's once stronghold, the banana-growing Uraba region, became subject to fierce territorial disputes by the remaining illegal armed groups (Alape, 1996). The dominance of the EPL in Urabá in the years preceding the negotiations meant that power vacuums would inevitably emerge in consequence of the group's demobilization. President Gaviria's administration (1990-1994) failed to produce the kind of response that would prevent reorganization of illegal armed groups in the power vacuums and, as a result, a recycling of violence. It is clear that insufficient state efforts, both coercive and institutional, to control the power vacuum led to the bloodiest chapter in the region's history (CNMH, 2013). The EPL experience provided the clearest evidence yet that simply demobilizing a non-state armed group isn't nearly enough to boost security in the region in which it operated.

Under the above circumstances, the delegitimization of state institutions in the eyes of the Colombian society reached its peak at the turn of the century (Gonzalez, 2014). Whether as a product of their weakness or corruption, the malfunctioning institutions were either accessory (corruption; the ideologically-bent military forces), or incapable (e.g., the collapsed justice system), at best, to stop a wave of violent persecution of social sectors more or less loosely associated with the left-wing[11]. At this point in Colombian history, the three arenas of violence described by Pecaut meshed beyond recognition, while to many Colombians the Constitution of 1991 was little more than a dead letter. The struggles of the state to provide the services it vowed to provide in the new charter, most notably protection and justice, continued.

[11] The event possesses characteristics of a genocide, a term favored by many Colombian historians to describe the successive extermination of the members of the Patriotic Union (*Union Patriotica*) political party and its sympathizers.

1.9. Uribe's Democratic Security (2002-2010)

If ever the failed state hypothesis had a grain of truth to it in the Colombian context, it was at the end of the 1990s decade. As maintained by Bejerano and Pizarro (2003), the expansion of illegal armed actors—more powerful than ever by reason of the burgeoning drug economy—meant that the state not only failed to consolidate itself in the second half of the 20th century, but shrunk even further. At same time, the armed conflict's spatial scope ballooned, encompassing the regions that hadn't previously been theatres of violence, with nearly half of the municipalities in the country reporting the presence of a non-state armed actor (Sánchez & Chacón, 2006). The number of police stations, on the other hand, decreased proportionately: in 2002, there were as many as 157 municipalities without so much as a single officer of the law in sight (CNMH, 2014). Not only did the paramilitaries and guerrillas venture out of their home bases, but began to employ terror against civil population as the primary strategy to isolate the enemy (Pecaut, 2000). It was precisely at this point in history that land conflicts of the past turned into struggle for territorial control (Reyes-Posada & Bejarano, 1988).

At the beginning of the new millennium, the rise of Alvaro Uribe Velez (2002-2010) to presidency kick-started a new political era in Colombia. Uribe's stunning first-round victory came at the back of another failed peace process with the FARC, and was attributed largely to his campaign promise to restore order throughout the country's territory by tackling the guerrillas with an iron fist (Dugas, 2003). Among the objectives of the new president's flagship security program, named *Democratic Security*, were: dismantling terrorist organizations, strengthening of public institutions and restoring state presence in war-torn territories. Major investments into the military as part of Plan Colombia translated into a series of successful counterinsurgency offensives. As a result, substantial territorial gains were made while the guerrilla saw itself pushed back towards the fringes of the country (Pachón, 2009). Meanwhile the demobilization of the paramilitary umbrella organization, the AUC, in 2006, scraped one of the actors of the conflict. In the short term, Uribe's security policies halted the spiraling violence, stimulated economic performance and brought back some confidence among Colombians (Rangel, 2010).

Nevertheless, the legacy of the Democratic Security remains a mixed bag. On one hand, the state's security forces recovered some of its territorial control (especially in urban and economic centers), and reduced the indicators of violence compared to the period between the

1980s and the 2000s. On the other hand, however, the pledge to strengthen institutionalism in territories marked by the conflict went largely unfulfilled (Villegas & Rebolledo, 2010). The pressure applied by the U.S. in effect of the War on Drugs led Colombia to choose the path of militarization as the primary expression of state authority. There was a notable lack of balance in budgeting when we compare the expenditure on the Public Force and that on other essential government programs (e.g., judiciary or development) (Leal Buitrago, 2011). The consequence of that was a paradox described by Elhawary (2010), whereby improved security didn't translate into improved civilian protection. The scholar argues that:

> "By prioritising the military defeat of FARC and the countering of narcotics, the reversal of institutional failures to resolve land grievances and to monopolise territorial control has been neglected. As a result, stabilisation efforts have not translated into legitimate widespread territorial control. There remains a lack of state institutions in rural peripheries, and military efforts to date have simply led to a retreat by FARC and some of the peasantry into these areas, furthering once again the agricultural frontier. In addition, the failure of the government to tackle land grievances and to ensure respect for human rights has generally undermined the support of rural populations that are largely distrustful of a historically distant state, which is seen to work in the interests of powerful elites rather their own. Longterm stability requires an about turn of these trends," (p. 402).

With such disproportions in place, the state stood little chance to consolidate itself as a legitimate arbiter of social tensions and an "equilibrating factor between social and economic inequalities, in a manner which would make the clientelist model of mediation with local powers unnecessary," (Gonzalez & Rettberg, 2010, p.183). Even worse, during the Uribe presidency, not only wasn't clientelism replaced with institutionalism, but underwent a transformation into something arguably more damaging instead. As suggested by Villegas and Rebolledo (2010), the local power structures once formed by caciques, priests and politicians were now "replaced with a complex blend of unscrupulous politicians, landowners, mafiosi and paramilitaries," (p.19). Furthermore, the phenomenon of state capture, tolerated under Uribe, spread out of local politics and onto the big stage of Colombian politics[12].

[12] In her research on the phenomenon of state capture in Colombia, Claudia López (2010) shows how the regional networks, both legal and legal, ascended from the local "towards the national, with the most evident scenario, although not unique, was the Congress of the Republic," (p.64).

As for the demobilization of the AUC, the outcome is shrouded in controversy. Studies have shown that, in spite of some security improvements, a wealth of paramilitaries never demobilized, while the structures that supported them remained almost intact (Restrepo & Muggah, 2008; Nussio, 2011). The merit of a large-scale demobilization notwithstanding, there exists a litany of reasons why the process has kept receiving its share of criticism. Marred by disorder and arbitrariness, the AUC demobilization "was not based in principles of democratic participation, transparency, equity and inclusion," (Valencia, 2007, p.182). According to Human Rights Watch (2005), the process "undermine[d] human rights, justice, and the already weak rule of law in Colombia," (p.64). The most common complaint had to do with the Justice and Peace Law, the legal framework facilitating the demobilization of paramilitaries, seen to this day as a conduit to impunity for war criminals. Moreover, the DDR of the AUC led to the emergence of gaping power vacuums that instantly became a coveted prize for the competing illegal armed groups. Contrary to what the Uribe's government portrayed, the main competitors were not the guerrillas, but post-paramilitary groups (at the time referred to as *bandas criminales*, or BACRIMS) reorganized under the auspices of the drug-trafficking industry.

The state's strategy for the post-demobilization landscape was reactionary and rather short-sighted. While it had some success in suppressing the newly formed groups, the coercion-based response ultimately failed to prevent these groups from overtaking the former AUC strongholds and spreading violence while they were at it. One reasons to explain this could be the continued faltering state presence in the regions where it had traditionally been absent (Restrepo & Muggah, 2009). Having focused solely on military operations and the demobilization itself, the government stopped short of preparing a meaningful strategy to substitute the AUC in its proto-statal role. Deeper institutional penetration resulting in strengthening of the rule of law and democracy never materialized, and the living conditions on the ground saw practically no improvement. This fostered the perfect conditions for criminal activity to gain foothold and the cycle of violence to renew.

In sum, if state presence improved in Colombia in the beginning of the 20th century, then it was almost exclusively the coercive aspect thereof, i.e., the sort of presence associated with violence and trauma, rather than legitimacy. That being so, the areas of state abandonment in early 2010s in Colombia remained strikingly similar to those from 100-150 years before. Unsurprisingly, bar a handful of departments, no significant gains have been made with regards to trust-building between the population and the state. This prompted calls for a more integrated and comprehensive approach to state expansion.

1.10. Last phase of armed conflict (2010-2016)

As Uribe's former Minister of Defense, the incoming president Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018) was himself one of the architects of the strategy that had shaped the Colombian security landscape over the prior eight years. Nevertheless, those who expected him to push on along his predecessor's path were in for a surprise. In view of the much-publicized missteps of the hardline Democratic Security program, Santos understood it required a public relations revamp. Hence, he was determined to allay the overwhelmingly military approach to conflict while, at the same time, seeking a negotiated solution with the country's largest rebel groups.

Following the FARC's retreat from key territories in the early 21st century, the Colombian state was faced with an old conundrum: How to consolidate its presence in territories once controlled by the guerrilla? The Santos administration embraced a more integrated approach to stabilization. According to this new strategy, first put to test in the region of La Macarena, in order to promote stability in conflict-affected areas, the state has to better balance the military and civilian operations. After years of Uribe's cut-throat tactics awash with well-documented human rights abuses—most glaringly the False Positives scandal (*Falsos Positivos*), involving extrajudicial killings of civilians by the Colombian army ordered to improve guerrilla casualty figures—the trust of rural populations towards state institutions hit a nadir. Therefore, the government looked for ways to overcome the legitimacy deficit (Beltrán, 2013).

La Macarena was chosen for the pilot program of the Democratic Security and Consolidation policy as one of the FARC's traditional strongholds and a major drug-trafficking hub. Aside from establishing permanent state security presence and eradicating coca crops, the integrated plan encompassed provision of humanitarian and development aid. The stabilizing forces would then help usher in civilian governance to pick up the mantle (DeShazo, McLean & Mendelson Forman, 2009). Santos was keen to present the Macarena program as a success, claiming state forces had won over the support of civilians (Elhawary, 2010). Indeed, in the period shortly after the implementation, the initiatives rolled out in the region led to some security benefits, illicit crops reduction, and improvement to socio-economic conditions (Mejia, Uribe & Ibañez, 2011). However, as had been the case in the past, the long-term results were tenuous. Most crucially, the persistently low institutional capacity hardly moved the needle when it came to trust and confidence of the locals. Military and structural objectives proved difficult to reconcile yet again (Elhawary, 2010). With the guerrilla still present in rural areas, the State was far from consolidated in La Macarena and other disputed territories in

Colombia (Isacson & Poe, 2010). Moreover, the democratizing rhetoric notwithstanding, the Santos administration gave the belligerent military free rein; repression continued to be central tenet of solving the security puzzle (Beltrán, 2013).

1.11. Some preliminary remarks: Security legacies of the armed conflict

In the last section of the first context chapter, let us go back to 2016 to discuss the most salient factors affecting the security situation in Colombia as they were on the eve of the signing of the Peace Accords on November 30. Below, the legacies of some forty years of the Colombian conflict are summarized together with their potential implications for the peace process.

1.11.1. State absence

First of all, the issue of fundamental significance from the perspective of this study: the persistently weak state presence, also referred to as state absence[13], in large swathes of mostly rural territories of Colombia. By 2016, the central state was arguably stronger than it had ever been. However, at the local level, the "precariousness and the enormous gaps in institutional capacity and quality of life not only haven't been bridged, but—in some cases—have been made more profound" (López, 2016, p.19). To be sure, and contrary to the label, the peripheries discussed here were by no means negligible. García-Villegas and Espinosa (2013) calculated that the State was absent in as much as 60 per cent of the territory, a share that amounts to an area inhabited by more than six million people.

Some argue that, when understood literally, state absence is a term that leaves room for misinterpretation. The rub lays not in its absence, but in the quality of its presence. The grade and the nature of state presence across the regions of Colombia is heterogenous, and can only really be evaluated on territory-to-territory basis. In some regions, state institutions function adequately, in others they are missing entirely, or are reduced to mere physical presence via the police or the military. Elsewhere, they compete or are coopted by powerful informal institutions set up by non-state actors. Reflecting the above discrepancies is the geography of violence, diverse with respect to internal dynamics of the region, history of settlement, social

[13] There exist multiple terms to describe the phenomenon in the literature on Colombian history: from 'state in construction,' 'state's differential presence' to 'state precarity,' 'partial collapse of the state,' and even 'failed state'. Important semantic discrepancies notwithstanding, they all tend to agree on the following: in Colombia there has been a historical weakness of state institutions and sub-par provision of basic services, most crucially that of protection, throughout the country's territory (González, 2003). Beyond that core majority view, we are faced with much more ambiguity with "multiple, overlapping, and concurrent forms of state presence and absence," in different locations and from the perspective of different populations (McFee, 2020, par.21).

practices, economic organization and the strain of illegal armed actors with most influence (Gonzalez, 2004).

There exist a few trends in terms of the consistency of state presence throughout Colombia. The most obvious one reveals a relatively strong state presence in major urban hubs in the highlands and the Atlantic coast, and partial or complete absence in remote rural areas and the borderlands of the country. The center-periphery division best captures the stark contrast in the viability of Colombian institutions. In general, the municipalities with the strongest institutional records are those situated along the cordilleras running through the center of the country. Perhaps the starkest example of the above discrepancies can be observed in the access to formal justice mechanisms (Garcia Villegas & Espinosa, 2015). Unsurprisingly, the tendency is consistent with diverse socio-economic indicators. The state absenteeism map in Colombia is virtually one and the same with maps providing spatial distribution of poverty, illicit crops, presence of illegal armed groups, infant mortality, etc. (CEPAL, 2016; García-Villegas et al., 2016; Restrepo, Spagat & Vargas, 2006). Likewise, similar trends are noticeable on the map of major military operations or forced displacements, (i.e., the existence of an armed conflict). Clearly, the 'two Colombias'—the urbanized centre and the peripheries—enjoy starkly different security realities. Take, for instance, the distribution of the police force in 2015. There were approximately 162.000 policemen in Colombia, albeit only 7.000 of them are dedicated to patrol rural zones (Garcia & Espinosa, 2015). The geographical correlation between violence and state absenteeism has led scholars to speak of "violent exclusion" of one third of the country (López, 2010). According to Lopez, the endemic absence of state institutions in the regions—together with the absence of modern market and citizenry—remains the source of criminality and violence in Colombia[14]. It should be noted that the violent exclusion disproportionately affects the already underprivileged populations, such as Afro-Colombians and the indigenous. Differently put, the map of conflict overlaps with the map of ethnic distribution in Colombia and the most vulnerable social groups are found amongst minorities.

In sum, by the time the two parties met at the negotiating table, there existed a near unanimous consensus that the Colombian conflict may never be extinguished without the enhancement of

[14] Garcia-Villegas & Espinosa (2015), for example, found that "municipalities with 'high' and 'very high' levels of justice performance had a lesser presence of illegal armed groups," (p.10).

the state's legitimate presence via efficient institutions throughout the country. As it will shortly become visible, the text of the accords embraces this sentiment.

1.11.2. Criminal economies

Multifarious and sophisticated criminal economies have pervaded Colombia for decades and fed the armed conflict in the country. In regulating these criminal economies, non-state armed groups had found ways to persist and prosper through the years. We have discussed the origins of the gargantuan drug industry, along with its impact on instability and violence, particularly since the 1980s. Perverse as it already had been, coca growing and cocaine production nearly tripled in the four years leading up to the signing of peace (UNODC, 2016). As the peace process was fast approaching, the swelling of the drug industry put the government under an immense pressure to remedy the disruptive trend (International Crisis Group, 2017). Yet, narcotics are not the only source of income for non-state armed groups. These organizations had in the recent past considerably diversified their revenues to "include legal mineral resources, such as coal, ferronickel, gold, and oil, as well as several agricultural products such as bananas and palm oil," (Rettberg, 2015, p.2). The extraction of mineral resources turned out especially lucrative. As retold by Massé & Camargo (2012), in 2010, 86% of all gold production in Colombia came from illegal mining, of which vast majority was attributable to illegal armed groups. The correlation is unequivocal—the map of illegal mining in Colombia matches that of activity of armed actors. Without a doubt, the phenomenon had greatly contributed to the development of violence markets. What's more, illegal armed actors operating across Colombia secure shares of their finances by engaging in contraband. More than anything, trafficking of goods is an apt representation of the state's impotence in controlling its frontier. Considering the relative economic disproportion between Colombia and its neighbours, the porous borders, particularly the Colombian-Venezuelan one, had seen a steady flow of drugs, gasoline, arms, people, etc. The illicit industry organized around smuggling contributed to the deteriorating security situation along the borders. However, the goods pouring into Colombia via contraband, particularly weapons, posed a serious risk to peace in the country at large.

Clearly, regardless of whether the Colombian peacebuilders addressed the issue or not, the likelihood that they would disentangle the Gordian Knot of criminal economies in Colombia in the short-term in post-conflict was negligible. Irrespective of the context, illicit markets tend to be "difficult to dismantle, enduringly lucrative, and at the disposal of new actors once the previous controllers have demobilised," (Kurtenbach & Rettberg, 2018, p.2). In Colombia,

what had fuelled the conflict for decades would likely continue to be a destabilizing factor once formal hostilities terminated (Garzón, 2015).

1.11.3. Non-state armed groups

The structural conditions recapped above have historically engendered an ideal habitat for copious non-state armed groups to thrive in. It may have been the largest of them all, but the FARC's disbanding by no means ended the phenomenon in the country. The sheer length of the Colombian conflict meant that the global and local transformations over the years had driven the illegal armed actors to evolve and permutate. Out of the collection of guerrillas all but one had laid down their weapons in the preceding decades. With the negotiations ongoing, there were some hopes that the second largest guerrilla group, the ELN, could follow the FARC on the path to legality. However, the peace talks broke down in 2018 following a series of attacks on various police stations (Dayton, 2019). Regardless of how one classifies the other non-state armed groups, the mere presence of the ELN guerrilla meant the Colombian conflict formally carried on.

The EPL, the other of the non-state armed group with origins in the insurgency movement had over the years lost much of its ideological zeal. While after its partial demobilization in 1991, the EPL became, first and foremost, a key player in drug trade operations in eastern Colombia, the group's facets were diverse and included the use of guerrilla warfare tactics, capacity to affect the armed forces and social legitimacy with communities in the areas in which it operates (Prieto, 2017).

Nevertheless, a large share of the illegal armed actors in today's Colombia are, in essence, organized crime groups. Their provenance can be traced back primarily to the AUC. Immediately after the demobilization in 2006, a proliferation of new structures manifested itself in zones formerly under the paramilitary control. These organizations, the BACRIMS, proved highly flexible, resilient and quick to adapt. The key factor fueling the reorganization process was drug-trafficking. The power vacuums left behind by the AUC were seen by drug cartels as an opportunity for expansion. Yet, with the withdrawal of the paramilitary organization in effect, drug-traffickers were in need of an organization to regulate the illegal use of force in these strategic territories (CNMH, 2015). It was in the remobilized mid-level officers that they found the perfect commanders of their private armies tasked with protecting the drug business (Grajales, 2011). Allowed to expand into power vacuums and consolidate, the groups were soon capable of running the drug business and infiltrating the state, as well as the local and

regional institutions. What's more, they were now controlling territories and collecting protection taxes. Once the local and regional domination was established, there occurred alliances and hierarchization around the victorious structures (Indepaz, 2010). In just a few years, they recovered the organizational capacity and military might akin to that of various AUC fronts in the past (Human Rights Watch, 2010). Among what is considered the third generation of Colombian drug-trafficking organizations, the most powerful group with respect to the number of members and the scope of its operations were the *Urabeños*. Another noteworthy group, the *Rastrojos*, were born out of the Norte del Valle cartel, who nevertheless lost much of its ground in 2012. In sum, towards the end of 2014, there were up to 90 smaller active BACRIMs in Colombia (Valencia, 2016).

There were good reasons to believe the above patterns would be reproduced following the FARC's demobilization. The lucrative illicit economies abandoned by the guerrilla were expected to lure in the remaining non-state armed groups (Avila & Valencia, 2016). Besides, even in the best-case scenario, the FARC's demobilization would hardly ever be full, with some mid-level officers the likeliest to abandon the DDR process, form their own groups or make themselves available for other criminal organization. In fact, the above chain of events materialized as early as in July, 2016, when the historic 1st Front of the guerrilla officially declared itself a dissident group. One of the FARC's foremost units thanks to its involvement in drug-trafficking in southern Colombia, never laid down its weapons, let go off the illicit economies or abandoned their violent modus operandi ("La primera," 2016). More splinter groups were expected to follow.

In sum, violence and coercion were expected to underscore the strategy of the remaining non-state armed groups vying for territorial dominance over the zones abandoned by the FARC, just as was the case with the BARCRIMs post-2006 (Krakowski, 2015). This would put the lives of the civilian population, as well as of the demobilized FARC combatants, at serious risk. Experts warned that Colombia was witnessing a brewing confluence of common crime, insurgent (or former insurgent) forces and groups associated with transnational organized crime (particularly the Mexican drug cartels), a tendency likely to gather momentum after the FARC's demobilization (Patiño, 2015).

1.11.4. Public Force

Another relevant legacy of the conflict in Colombia is the character of the country's *Fuerza Publica* (Public Force)—the military and the police—and its relationship with the civilian

population. The Colombian security apparatus, long implicated in the atrocities of the protracted conflict and state violence, had a mountain to climb in order to change the largely unfavourable public perception in affected areas. Decades of war had sharpened the divisions between the civil society and the military, contributing to the image of the latter as a rogue force, far detached from what should be its core function: to protect civilians and contribute positively to community life.

As a result of the prolonged conflict, the ethos of the modern Colombian police and armed forces has drawn heavily from the counterinsurgency doctrine (or the national security as described by Bulla & Guarin, 2015). This was abundantly clear in the way it shunned territorial consolidation along with the mundane realities of having to attend to quotidian security needs of the local population. Pecaut (2000) suggested that holding territories was never truly a priority for the army[15], which "has usually engaged in rapid territorial incursions that neither offer protection to the inhabitants nor allow for the gathering of reliable intelligence, a strategy that cost the military dearly in political terms," (Pecaut, 2000, p.131). While this state of affairs had changed since President Uribe's administration, and there were now zones (most commonly those where the military defeated illegal armed groups relatively recently), where the public force remained the only expression of the state, there had been relatively little change when it comes to the identity of the armed forces. However, it is fair to say that, due to the condition referred to in this study as state absenteeism, the Public Forces of Colombia have been asked to "act in the name of other state institutions to resolve complex problems outside of their responsibility and capacity," (Fernandez-Osorio, 2018, p. 32).

The sense of urgency that came along with the sweeping campaigns against guerrillas, paramilitarism and drug-trafficking, had led to what is described as militarization of security provision. Simply put, the public force in Colombia finds it difficult to interpret its role as a peacetime force designed to respond to coexistence and security challenges, rather than fighting against illegal armed actors. The public force isn't attuned to responding to multifarious needs of the local population. On the contrary, in some cases, its relationship with communities isn't one of service, but predation reminiscent of the worst periods of violence and impunity in

[15] It should be noted that, as maintained by Tilly (1985), the creation of police forces subordinate to the government and not local patrons, was one of the two strategies employed by European governments to end with indirect rule in some of its territory (p.175).

Colombia. Many of the entrenched values and practices[16] of the armed forces contribute to the view of the police and the military as illegitimate. As a result, even "the active presence of legal armed entities, whether they are police, army, or marine infantry, has not translated to an improvement in security and coexistence conditions for the inhabitants of Colombia's rural areas," (Bulla & Guarin, 2015, p.15). Post-conflict and post-demobilization should be thought of as an opportunity to re-build civilian confidence in the police and the army by profiling the security sector as an ally of civil society and a buttress in the process of implementation of peace (Grasa, 2017). Nevertheless, a transformation (or partial transformation, considering the conflict is on-going elsewhere) of the army profile is tedious and can be met with internal resistance. More entrenched sectors of the military may eschew peace-building outright, opposing its very principles on ideological basis or out of fear for their own future. The progressive tenets of peace—from demilitarization to democratization to truth-seeking—may not sit well with the hardline factions within the army.

1.11.5. Corruption

Lastly, a legacy of conflict that, although difficult to pin down, can have a significant deleterious effect on peacebuilding: corruption. While rampant clientelism, bribes and embezzlement of public funds have constituted part of the Colombian political landscape for centuries, the practice has become more nefarious with the expansion of non-state armed groups in the country. For this reason, Garay Salamanca et al. (2008) warn that corruption in Colombia "can only be understood in the light of the intervention of illegal armed groups and the use of degraded practices, such as threat, assassination of the public officials and civil society, displacement of the campesino population and seizure of land in search of power and territorial predominance," (p.138). Today, corruption practices are inextricably tied to violence. The parapolitics scandal described earlier in this chapter, revealed only a fraction of the problem of corruption in Colombia that has become more sophisticated and structural. Particularly on the local level, criminal organizations of all persuasion have forged mutually beneficial clandestine alliances with political and economic elites (Duncan, 2006). As mentioned above, there exist territories in Colombia where State institutions became coopted by criminal actors who over the years have been able to bend them to their will. So far-reaching has been the instrumentalization of the state that while, in theory, the institutions remain in

[16] Among these practices are: "military use of civilian facilities, which puts the civilian population at risk, use of civilian facilities as a military shelter, disproportionate use of force, and human rights violations such as sexual abuse and 'false positive' cases, among others." (Bulla & Guarin, p.8, 2015).

place, in practice they perform a merely decorative role (Garcia-Villegas & Revelo, 2010). Corruption goes to show that the notion of state absence may not always refer solely to the physical absence of institutions, but rather their dysfunctional character.

With that being said, political corruption infiltrated the very top echelons of Colombian politics, with dozens of senators, congressmen, governors and mayors implicated (Lopez, 2010). However, political and economic elites aren't the only group with a history of corruption in the country. Following the Uribe administration, national authorities began investigations into the similar cases of wrongdoing by the public force and the intelligence services (Prieto, 2014). In 2014, 57 members of the police were arrested and sentenced for participating in the BACRIMs ("5.749 militares," 2014). Thus, it is reasonable to assume that peace in Colombia must be enacted in spite of the ubiquitous corruption networks. In other words, peacemaking should be cautious of the corruption networks and should be able to prevent them from appropriating or spoiling the transition.

All in all, in spite of the reasonable optimism created by signing of the peace accords with the largest guerrilla group in the country, there lingered serious questions with regards to the security situation in the years to come. The legacies of armed conflict were to pose a serious challenge to the peacebuilders. The main concern revolved around the potential of territorial disputes between the remaining non-state armed groups over criminal economies in the former FARC strongholds. At the same time, rife state absenteeism, corruption and the issues on the inside of the Colombian public forces cast doubt over the state's capacity to confront the challenges of post-conflict, or post-demobilization. The above factors constituted a major handicap for the already intricate process.

Chapter 2. Context II: FARC and Havana Negotiations

In this second context chapter, a closer look is taken at the leading protagonist of the 2016 peace processes in Colombia, the FARC. This historical overview pays special heed to the trajectory of the rebel group, the evolution of its interactions with civilians, and the shaping of the guerrilla proto-state. Understanding the FARC and its role in modern Colombian history in necessary if we are to contemplate what a transition towards post-FARC Colombia may implicate. It will hopefully allow us to appreciate the magnitude of the challenge and the sense of opportunity the group's demobilization entailed. The chapter then gives an account of the run-up to the Havana negotiations, as well as the negotiation process itself. Finally, it briefly delves into the text of the Final Agreement.

2.1. FARC

In this second context chapter, a closer look is taken at the leading protagonist of the 2016 peace processes in Colombia, the FARC. This historical overview pays special heed to the trajectory of the rebel group, the evolution of its interactions with civilians, and the shaping of the guerrilla proto-state. Understanding the FARC and its role in modern Colombian history in necessary if we are to contemplate what a transition towards post-FARC Colombia may implicate. It will hopefully allow us to appreciate the magnitude of the challenge and the sense of opportunity the group's demobilization entailed. The chapter then gives an account of the run-up to the Havana negotiations, as well as the negotiation process itself. Finally, it briefly delves into the text of the Final Agreement.

With the history spanning over half a century, the FARC's relationship with civilians passed through several transmutations. The many faces of the FARC's quasi states across rural Colombia reflect some of the wider variance in the way non-state armed groups approach the practice of governance. Scholars differentiate between four distinct phases in the history of the guerrilla (CNMH, 2014). Thus, in the chapter, I will briefly characterize each of the stages with regards to historic milestones, attempts at peace negotiations and the modes of interactions between the insurgent group and civilians.

2.1.1. Origins of FARC

The previous chapter outlined how the FARC's roots go back as far as peasant organizations of the agrarian conflicts of the 1920s. Yet, the formative stage for the future guerrilla extends roughly since the turmoil of La Violencia, until the end of the 1970s. In this period, the rebel

group still functioned first and foremost as an armed wing of the Colombian Communist Party. On behalf of the political organization, the former La Violencia combatants integrated themselves into marginal regions of Tequendama, Sumapaz, Cundinamarca and South Tolima, where high social tensions provided fertile grounds for formation of popular bases of support for the communist cause (Pecaut, 2000). They maintained a rather low-profile, remained rooted to its rearguards, and were generally pacifist and unwilling to engage in combat. At that time, the Communist Party was determined to pursue power via legal routes; the armed structures were only to be called into action in an event of a military coup. It wasn't until the mid-1960s that the conversion from peasant self-defense units to revolutionary guerrillas, now known as the FARC, occurred. The systematic persecution by the government forces led the Communist Party figureheads to abandon hope of a democratic transition (Pizarro, 1989).

Comprising fighters of mostly campesino origins, the FARC saw itself, above all, as the champion of the small Colombian peasantry in their struggle for land against the state, large proprietors and international corporations (Pizarro, 1991). In the self-proclaimed "liberated zones" (later referred to as "independent republics"), the rebels provided safe havens from the violence of the epoch, particularly the atrocities perpetrated by Conservative militias against campesinos across the country (Ortiz, 2002). However, protection wasn't the only function adopted by the guerrilla in these territories.

From the very beginning, the FARC leaders saw engaging in governance in its stamping ground as a vital source of power. In that way, the guerrilla proved its worth to the communities and secured loyalties among civilian population. The FARC had a say in almost all aspects of life in the independent republics. Rather than ruling by decree, however, the rebels took it upon themselves to organize the political and economic life of peasant communities. In their operations manual, the FARC urged its commanders to liaise themselves with the campesino organizations, such as Community Action Committees (*Juntas de Acción Comunal,* JAC), *Comités de Usuarios Campesinos* (peasant committees), or *Sindicatos Agrícolas* (agricultural unions). In co-operation with these bodies, the FARC appointed authorities to maintain social order and attend to the many daily needs of the peasantry, e.g., solving conflicts or carrying out administrative work. The synergy between combatants and civilian authorities on matters of governance allowed for considerable community participation in the decision-making process (Phelan, 2021). On top of that, codes of conduct regulating community life and the relationship between the guerrilla and the local population were formulated (CNMH, 2014). Should these codes be violated, wrongdoers faced trial in an informal court—community

justice mechanisms would become the cornerstone of the FARC rule for decades (Provost, 2021). The legal procedures were efficient and thorough, albeit ad hoc (Aguilera, 2000). Finally, the independent republics were the stage for the guerrilla's experiments with an alternative autarkic economic model based on expropriation, land colonizing, collective forms of labor, and redistribution (Molano, 1992).

While at the early stage the FARC was predominately interested in peasant organizing and political work, it didn't shy away from coercion whenever deemed of service. It was already at this moment that the guerrilla saw the advantages of violence—by executing petty criminals, for example, it would build better rapport with local populations who valued the swiftness of retribution, and the resulting improvements to security. However, the volatile nature of violence meant that it could be employed at will, such as in cases when campesinos refused to co-operate or were suspected of collaborating with the enemy (CNMH, 2014). As a result, the campesinos "suffered the consequences of coercion as much or more than they realized the benefits of protection" (Pecaut, 2000, p.133).

In territories where the degree of state presence was higher, the rebel group either operated parallel to it (lending support to campesino organizations) or simply offered protection to large landowners in exchange for guarantees of labor rights (e.g., of banana plantations workers in Uraba) (CNMH, 2014). The degree of the FARC's involvement with communities was subject to constant permutations, produced mostly by the expansion of the state's institutional offer in some zones where the FARC had been dominant and the targeted counterinsurgency offensives by the military as part of the Plan LASO (Safford & Palacios, 2001). Other reasons for the shifting of power dynamic in territories included the rebels' overreliance on violence, civilian resistance to taxes, or increased competition from other armed actors (CNMH, 2014). Be it as it may, whenever the FARC lost ground for the above motives, it was able to find new adjacent areas where the state was nowhere to be found, while social dissatisfaction persisted. In addition, the bipartisan violence continued to yield newly displaced peasants in search of land, whom the guerrilla looked to mobilize into self-defense groups.

Although it had managed to create a solid social base of support in the limited territories it occupied, at the end of the 1970s decade, the FARC remained a rather insignificant group, with as few as 400-600 members (Gutierrez, 2004). Any hopes challenging the sate one day seemed exaggerated at this point.

2.1.2. Expansion

By the late 1970s, the reality of the Colombian conflict had altered dramatically, and so had the FARC's tactics with regards to the territories of settlement and the governance in them. After years of inertia, the command came to regard the national (e.g., the 1977 National Strike) and international (the Sandinista triumph in Nicaragua) conditions as ripe for expansion (Aponte, 2019). However, early on, the visions of grandeur stood in stark contrast with the guerrilla's crumbling financial records. The emergence of the drug trade provided the much-needed capital to bankroll the new strategic direction. The Sixth and Seventh Conference, of 1978 and 1982 respectively, saw the leadership take two momentous resolutions that reformulated the FARC's trajectory for decades to come.

First, the guerrilla set out a new goal: to take over the state by armed might. This doctrinal sea change was signaled via a decision to add two letters to the organization's name. Henceforth, the 'EP' in FARC-EP stood for *Ejército del Pueblo* (People's Army) (Pizarro, 1991). Second, a plan to seize power was drawn up. The plan consisted of sweeping administrative changes, enhanced political activism, emphasis on recruitment of new combatants (the pool of recruits was now far more diverse than just peasantry), among other things. Most importantly, it recommended multiplying of fronts in an effort to access new resources in areas abundant in oil and illicit economies. The latter was a relatively easy task given that drugs were grown predominantly in the peripheries, where—as we have discussed—state absenteeism was even more acute (e.g., in Guaviare, Meta, Caquetá, Nariño or Putumayo). Once there, the FARC encouraged the migrating peasants to cultivate coca in exchange for protection from recalcitrant drug-traffickers, as well as financial and technical assistance (Richani, 2002). In addition, the rebels regulated the commerce and set the prices. Although some commanders entered the drug trade in more direct fashion, the bulk of the guerrilla's income came from protection payments and taxes (Ortiz, 2002). By then, the FARC's financial practices were miscellaneous. Aside from marijuana, coca and poppy business, it set about accumulating resources via extortion, kidnapping, racketeering, etc. (Gutierrez, 2004).

The windfall generated by ways of this mutually beneficial arrangement allowed the rebel organization to further cement its proto-state authority. By allocating a share of the revenue towards more effective provision of goods for the population and lending further assistance to JACs, the guerilla was reasonably successful in building new bases of support (Hough, 2011; Phelan, 2021). Even though fully invested in the coca bonanza, the rebel group insisted on preventing the high-paying activity from disrupting the healthy balance in the economic and

social life of communities. The FARC exercised its ideological and organizational authority over the campesinos, for instance, by promoting sustainable cultivation of edible crops or by banning the use of drugs (Molano, 1987). Since the potential for social conflict was made more acute with the arrival of drugs, the FARC's ability to maintain order became ever more desired.

Regions rich in coca crops notwithstanding, the FARC's geographic expansion brought its rebel orders to ever newer territories meant to serve as rearguards. Aside from the deepened economic association briefly discussed above, the bulk of its relationship with civilians remained based in the same practices as in the 1960s: expediate sentencing of criminals, social control, taxes, land confiscations, and propaganda. For the most part, the FARC governance was received with a certain degree of affirmation, except for the indigenous communities, which saw it as irreconcilable with their internal order (CNMH, 2014). The lingering disillusionment with the government in Colombia during the Turbay administration helped the FARC's message resonate with wider public (Gutierrez, 2004). Not only didn't Turbay succeed in combating the guerrilla, but his repressive, state-of-siege ways of arbitrary arrests, torture and "disappearing" brought many civil society members into the ranks of rebel organizations in the country (Leech, 2011).

In spite of having been rebranded as an offensive guerrilla movement, the FARC tended to shy away from direct military confrontations with the Public Force throughout the period. The tentacles of the guerrilla might have continued to spread around the country, but the scope of the conflict grew at a slower pace (Aguilera, 2000). Above all, it was a period of consolidation and the rebel group was cautious not to bite more than it could chew.

Another reason why the conflict between the FARC and the government remained relatively subdued throughout the 1980s was the first round of peace negotiations architected by President Belisario Betancourt at the beginning of the decade. Incentivized by Betancourt's amnesty for the imprisoned FARC combatants, the dialogues centered around the possibility of the guerrilla's induction into the political system (LeGrand, 2003). In 1984, the negotiating parties signed the Uribe Accord, ipso facto establishing a bilateral ceasefire. The agreement was unprecedented insofar as the Colombian government for the first time recognized the political motives for guerrilla violence. In addition, it committed to a series of economic, political and social reforms (Aguilera, 2000). The following year, the FARC brought into existence a political party, the Patriotic Union (UP). The party was to become a vehicle through which the rebels would spread their message, particularly in the urban centers. Meanwhile, the FARC

commanders refused to lay down their weapons out of fear of becoming easy prey for their enemies (Leech, 2011). History proved them right.

Touting itself as a plausible left-wing alternative to the absent state, the UP was making early headways in consecutive elections. This exasperated some of the most powerful sectors of the society who deemed Betancourt's peace efforts a threat to their interest. In what has since been described as political genocide, some 3,000 members of the UP were killed in the span of just few years on behest of the paramilitaries, the army or national and local elites (Dudley, 2004). As explained by LeGrand (2003), "the inability or unwillingness of the Colombian government to create a secure political space was a blow to the possibility of consolidating a strong, inclusive state within which real democratic opposition could thrive," (p.176). The resulting deterioration of the peace process damaged any chances of a negotiated end to the conflict for the foreseeable future. War seemed the only way forward.

2.1.3. Strategic Plan for taking of power

The third phase, between 1991-2008, comprises the application, initial success and eventual debacle of the FARC's Strategic Plan (*Plan Estratègico*) for taking of power (CNMH, 2014). Having spent much of the previous decade spreading into coca-producing territories, the guerrilla had accrued enough funds and new fighters to launch a major offensive against the Colombian state. Despite some early gains, the FARC's progress was halted by the heavily reinforced military. To make matters worse, the rebels saw its enemies multiply as a consequence of the meteoric rise to prominence of paramilitarism and a bloody divorce with drug cartels. As for the FARC itself, not only did it miscalculate the ability to galvanize the popular support outside of its rearguard, but it also managed to alienate its bases. On top of that, with the Cold War now over and the Soviet Union in disarray, it lost a crucial ideological and financial benefactor.

It is fair to assume that the FARC never genuinely bought into the peace deal with Betancourt. Instead, it stayed true to the "combination of all forms of struggle" principle—reaping benefits from the newly established UP on the one hand, going about their business as usual on the other (Ortiz, 2002). The ceasefire fostered an environment conducive to steady growth: between 1981 and 1986, the number of fronts went from ten to thirty-one (Echandia, 2006). Hence, by the time the 1990s arrived, the FARC was at the peak of its powers. Should the truce fall apart, it was ready to trigger the action plan conceived at the 7th Conference.

With the arrival in power of the President Virgilio Barco (1986-1990), the potential for the above scenario increased exponentially. Barco was suspicious of the rebel's half-hearted attitude to peace, making it clear there will be no further negotiations without disarmament. Rather than via dialogue with the enemy, he looked to advance peace by extending the state presence throughout the national territory. The National Rehabilitation Plan (PNR) was based on a premise that institutional strengthening and development initiatives in marginalized regions will boost the government's legitimacy and, simultaneously, weaken the guerrilla's popular support (Chernick, 1996). The FARC commanders, however, were wary of the plan's military arrière-pensée, a fear made worse by the state's inability to restrain the Public Force and the paramilitaries (González, 2014).

Thus, the talks broke down and conflict intensified. Whereas the government secured peace with various guerrillas in 1990, the FARC repeatedly declined to yield. Apprehensive about the new president Gaviria's neoliberal economic policies and mindful of the M-19 and the EPL's difficult time since demobilization, the rebel group insisted that any peace agreements must "go beyond the narrow approach of the government which attempted to reduce peace to the mere cessation of armed struggle," (Leech, 2011, p.34).

The second half of the 1990s represented the high point in the history of the FARC. After the initial reservations, it was now fully immersed in the drug-trafficking business (Felbab-Brown, 2011). Having established near total hegemony in their strongholds enabled the rebels to expand into areas better integrated in the national state structure (Bottia, 2003). So well fared the FARC against the ineffectual army, it was able to adopt trench warfare in addition to the usual guerrilla tactic (Gonzalez, 2014). Perhaps most remarkably, towards the end of the 1990s, the FARC came close to attempting a siege of Bogota (Aguilera, 2013). In the meantime, embroiled in a dire crisis of governance, President Samper's administration (1994-1998) struggled to hold back the proliferation of the guerrilla.

The emboldened insurgents continued to take advantage of the existing state absence, while also targeting state institutions to create even more vacuums of power (CNMH, 2014). This was accomplished via direct attacks on police stations, as well as with the use of threats against the representatives of local governments, prosecutors and judges (Echandia 2004). The expansion into territories without state and engagement in governance remained the guerrilla's claim to legitimacy on occasion of political negotiations. At the turn of the century, the FARC's then leader, Manuel Marulanda, declared: "we are the authority in a large part of the national

territory … In reality, we are a government inside a government and because of that we are looking for recognition as a belligerent force," (Aguilar, 2013, p.96).

By authorizing the *El Caguán DMZ* demilitarized zone in 1999, President Andres Pastrana granted said recognition of the FARC's power. Hoping to facilitate a new attempt at peace negotiations, the Colombian government demilitarized 42,000 km^2 of land across five municipalities in the south of the country, handing it over to the guerrilla. The move was historically significant inasmuch as it made formal what had already been the reality in Colombia: the state's renouncement of sovereignty over a portion of its national territory. The "demilitarization" consisted of, among other things, retiring the Public Force and all judicial authorities from the region. Although mayors and local governments remained in place, the lack of accompanying executive power meant their authority in the zone was close to null. This allowed the FARC to pursue strategies of dual power. The rebel "government inside the government" enacted laws, levied taxes, set up judicial structures, policed communities, etc. (CNMH, 2014). The *zona de despeje* served as "a display window for the insurgents to put on show an alternative government project for a domestic and international audience. The result has been the affirmation of the FARC as a parallel state," (Ortiz, 2002, p.136). The negotiations proved an unmitigated fiasco, with neither side fully committed nor willing (Felbab-Brown, 2011). The utter disillusionment with peace talks didn't subside among Colombians until a decade later.

At the same time, the democratic opening of the early 1990s unlocked new courses of action in the FARC's struggle for power. The 1991 Constitution's shift towards decentralization meant, among other things, that mayors were now to be voted for in popular elections while sizable funds routed directly to local governments. These developments came to be seen by illegal armed groups as an opportunity to penetrate state institutions with the aim to bolster their influence over old territories and to breach new ones. As for the FARC, the insurgent group formed close alliances with candidates for political posts at the local level, reproducing the vintage forms of clientelism from the times of bipartisan violence. Where any trace of disobedience was manifested or suspected, the guerrilla relied on physical elimination of local political classes, exacerbating the erosion of the state even further (Ortiz, 2002).

Considering the geographical expansion, burgeoning new fronts and diversification of strategies, the guerrilla's modes of interaction with civilian population became less and less homogenous during this period. In general, we can talk about three categories of territories with strong FARC presence, each with its unique insights into the group's relationship with

local communities (CNMH, 2014, p. 175). In the rearguard, exchanging of loyalty for provision of services and security continued in a more or less stable manner. In disputed areas, the same mode was used, albeit in more erratic ways. As for the territories recently controlled, the guerrilla played the role of an occupying force, meaning it came to rely more heavily on terror and violence towards civilians.

The strengthening of the military and the emergence of a powerful rival in the shape of paramilitary organization, forced the FARC, along with other guerrillas, to abandon the familiar patterns of governance in the heavily militarized areas. Various regions of the country changed hands from one day to another, while borders between enemy territories were becoming ever more nebulous. The legitimacy factor had virtually no weight in this phase of the conflict. A short-term horizon and the thirst for resources favored coercion and predation, rather than establishing systems of governance, as means of gaining territorial dominance (Gutierrez, 2004; Pecaut, 2000). Furthermore, the fact that civilian population was a source of an economic, political, moral and logistic advantage, automatically transformed it into a high-value military objective for competing non-state armed groups during this period (Echandia, 2004). In other words, to weaken the enemy, all organizations targeted their enemies' networks of civilian support.

This indiscriminate use of force and senseless persecution of civilians (via terrorism, massacres and kidnapping) cost the FARC much of its popular support by the end of the period in question (CNMH, 2014). The inability to foster sympathy for its cause in new regions, particularly urban areas, contributed to the failure of the Strategic Plan to taking over power (Richani, 2002). With the civilian support for the rebels diminishing, the military found it easier to pounce (Leech, 2011). Major investments made into the army as part of the *Plan Patriota* and Plan Colombia allowed it to break the cordon around the capital, chase the guerrilla away from the strategic territories, and cut it off from critical sources of income (Aguilera, 2013). All in all, in this epoch, the rebel group saw many of its leaders and mid-level officers killed in combat, strategic territories lost and a significant chunk of their foot soldiers missing due to desertion. By the time it was over, the FARC had gone back to square one, pushed to the margins of the country with a seriously depleted manpower.

2.1.4. From *Plan Renacer* to Havana negotiations and final demobilization

The last period in the FARC's history runs from 2008 until the demobilization in 2017. The two central developments of that era were the *Plan Renacer* and the Havana peace negotiations.

The former was a strategy drawn up by the newly appointed commander, Alfonso Cano, aimed at reversing the territorial losses inflicted upon the guerrilla by the policies of the Uribe administration. Plan Renacer was, in essence, a return to the basics. The FARC readopted guerrilla warfare—mostly hit-and-run tactics carried out by small, decentralized and mobile units. Rather than prolonged combat in an open field, the rebels now resorted to a combination of explosives, anti-personnel mines, snipers and harassing fire. This new modus operandi, rooted in psychological warfare, took a serious toll on increasingly battle fatigued soldiers of the Colombian armed forces (Valencia & Ávila, 2011).

At the same time, in urgent need of more revenues, the FARC aligned itself closer with drug-trafficking organizations. While dealing with organized crime was not necessarily a new development, the fact that among these organizations were groups rooted in the paramilitary movements, until recently the fiercest of enemies, spoke to the sense of desperation by the rebel group. With that being so, the financial benefits flowing from these ties certainly helped the insurgent group shake off the offensive by the military forces and get back on its feet.

What came at the cost of the major territorial losses was the wilting of the FARC's social and political capital. Under Cano's leadership, the group devised an ambitious plan in function of recovering the lost influence (from broad political fronts to formation of ideological bases to international cooperation, etc.). Cano was aware that restoring popular support was a prerequisite if the FARC were to successfully challenge the state again. Yet, the breakneck growth of the previous decade caused a loss of internal ideological cohesion and estrangement from the society. Wary of the above conundrum, the new commander insisted on more political training of the troops (Leech, 2011). Hence, in spite of its turn towards criminal revenues, many aspects of the guerrilla's governance remained unchanged (Chernick, 2005).

However, the FARC's political work was falling on increasingly deaf ears. There was a growing sense that the guerrilla had undergone a "political involution" (Sanchez, 2000, p.286). The damage produced by quick-returns coercive measures such as kidnapping, death threats, planting of anti-personnel mines around coca plantations, recruitment of children (as a compensation for the growing number of desertions), *paros armados* (restrictions on mobility), and overbearing taxation began to outweigh the benefits of the guerrilla order. As Gutierrez (2004) puts it "the tensions between the economic and political dimensions of the organization of anger has put an ocean of blood between the guerrillas and the peasants," (p.280). The blossoming affair with drug-trafficking further added to the legitimacy crisis of the rebel group. Communities satiated with violence no longer perceived the FARC as their protector (Hough,

2011). Protests against violence, and the FARC, were more and more widespread (CNMH, 2014). The deterioration the relationship was complete and, to this day, the guerrilla hasn't recovered the trust of civilian population, as demonstrated time and again by elections and opinion polls.

While weakened, the FARC remained perfectly capable of carrying out large-scale military assaults. In fact, a series of coordinated lethal attacks came just days after the swearing in of President Juan Manuel Santos in 2010 (Leech, 2011). The "mutually hurting stalemate" seemed destined to last (Segura & Mechoulan, 2017). The Santos' administration was thus faced with a choice: to continue Alvaro Uribe's bloodstained pursuit of a military victory over the guerrilla or seek peace. It came somewhat as a surprise when Santos, Uribe's Minister of Defense, opted for the latter. Meanwhile, there was a growing sensation among the FARC command that the glory days of the 1990s may never return. A succession of heavy losses at the leadership level, including that of the historic commander Marulanda, shook the rebels' confidence. When Cano was killed in action in 2011, the FARC felt compelled to take a seat at a negotiation table.

Since the *DMZ Caguán*, the rebel group had seen its membership trimmed from 20,000 to just around 7,000. It bears repeating, however, that the FARC had not been militarily defeated. Time and again throughout history, the guerrilla managed to adapt to the circumstances and weather the storm. In spite of the major blows received in the preceding years, its activity was on the rise again since 2011 (the mounting attacks were arguably a strategic move aimed at improving their bargaining positions ahead of the peace talks). What is significant is that the FARC remained an undisputed authority in many of its strongholds. With more deleterious fund-raising activities scaled down for the duration of the Havana negotiations, the guerrilla pursued further diversification of its sources of income to now include gold mining, illegal logging and cattle rustling (CNMH, 2014).

2.2. Negotiations and 2016 Peace Accord

In this last section of the context chapter, the final stage of the FARC history is linked with the lead up to the Havana peace negotiations. After an outline of how the two parties to the conflict sat down to talk, and how the peace deal was reached, the document of the accords is briefly examined with special attention paid to the chapters relevant to security in post-demobilization.

2.2.1. Lead-up to Havana Peace Negotiations

As mentioned before, after taking the office, President Santos began to sound out the possibility of holding a new round of peace talks with the FARC. From the beginning, his stand with

respect to some key issues (e.g., land redistribution) revealed room for confluence with the guerrilla (Leal Buitrago, 2011). By sanctioning the Victims and Land Restitution Law, Santos recognized the political background of the Colombian conflict (something that Uribe had denied), bolstered the human rights law and showed a good-will gesture to the national and, perhaps more importantly, international community alarmed with state of affairs in the country (Martinez, 2013). Likewise, it was interpreted as a signal to the FARC that consensus is possible. With that being said, the legacy of the DMZ Caguán made Santos' life difficult in that large sections of the society remained anxious about the viability of negotiating with the FARC.

Initially, the new administration reached out to the FARC command in 2011 via exploratory talks. The following year, having laid the necessary groundwork, the two parties established negotiations —first secretive, then official—to be held on neutral ground in Cuba, and mediated by the international community[17] (Norway and Cuba went on to play a pivotal role in the discussions, averting various crises and providing substantial support to both sides) (Segura & Mechoulan, 2017). The negotiating teams agreed to follow a simple rule with regards to the outcome of the talks: "nothing is agreed until everything is agreed" (CNMH, 2014). In the end, the adopted six-point agenda was well-defined and relatively straightforward—compared to some of the previous attempts at peace, the new proposal didn't call for a complete overhaul of the political system or a new constitution (e.g., the economic sphere was largely omitted). Thus, reaching a final agreement was more feasible. The themes were as follows: (I) comprehensive rural reform; (II) political participation; (III) an end to the conflict; (IV) a solution to illicit drugs problem; (V) victims; and (VI) implementation and verification mechanisms (Final Agreement, 2016).

The FARC considered themselves as representatives of the nation who invoked the right to rebellion in response to organized state violence. As such, the guerrilleros rejected any prospective jail sentences (CNMH, 2014). What the rebels did agree to was unilateral ceasefire. The government insisted in this solution to avoid a repeat of the Caguán scenario, whereby the guerrilla took advantage of the truce in order to reinforce. In addition, Santos used it to assert the state's position of strength and quell criticism at home. In return for their apparent commitment to peace, the government passed the Framework Law for Peace—an amendment

[17] It has to be noted that whilst the UN played a valuable role in the Colombian peace process, the possibility of an international intervention and deployment of the 'blue helmets' was out of question for the Colombian authorities who have traditionally repudiated the 'failed state' label or any insinuation thereof.

to the constitution that incentivized the FARC's participation in the DDR by offering reduced or suspended sentences for human rights abuses (Carlin, McCoy & Subotic, 2016). Unsurprisingly, the question of legal responsibility was to become one of the most contentious elements of the entire peace process.

As for the methodology, Segura & Mechoulan (2017) explain that "the process was guided by a search for the middle ground between two opposite ways of understanding the conflict in Colombia: between the FARC's 'positive peace,' which relied on the argument that there cannot be peace until there is full and complete social justice; and the view of "negative peace" traditionally held by the state, which understands peace merely as the absence of violence," (p.13-14). Ultimately, the two sides agreed that peacebuilding is the forerunner for the kind of organic, far-reaching transformation envisioned by the FARC. What was rather novel in the context of peace negotiations in Colombia was the ample presence of diverse civil society organizations in Havana. In hope of procuring the much-needed legitimacy for the negotiations, the government invited numerous groups to contribute to the talks with their distinct perspectives.

The first two points on the agenda were agreed upon by late 2013. Yet, from then on, the talks slowed down, rocked by disagreements at the table and various security crises in the country. However, after four years of deliberation, a full agreement was reached in August 2016. In spite of being advised against it, President Santos stood firm in his conviction to submit the final decision to a vote. Once again, he considered it necessary that the document enjoyed the privilege of social legitimacy. Following many months of campaigns throughout the country, he might have been under the impression that the 'yes' vote would win. Shockingly, the opposite was true, as the political polarization came to a head and a large share of Colombians felt no ownership over the process. The outcome of the vote was a major setback and sent the decision-makers back to the drawing board. Just the same, the accords were then renegotiated and modified in dialogue with members of the opposition. They were soon approved by the Colombian Congress (Muñoz & Pachón, 2020).

Next, some 13,000 FARC combatants began the disarmament and demobilization procedure, moving into special transitory camps (*Zonas Veredales Transitorias de Normalización*, ZVTN), overseen by the UN. The process being up and running notwithstanding, the repercussions of the lost referendum were lasting—instead of more legitimate, the peace process was undermined right from the get-go. The lingering mistrust would lead to the victory of a peace skeptic presidential candidate, Ivan Duque, in 2018.

2.2.2. Final Agreement

The 2016 Peace Process recognizes state absenteeism as a crucial structural driver of the violence that has tormented Colombia for eons. The framing of the accords coincides with a diagnosis best summed up by the quip from the former vice-president Gustavo Bell: "Colombia has more geography than state," (Uribe, Otero-Bahamón & Peñaranda, 2020, p.90). Although the narrative coming from La Habana about the necessity to promote the expansion of the state in conflict-affected areas isn't new, the serious manner in which the text addresses the issue garnered some enthusiasm.

Never before had the territorial perspective of the conflict featured so prominently on the peace agenda. The two negotiating parties coincided in their diagnosis that in order to have a transformative impact, peacebuilding in Colombia had to take into account the fragmentation of the national territory and disproportionate legacies of conflict in peripheral, rural areas. The preamble reads: "The central pillar of peace is the promotion of the presence and the effective operation of the state throughout the country, especially throughout the many regions that are today afflicted by neglect, by the lack of an effective civil service and by the effects of the internal armed conflict itself; that it is an essential goal of national reconciliation to construct a new territorial-based welfare and development paradigm to the benefit of broad sectors of the population that have hitherto been the victims of exclusion and despair," (Final Agreement, 2016, p.3).

Such was the significance of the spatial dimension of the conflict for the negotiators in Havana, that the High Commissioner for Peace, Sergio Jaramillo, branded the agreements "territorial peace." In short, the assumption was that—prompted by the demobilization of the FARC—the state would be presented with a unique opportunity to expand into the marginalized regions of the country and repay its historical debt to the communities affected by conflict (Cairo et al., 2018). Scratching the surface, however, we are faced with a polysemic concept, in which territorial peace can at once denote: "greater territorial integration, greater social inclusion—especially of those who have existed on the fringes of development and have suffered from the conflict … strengthening [of] democracy, bringing it to all corners of the country and ensuring that social conflicts can be resolved through institutional channels, with full guarantees for those taking part in politics," (Final Agreement, 2016, p.6).

Reflecting the above, the practical scope of territorial peace was sweeping. The agreements outlined numerous pathways of state expansion in the abandoned territories: via development, democracy, infrastructure, public services, etc. Arguably the most important among them, particularly in the earlier stages of transition, was the state's guarantee of security and protection to its citizens. After all, both tend to be at a premium in post-conflict scenarios. In the case of Colombia, at stake laid one of the main objectives of the agreement—provision of "the right of society to comprehensive human security," (Final Agreements, 2016, p.3). It was clear that should the Colombian state fail to protect this right and find no adequate response to insecurity, the whole intricate political process ran the risk of collapsing before taking root.

It is no surprise, then, that the text of the peace agreements abounds in articles and clauses dedicated to the notion of security in the aftermath of conflict and beyond. They can be roughly divided into two broad categories. The first category consists of those initiatives devised to improve security in Colombia in a coercive manner. Conceived mostly as law-enforcement measures (under the jurisdiction of the military and the police), they counter the symptoms of violence. The other category encompasses designs likely to advance security via improved institutional offer and increased state legitimacy. Provisions in the latter category are intended to have a more structural character and target drivers, or root causes, of conflict, as well as the push-pull factors that produce violence.

As far as security in post-conflict Colombia is concerned, the most important passage of the Accords is Chapter III (2016), which pertains to the "end of conflict," and specifically sets out a comprehensive agenda of "security guarantees and the fight against criminal organizations" (section 3.4). Indeed, the chapter offers a number of guiding principles and more specific interventions designed to address major organized crime-related security concerns in post-war Colombia. However, Chapter III is not the only item in the Agreement that brings different security aspects into focus. Indeed, many of the sections refer to the same concepts or measures and, as such, are interconnected on multiple levels.

Below, I take a closer look at the most fundamental items in the peace Accords of relevance to the security situation in post-conflict Colombia. The goal is to highlight the most significant resolutions established with clear intention of preventing the undesirable consequences of violence and insecurity in post-conflict. I analyze the applicable fragments in a chronological order, as they appear in the Accords document.

In the first Chapter of the Agreements on *Rural Development*, the notion of security is brought up in a more structural sense. Right from the beginning of the chapter, security is discussed as

one of the underlying objectives of the rural reform. The stated aim is to "reverse the consequences of the conflict and change the conditions that made the persistence of violence in rural Colombia viable," (p.10). Central to this is the promotion of access to land, one of the original causes of conflict. Regularizing property ownership rights would benefit small-scale farmers and those gravely affected by violence and conflict (p.16). What is, *de facto*, a redistribution scheme would, according to the document, lead to the removal of exclusion and backwardness from across rural Colombia.

As would the provision of public goods and services via the Development Programs with a Territorial-Based Focus (*Planes de Desarrollo con Enfoque Territorial*—PDET). These planning and management instruments reveal a prominent decentralizing facet of the Accords. Fostering popular participation and consultation in decision-making and governance process, the PDETs aim at bottom-up transformation of the reality of the Colombian countryside (Cairo et al. 2018). They are perhaps the single most far-reaching initiative reverting state absence in across rural Colombia to-date.

Elsewhere, the rural reform is expected to promote certain mechanisms to resolve conflicts concerning possession and use of land, e.g., by stimulating participative community intervention in conflict resolution. Likewise, the government is expected to set in motion a new rural land legal system, with mechanisms that guarantee access to justice. All of this is essential in answering of land grievances, settlement of land feuds and early prevention of violence in the countryside.

Chapter II of the Accords pertains to *Political Participation and a democratic opening*. This item focuses its attention on the rights and guarantees to exercise the role of political opposition on all levels: in national government and by political parties, but also in local settings and by other forms of organizations and social movements. This, of course, was one of the core demands made by the FARC delegates in Havana. Much like land issues, the restrictive nature of Colombia's democracy is recognized as one of the lead causes of conflict.

As far as security matters are concerned, Chapter II makes numerous references to State-sponsored safe-keeping. As opposed to Chapter I, the approach here is more of a direct one, with the intention of providing immediate relief to violence and vulnerability. In the most relevant passage, the chapter introduces the Comprehensive Security System for the Exercise of Politics (SISEP). By implementing the SISEP framework, the government vows to establish maximum possible guarantees "for the exercising of politics, thereby using democracy as a channel for the settlement of disputes and conflicts, contributing in a decisive manner to the

creation of a climate of coexistence and reconciliation," (p.37). Although this measure is designed predominantly to protect the demobilized FARC combatants, it is equally applicable to leaders of social organizations and movements, who frequently fall victim to harassment and assassination attempts by illegal actors in transition.

Speaking in more practical terms, the government pledges to strengthen its institutional capacity to prevent, dismantle, and neutralize any possible source of violence against those exercising politics. What's more, for the first time, the Accord goes as far as to explicitly name the threat, declaring to take every necessary measure to "ensure that there is no resurgence of paramilitary groups," (p.38) The document sees preventive security programs as crucial to curbing of violence in transition and beyond. Thus, the government planned to revamp the Early-Warning System (*Alertas Tempranas*). The system was to combine permanent monitoring and early warning activities. It would function in coordination with human rights organizations and communities, offering preventive security deployment based on monitoring and mapping activities.

As far as protection is concerned, the document suggests carrying out specialized programs for the post-FARC political party, as well as for other at-risk elected officials, leaders of opposition parties and movements. Risk evaluation procedures are to be put in place, and all necessary resources to protect individuals involved in politics and attend to their specific needs are to be made available. Lastly, the Agreement sets up a special committee "to provide impetus for investigations into crimes against those exercising politics and especially against those posing a threat to the opposition," (p.40). The commission is also to assess the progress of dismantling of criminal organizations that constitute a serious threat to those exercising politics.

As mentioned in the introduction, the Chapter III of the Agreement (*The End of Conflict*) is by far the most important item with regards to security in post-conflict Colombia. First and foremost, it offers a detailed account of the terms of the bilateral ceasefire, the cessation of hostilities and the laying down of arms. Under Chapter III, the government and the FARC reaffirm their commitment to creation of a "modern, qualitatively new concept of security that, within the context of the end of the conflict, is based on respect for human dignity, promotion of and respect for human rights and defense of democratic values," (p.37). In this chapter, a roadmap to provision of security guarantees and fight against criminal organizations is sketched out. The measures listed here are meant to be more direct in nature and have immediate effect on the security situation in the country.

In the first three sections of the Chapter, the ceasefire, disarmament and reincorporation of former FARC combatants into civilian life are discussed in more detail. In this segment, the

rules for the DDR are set, along with the major milestones and the agreed timelines. It also offers insight into the Transitional Local zones for Normalization, and more specifically, the logistics and security considerations guiding the process of transitioning into these spaces. Finally, in section 3.2., the political, social and economic reincorporation of the former FARC combatants is scrutinized.

Let us now turn our attention to the key section 3.4. Listed among the principles behind the measures in this key passage are: respect, guarantee of protection and promotion of human rights, establishing of monopoly of force by the state, fortification of the administration of justice, accountability and guarantees of no-repetition, etc.

One of the most noteworthy measures included in this chapter is the establishment of the National Commission on Security Guarantees for the dismantling of criminal organizations and criminal acts. The launching of the commission is related to section 2.1.2.1. insofar as it has as its goal tackling and dismantling of criminal organizations, as well as prosecution of punishable conduct. Within this jurisdiction, the body has a long list of responsibilities, from drawing up action plans and evaluating institutional responses to recommending reforms.

Alongside the commission, the Accords propose to set up a Special Investigation Unit for the dismantling of criminal organizations and criminal acts. The mandate of this unit shall involve: investigation, prosecution and indictment of criminal organizations and behaviors responsible for homicides, massacres or systematic violence, and for threats or acts against persons who participate in peacebuilding. This body shall help to strengthen justice and contribute to the dismantling of the organizations that have been labelled as successors of paramilitarism, which shall in turn guarantee non-recurrence of the paramilitary phenomenon, prevent the perpetration of new human rights violations and thereby help build a stable and long-lasting peace.

As a guarantee of immediate state action against criminal organizations and their transgressions, the state shall integrate an Elite Corps unit into the National Police forces. The members of the corps shall adhere to the highest standards of suitability, transparency and effectiveness. Additionally, the Agreement insists on provision of basic guarantees for the performance of office by prosecutors, judges and other public servants. Elsewhere, the document introduces a Comprehensive Security and Protection Program for the Communities and Organizations across the Country's Territories. The program is intended for vulnerable communities and organizations, and shall promote the following measures: legitimization and recognition of human rights and coexistence, alternative mechanisms for resolving conflicts,

protocols for protection of rural territories, and strengthening of reporting capability of human rights organizations across rural Colombia.

Another important clause from the perspective of security in post-conflict is the Implementation of a National Mechanism for Territorial Supervision of Private Security and Surveillance Services. The purpose of this mechanism is to ensure that the use of private security and surveillance services corresponds to the purposes for which they were created, placing an emphasis on the prohibition of the privatization of the military, police or intelligence. Furthermore, the government declares its determination to promote measures for the prevention of and fight against corruption. In order to avoid instances of corruption and economic crimes, as well as to contain the expansion of criminal organizations (particularly its penetration of the political sphere), the state pledges to foster a culture of transparency across the country's territories, and to provide instruments of oversight and verification.

Lastly, in the critical section 3.4, plea agreements with criminal organizations are briefly introduced. As means of strengthening the guarantees of security and to facilitate the creation of favorable conditions for peacebuilding, the government, along with the judiciary, is to present a draft law to promote plea agreements with the aforementioned organizations. This, of course, is a measure promoting demobilization of illegal actors in post-conflict transition.

The last item in the Agreement with particular relevance to the post-conflict security situation is Chapter IV on *Solution to the Illicit Drugs Problem*. In this article, both short-term, law-enforcement and long-term, structural measures are considered. The problem of illicit drugs has traditionally been a major contributing factor to the durability of the Colombian conflict. The persistence of illicit crops has, in turn, been linked to the existence of conditions of poverty, marginalization, weak presence of institutions and, naturally, the continuation of criminal organizations dedicated to drug trafficking. Therefore, in an attempt at construction of a long-lasting peace, the State has as its priority to find a definitive solution to the problem of illicit drugs. Article IV puts forward a number of measures designed with that very purpose in mind. At the forefront of this solution are programs stimulating substitution of crops used for illicit purposes and environmental regeneration of the areas affected by such crops (*Programa Nacional Integral de Sustitución de Cultivos de Uso Ilícito*—PNIS). This structural, community-based, voluntary scheme is intended to be integrated into the Comprehensive Rural Reform (CRR). The aim here is to, inter alia, overcome conditions of poverty in rural communities, promote voluntary substitution of crops used for illicit purposes, create policies and productive opportunities for growers, as well as employment opportunities and policies for

harvesters and share-croppers. In addition, the purpose of the substitution plan is to contribute to the closure of the agricultural frontiers, regeneration of ecosystems and sustainable development, to strengthen small-scale farmer's organizations, to build up the relationships of trust, solidarity, coexistence, and reconciliation within communities, and to ensure that the Colombia is free from crops used for illicit purposes, whilst respect for human rights, the environment and well-being is restored (Final Agreement, 2016, p.110-111).

Notwithstanding, the most significant passage of Chapter IV in terms of security in transition is section 4.1.3.1.—"Security conditions for the communities and territories affected by crops used for illicit purposes." Apart from amelioration of the economic and social aspects of rural life, the sustainability of developmental programs will be determined by effective security provision. According to the text of the Accords, this will be achieved by increasing the presence of state institutions in the Colombian countryside and strengthening their capabilities to protect communities from coercion and threat, as well as to "interdict and prosecute territorial-based drug trafficking networks in accordance with the security concept laid out in the Final Agreement." (p.113).

Similarly, the Agreement discusses tackling production and selling of narcotics. With the aim to overcome the challenge of organized crime associated with drug trafficking and money laundering, the two signatory parties pledge to "implement policies and programs to disable the factors and mechanisms that give rise to and maintain the problem of production and selling of illicit drugs and profiting therefrom," (p.127). Later on, the Chapter mentions the necessity to clarify the relationship between production and selling of illicit drugs and conflict, including the relationship between paramilitaries and drug trafficking.

In a similar vein, the government declares the launching of a criminal policy strategy. In addition to a comprehensive strategy to fight corruption, this strategy would "strengthen and qualify the presence and effectiveness of institutions and concentrate their capabilities in the investigation, prosecution and punishment of crimes associated with any organization or criminal group involved in the production and selling of illicit drugs," (p.128). In more detail, the established investigative groups will have the ability to understand local, regional, national and transnational dynamics of crime, and to prevent the emergence of new groups dedicated to organized crime.

As seen above, the text of the Final Agreement between the Colombian Government and the FARC guerrilla abounds in items and measures aimed at improving the security situation in post-demobilization. Diverse in nature, the strategies here affect different aspects of security

and are designed to exercise impact at various state levels and at distinctive time frames. In short, it can be argued that, on paper, the Agreement demonstrated a good understanding of the security challenges to be expected once the FARC abandons its position.

Chapter 3. Literature review

The following chapter explores two strands of literature of relevance to security in post-demobilization zones: the literature on rebel governance and the literature on stabilization. For this reason, it is divided into two parts.

In the first part, theory on rebel governance is considered. The chapter starts with a general discussion on the reasons for which non-state armed groups exercise forms of governance in territories they control. In the process, it covers a diverse range of orders installed by illegal armed groups in territories with limited-to-no state presence. It then pinpoints the main characteristics of governance by non-state armed groups. Next, it deliberates on the impact governance by non-state armed groups has on civilian security. Finally, this section scrutinizes territorial control as the key factor determining the kind of order governance and, in consequence, the nature of the armed group's interactions with civilians.

The purpose of the above is to review what the literature on rebel governance tells us about a scenario whereby a governing non-state armed groups demobilizes. In other words, the following section identifies the factors that may determine the security dynamics after demobilization of a non-state armed actor previously holding sway over a given territory. Interpreting the patterns of behavior by non-state armed groups, along with their determinants, may be a source of knowledge on the level of violence and crime to be expected in post-conflict and post-demobilization scenarios. Therefore, it is key in formulating security and peacebuilding agendas.

In the second part of this chapter, potential responses at state level to the above scenarios within the context of peacebuilding are examined. In other words, this section reviews the array of strategies states can implement in order to manage transitions away from non-state armed groups governance and promote security in the aftermath of demobilization. The study then zeroes in on stabilization as an approach best suited to promote the above goals.

3.1. Rebel governance

As seen in the overview of the Colombian conflict, state absenteeism rarely results in an utter absence of authority. Notwithstanding the reductive labels, such as "black spots" or "ungoverned territories," until recently common in geopolitical parlance, conflict zones with limited-to-no state presence are hardly ever Hobbesian anomies consumed by anarchy. On the

contrary, in civil wars, non-state armed actors[18] regularly employ some form of governance; at times remarkably consensual, legitimate and effective. In fact, such is the degree to which certain non-state armed groups emulate the state that they have led scholars to describe the territories they govern as states-within-state (Kingston & Spears, 2004; Keister, 2011).

There are many appealing definitions of the phenomenon of governance by non-state armed actors. Weinstein (2007), for instance, comes up with the following interpretation:

> "A rebel government exists when and where (1) a rebel group exercises control over territory, (2) it establishes institutions within or outside of its military to manage relations with the civilian population, and (3) these institutions set in place a series of formal or informal rules that define a hierarchy of decision making and a system of taxation," (p.164).

Arjona (2009) echoes Weinstein when she emphasizes territorial control (either partial or total) and "the establishment of rules or institutions to regulate civilian populations, the relations between combatants and civilians, or both," as indicators of rebel governance (p.3). Kasfir (2015) simplifies the above while maintaining the core assumptions that rebel governance occurs whenever rebels "engage residents in an area they significantly control to pursue a common objective," (p.22). In short, territorial control and, more or less, institutionalized interactions with civilians are the two basic preconditions seemingly required for the phenomenon to arise. Nevertheless, the complexity of the notion of governance renders any simple definitions restricted. In the next two sub-sections, some fundamental questions about the phenomenon of rebel governance are answered.

3.1.1. Why do non-state armed groups govern?

Scholars have extensively explored the reasons for non-state armed actors' governance in territories where the state falters (Wickham-Crowley, 1987; Arjona, Kasfir & Mampilly, 2015; Kasfir, 2005). Multifarious as they are, the incentives non-state actors have to provide political

[18] The preferred term used by scholars in the field is that of rebel or insurgent organizations, defined by Kasfir (2008) as actors "engaged in protracted violence with the intention of gaining undisputed political control over all or a portion of a pre-existing state's territory" (p.4). However, with the blurring of boundaries between the rationale for armed struggle, political control over a region can be an objective of otherwise non-political actors who have no broader ambitions to overthrow central governments. That being so, I concur with Jentzsch, Kalyvas & Schubiger (2015) that "research on internal armed conflict must depart from its tendency to equate the concepts of 'armed group' and 'rebel group' and abandon its canonical focus on state and insurgent actors as sole providers of wartime political order and violence" (p.11). Following Kasfir et al. (2017), "it is possible to adopt this broader definition of armed groups instead of rebels, without the loss of explanatory power already existing in the current rebel governance literature," (p.260). Hence, I use more inclusive terms *non-state/illegal armed group* interchangeably.

and social order are generally rational and rather self-interested. In simple terms, it is presupposed that by exploiting the benefits of an effective and legitimate system of governance, violent entrepreneurs procure civilian loyalty, which in turn improves their chances of overcoming their armed competitors and achieving other strategic objectives. Conversely, failing to engage in governance essentially means non-state armed actors rely on terror in its interactions with civilians. This is likely to spark resistance and weaken their chances of success.

The bulk of the academic discussion on the determinants of non-state armed groups' approach to governance can be sliced up into two approaches. These two reflect a larger trend in the analysis of conditions that lead to civil wars, first introduced by Collier (2003): the dichotomy of greed and grievance. In short, the two distinct motives that incite actors to pick up arms are then at play in their decision whether to engage in governance. Until recently, the two major sources of insights on rebel governance were studies by rebels or military historians and political economists.

First, let us briefly touch upon literature that identified ideology and the guerrilla warfare strategies as the leading influence behind the rebels' decision to engage in complex governance. This view originates from the writings of famed revolutionaries and military theoreticians, and is embedded in the era of ideological rebellions of the 20th century. It presupposes that, since non-state armed groups championing popular causes are born of grievance, they should, by definition, be inclined to protect the interests of a particular social stratum or the society at large. The ideological profile of the group is important in that it determines its time-line (i.e., ideologically driven organizations tend to operate under long-time horizon [(Arjona, 2009]). Since the benefits of engaging in governance are likely to be reaped in the long run, such behavior will be prudent as long as there exists, what Weinstein (2007) refers to as, long-term commitment (most commonly it's a commitment to taking over state power).

However, more than just aligned with ideological beliefs of the revolutionaries, the close relationship with the civilian population can be seen as sensible from the propaganda standpoint: by offering just governance, the insurgency legitimizes its own armed struggle, while at the same time weakening the position of its enemy, e.g., the incumbent state (Ahmad, 1982). The two most influential figures to disseminate the significance of the insurgent's positive engagement with the local population, Mao Zedong (1961) and Ernesto "Che" Guevara (1969), had it clear: cooperation and not violence shall generate popular support for

the revolutionary agenda. In order to progress and defeat the enemy, a guerrilla has to win the hearts and minds of the populations (Thompson 1989; Trinquier, 2006). Guaranteeing order and provision of public goods to fulfil the basic needs of the population was, if nothing else, the pre-eminent propaganda tool, "creating the necessary atmosphere for helping the rebel troops," (Guevara, 1969, p.81). Popular support brought immediate and tangible rewards: food supplies and access to recruitment pools, among other things. Thus, according to this line of reasoning, a non-state armed actor's pursuit of more consensual governance was a valuable means of gaining the upper hand in the revolutionary struggle.

While the ideology argument shouldn't be disregarded altogether (especially because its propaganda aspect is pragmatic at the same time), its explanatory powers as to why non-state armed groups govern have been deemed limited in more contemporary settings[19]. The opposing view rejects ideology in favor of more practical, economic considerations. Because material interest takes precedent over ideology, or so say the proponents of this hypothesis, even those groups with a strong political profile are ultimately driven to governance by more immediate concerns[20]. Simply put, violent actors construct governmental structures to enhance their revenue-generating capacity.

In a way of exposition of the argument, let's consider the following sequence of events. In a conflict scenario, defeating the competitor is contingent on your capacity to access funds for war-making. Such funds are best acquired by extracting resources from the population (or with the help of population) in a given territory. While it is possible—and perhaps the easiest—to extract the necessary resources with the use of coercion only, armed actors may not rely on looting of the population in perpetuity (sooner or later, they will simply run out of resources for looting). Thus, in order to access more funds for war-making, these groups are much better off with a sustainable system of taxation rather than occasional plunder. Furthermore, with maximization of profit in mind, the armed actor has an "encompassing interest" in providing the populations with some goods in return for taxes. From the perspective of capital accumulation, the key goods are those fostering the right conditions for labor: public order and

[19] Not least because of the contradictions between the ideological tenets these armed groups allegedly adhere to and their conduct towards civilians in real life.

[20] In his analysis of the National Resistance Army in Uganda, Kasfir (2005) demonstrates how the rebels allowed for extensive civilian participation in governance not just because it aligned with their ideology, but rather to achieve various practical objectives (among other things to avoid losing support as a result of unpopular decisions) (p.291)

security. At the risk of oversimplifying things, this political economy model can be summed up as follows: anarchy and terror are bad for business.

As a matter of fact, the above sequence has been detailed by scholars of state-building in their depiction of the genesis of the Western European states (Tilly, 1985; Mann, 1986; Olson, 1993). The analogies used by these authors suggest that the strategies, such as monopolization of violence, taxation, and provision of goods, applied by non-state armed groups in their spheres of influence in civil conflict mirror the standard processes of state formation at its primordial stages (Sánchez de la Sierra, 2020). Just as states were created as a byproduct of political entities' hunger for more economic prowess, system of governance is the byproduct of the non-state armed actors' greed. In keeping with this notion, rebel governance is not seen as an end, but rather a means to a different end.

This general framework has been elaborated by many other contemporary scholars (Kingston & Spears, 2003; Stokke, 2006; Wickham Crowley, 1987). Weinstein (2007), for instance, goes as far as to claim that rebels engage in governance only when they are incapable of drawing on external endowments[21]. In other words, where rebels lack other avenues to acquire capital, they simply have to depend on their interactions with civilian populations to survive. If the resource extracted from the population in a given territory requires substantial civilian labor, non-state armed actors will opt for governance predominantly with organization of the labor in mind. Thus, more than an intrinsic vocation or a stalwart of any military strategy, governance is a convenience under pressure from circumstances.

Nevertheless, the dualistic approach fails to account for the many contradictions on display when we take a closer look at rebel governance cases from around the world. Studies have shown that neither ideology nor economic interests can, by itself, give us an answer as to why non-state armed actors govern. Groups that are externally endowed, for instance, have been observed to engage in intricate governance, while ideologically-driven insurgents have forgone any attempts at construction of orders in some territories. In short, not only do groups demonstrate variations in strategies between each other, but also within their different iterations (Malaquias, 2001; Kasfir, 2005; Raeymaekers, Menkhaus & Vlassenroot, 2008; Wood, 2003).

[21] Mampilly (2011) questions Weinstein's argument by claiming that rebel groups "have a wide variety of viable funding sources and demonstrate considerable dexterity in switching between available options." (p.14).

For this reason, more recent studies are skeptical of this narrow scope and propose numerous individual characteristics, both endo- and exogenous explaining why armed organizations engage in governance (Mampilly, 2011).

Perhaps the most compelling explanation for rebel governance is offered by Arjona (2016), who sees it as an instrument of territorial control. Regardless of what the organization's ultimate goal may be, adopting some of the functions of an interventionist state allows non-state armed groups to regulate and monitor activities in the territory they aspire to control. Even more than that, Arjona claims that:

> "by intervening in the social, economic, and political realms, rebels can obtain high levels of civilian cooperation, which, in turn, makes territorial control more likely to prevail; they also obtain economic, political, and military benefits, while having the opportunity to put into practice at least part of their ideology," (p.60).

The author also reiterates the importance of efficient non-state institutions in fostering positive reputation of an armed group, which in turn facilitates the all-important cooperation from local communities. Whether implemented as a source of support for the cause or source of income, the simple utilitarian justification is that it improves control and, thus, is the means to sustainability and longevity of the group. In this regard, any non-state armed group interested in controlling territories—be it to convert it into revolutionary outpost or the goose that lays golden eggs—has in its interest to implement elements of governance. We will stick to this view as it offers enough universality to be applicable in diverse contexts.

3.1.2. How do non-state armed groups govern?

The diverse modes in which non-state armed groups govern over civilian populations have been covered by a growing body of literature in recent times (e.g., Arjona, 2016; Arjona, Kasfir & Mampilly, 2015; Kasfir, 2005; Metelits, 2010; Mampilly, 2011; Wickham-Crowley, 1987; Weinstein, 2007). Although insurgent or rebel groups constitute the main object of studies, it is worth mentioning that these alternative models of governance aren't limited to wartime situations only. What's more, guerrillas of various kinds[22] are just one of the non-state armed groups playing the part of the state. As documented by case studies from around the world, similar practices are implemented by other groups in more or less explicit conflict with the

[22] The "insurgents" label has also been stretched out to cover multiple markers: "bandits, rebels, guerrillas, warlords, insurgents or even freedom fighters and terrorists" (Mampilly, 2011, p.8)

state, such as religious militias, vigilante groups, gangs, mafia organizations, etc. (Arias, 2006; Caris & Reynolds, 2014; Gutierrez-Sanin, 2015; Lessing, 2020).

Consequently, there are as many differences as there are analogies between the models of governance established by non-state armed groups in diverse geographical contexts. The Weinstein definition equates governance with the existence of rather multifaceted administrative structures. Nevertheless, Huang (2016) found such par excellence governance model in only 13% of rebel groups. This led scholars to point out a "notable variation in design and degree of institutionalization," among rebels experimenting with some form governance (Cunningham & Loyle, 2021, p.5).

Aiming to capture these variations, several authors have come up with typologies of non-state armed groups' governance. In his classic study on the subject of embryonic states, Olson (1993) introduced the seminal division between actors who engage in governance and those who do not. He demonstrated the advantages of governance by juxtaposing uncoordinated, competitive theft of the roving bandit, with the provision of peaceful order and other public goods to civilians by the stationary bandit. Only the latter, states Olson, eliminates anarchy to guarantee increased productivity and steadier profit for the bandit[23]. An analogous binary categorization is employed by some studies dedicated specifically to non-state armed group's governance. Metelits (2009) differentiates between rebels who build their rapport with civilians on coercion only, i.e., extraction of rents offering nothing in return, and those more inclined to provide public goods to civilians. Likewise, based on his observations from Latin America, Wickham-Crowley (1987) proposes a dichotomy: guerrillas which establish a social contract with peasantry acquire the status of a legitimate authority in the eyes of the population, while guerrillas which "fail to fulfill the obligations of the social contract" see their authority decay. Other categories proposed by scholars are more elaborate, such as the degree to which the rebels stimulate civilian participation in a quasi-state governance (Kasfir, 2008). The typology chosen by Zahar (2001), on the other hand, brings into focus the economic foundations of the interactions between the militias[24] and the civilians, ranging from militias entirely independent of civilians, to militias using predatory or parasitic tactics, to militias living with local populations in symbiosis. In his study, Weinstein (2007), too, looks at the varying degree of

[23] Olson goes on to say that the bandit's decision to settle and commit to governance is what set in motion the construction of contemporary states

[24] By militias Zahar (2001) understands "all nonstate actors who resort to violence in order to achieve their objectives (p.44).

rebel-civilian interactions, coming to a conclusion that there are four types of rebel governments: unilateral military and participatory; unilateral military and non-participatory; joint military-civilian and non-participatory; and joint military-civilian and participatory (p.166). Elsewhere, Arjona (2016) argues that the variations between different regimes have to do with the type of contract binding the group and the population. The three types of social order established by armed group are: domination (in which no social contract is in effect), aliocracy or surveillance (social contract with narrow rebel intervention) and rebelocracy (social contract with broad rebel intervention). Finally, Mampilly (2011) orders insurgents according to the sum of resources devoted to questions of civilian governance. If a group demonstrates broad capacities to shape civilian experiences with governance within the territory they control, their governance is 'effective'. When provision of public goods confines itself to security, we can talk about "partially effective governance." Meanwhile, "noneffective governance" is when there exists "a paucity of structures and practices for managing captive population" (p.17-18).

3.1.3. Coercion and consensus in governance by non-state armed groups

As seen in the above typologies, what best characterizes the nature of non-state armed governance are the interactions between the organization and civilians. In the same spirit, Kasfir (2002) interprets rebel governance as a "range of possibilities for organization, authority, and responsiveness created between guerrillas and civilians," (p.4). To put it differently, when we talk about non-state armed groups' governance, what we really mean are the ways these actors project themselves onto the inhabitants of the territories they control.

The variations in modes of governance hint at a key tension non-state armed groups face when managing this relationship. They must decide whether to pivot on mostly coercive or mostly consensual approach as the cornerstone of the order they establish. Concomitant with that decision are the varying levels of violence used by non-state armed groups to control civilians[25].

Many scholars have written about how both rebel groups and criminal organizations employ violence for a variety of strategic reasons (Staniland, 2012; Weinstein, 2006; Wood, 2010). The roving bandit, a violent actor par excellence, has no interest in occupying any particular

[25] While more consensual forms of non-state armed groups governance tend to foment less insecurity for civilians, their mutual interactions are at no stage entirely devoid of a certain degree of violence. Non-state armed groups seldom move away from selective violence since it is the most effective tool in enforcing compliance and maintaining order (Kalyvas, 2006).

physical territory and, by extension, is less concerned with how civilians perceive it. Fighting, and not governing, is what they use their resources for. Hence, they are typically conformed with pure coercion: their interactions with local communities seldom move beyond looting, intimidation and assault. Coercive strategies can pay off in the short-term, including for the more intricate stationary bandit, as, in the words of Tilly (1992), "coercion works" (p.70), and force often equals compliance. Cooperation attained at gunpoint is cheap and relatively efficient (Keen, 2005). Using the Taliban rule in Afghanistan as an illustration, Kasfir explains that "coercion, which is never absent from civil war, can also form the basis of a political order if civilians consistently obey rebel rules because they dread the consequences while rebels continue to implement their commands on a regular basis," (2015, p.38).

Indeed, violence, or threat thereof, is used by non-state armed groups to create demand for security; a demand which they then offer to meet with their own services (Mehler, 2004). Thus, a sense of co-dependence is forged whereby the violent actor is at the same time the source of security. This twisted logic provides the armed group with a raison d'être. In sum, violence can be considered a rational choice, a low-cost means to an end. Thus, to paraphrase Kasfir, it is never absent from the non-state armed group's rule.

However, whereas sheer physical force might be effective in establishing control, quashing resistance and preserving order, "it is incapable per se of generating that positive sense of loyalty and endurance" from civilians towards non-state armed groups (Wickham-Crowley, 1987, p.494). In other words, coercion may engender satisfactory levels of obedience from civilians, yet it may simply not be enough for the group to prevail in the long term. Some enthusiasm, if only in a small segment of the population, is also necessary if the non-state armed group is to thrive (Arjona, 2016).

We mustn't forget that civilians in conflict zones are much more than just passive or invisible victims (Peclard & Mechoulan, 2015). As a matter of fact, local populations possess considerable agency in that they constitute the support system for the armed actor (i.e., they may or may not provide it with such elementary goods as sanctuary, information, food, supplies, labor force, recruits, etc.) (Johnson, 1998; Mason, 1996). Without some degree of popular support bestowed onto the ruler by the ruled, non-state armed groups may not be able to effectively control territories (Arjona, 2008; Terpstra & Frerks, 2017). Moreover, civilians have a substantial impact on the security of the illegal armed groups. This dependence is best encapsulated in the ability of the local population to defect and denounce the armed group to its direct rivals (Kalyvas, 2006). What's more, Arjona (2016) highlights the central strategic

function of the intelligence provided to the armed organizations by civilian when a degree of affinity is instilled. Thus, as noted by Worrall (2017) "rebels must engage with civilian populations in some way and exercise enough control over them to facilitate their aims," (p.716).

Studies have shown that while there is much to gain from securing civilian loyalty, there is even more to lose from antagonizing the communities sharing the same territory (Gutierrez, 2004; Kalyvas 2006; Förster, 2015; Schlichte, 2009). Incessant acts of predation and violence alienate the host population and, thus, deprive the armed actor of a support system (Wood, 2010). Furthermore, high civilian discontent is detrimental to the group's survival chances, as it can give rise to noncompliance with the command's directives, collaboration with enemy forces (e.g., supplying it with information and carrying out sabotage operations), or forming of resistance cells and militias (Mampilly, 2011). Without a modicum of spontaneous support, the organization loses the best possible source of information and runs a higher risk of being exposed to the enemy.

Therefore, to boost their chances of success, non-state armed groups have to refrain from an overreliance on the violent efficiency of coercion. Echoing Gramsci, they shall be wary that "power rests not only with the ability of a political actor to use violence but also with its ability to generate consent," (Mampilly, 2011, p.52). In the quest for power within the civilian populations, these groups look for a perfect balance of sympathy and fear, employing "a mix of persuasion and coercion," in the process (Kalyvas, 2006, p.102). We can even venture to say that the essence of non-state armed groups' governance lays in their aptitude to continually negotiate the tensions between the use of violence and social legitimacy[26]. This Weberian (1947) transition from raw power to domination is key for any bandit looking to become stationary. This is why, as posited by Schlichte (2009), "converting military power into rule is [rebel organizations'] ultimate task," (p.14). In order to complete this task, illegal armed groups must trade the easy appeal of express violence for the tedious challenge of governance.

Once in control of the territory, illegal armed groups should perceive the use of indiscriminate violence as increasingly disadvantageous and seek legitimacy and support among civilians via non-violent governance mechanisms. The two essential mechanisms to convert control into collaboration, which most evidently reflect the core function of the modern state, are what

[26] When discussing the optimal strategy employed by illegal armed groups to gain approval and access to local networks, Arjona (2016) arrives at "a mix of violence, ideological appeals, promises, and public and private goods," (p.165).

Kalyvas (2006) calls "shielding" and "provision of benefits." In broad strokes, shielding simply means security, i.e., guaranteeing the safety of a local unit in question (whether it would be a clan, ethnic group or local community) and its property (Grävingholt et al., 2007). To perform this function, non-state armed actors commit to prevention of high levels of instability and protection of the population from other violent actors, including the state, as well as from themselves. Scholars of rebel governance seem to agree with Weinstein (2007) that security is the most important of goods a non-state armed group can provide. Mampilly (2011), for example, deems security indispensable for effective governance, as it "allows an insurgency to demonstrate its relative power to civilians, in addition to laying claim to a key component of Weberian sovereignty, that is, the monopoly over the use of violence within a specific territory," (p.63). The urgency attached to defense and policing likewise reverberates in Wickham-Crowley's (1987) observations on fundamental prerequisites of the guerrilla government (p.478). That security is rudimentary even to the more limited social orders established by armed actors is clear from Arjona's concept of aliocracy. Although regulation of security, and sometimes taxation, are the only realms of rule in which the organization intervenes, aliocracy can be enough to uphold territorial control.

In territories where there existed a scarcity of legitimate means of procuring justice, illegal armed actors create alternative judicial mechanisms. Just like protection, administration of justice is key in igniting civilian cooperation as disputes adjudication is among the most appreciated services by civilians. Hence, rebels set up courts and other informal institutions tasked with civil and criminal conflict resolution. They do so in an effort to engender order or acquire legitimacy in the eyes of the community, but also to gain insight into its day-to-day and to foster a sense of dependency. Indeed, justice provision is not solely a tool of territorial control, but of expansion (Giustozzi, 2000; Garcia-Villegas, 2008; Aguilera, 2013; Arjona, 2016).

Once the security system is up and running, armed actors proceed to engage in provision of benefits. During conflict, the scarcity of material goods and adverse living conditions push civilians to ally themselves with the political actor best qualified to ameliorate their socio-economic situation (Heger & Jung, 2017). Non-state armed groups are aware of this empowering logic, and so purvey an abundance of public welfare goods to the communities under their rule. In his study of rebel rulers, Mampilly (2011) focuses predominately on health and education, the two basic items recurring in the cases of rebel governance worldwide. Nevertheless, the type of goods distributed is usually highly context-sensitive. Among them,

the literature mentions anything from food subsidies, to land transfers, and even to cultural or religious ceremonies. Finally, non-state armed groups will sometimes invest in public works, in particular roads, means of water service and other infrastructural projects otherwise unavailable to the populations in remote territories (Flanigan, 2007; Huang & Sullivan, 2021; Phelan, 2021; Stewart, 2018).

To the above function we can add economic regulation and even representation. It's a blueprint most commonly identified in comprehensive proto-state regimes established by non-state armed actors. If one thing is certain, however, it is that the type of political arrangement implemented by illegal armed groups is by no means homogenous, nor is it random. Instead, it "reflects both [their] ideological and strategic concerns," (Mampilly & Stewart, 2021, p.17).

3.1.4. The effect of territorial competition on governance by non-state armed groups

Until now we have mapped the interactions between illegal armed groups and civilians in territories of their activity on a spectrum from coercive to consensual. We have discussed how coercion-based interactions are characteristic of limited systems of governance, whereby, due to the lack of other recourse, a non-state armed group opts for indiscriminate violence as means of controlling populations. In contrast, more complex systems of governance are bound to involve a degree of consent. In such an instance, non-state armed groups can substitute sheer terror with selective violence on the one hand and protection services on the other. The latter scenario is believed to positively contribute to the stability of the order and the longevity of the illicit armed group's authority (Podder, 2014; Worrall, 2017).

If the above is true, we can hypothesize that, in a given territory, illegal armed groups follow a pattern of evolution from an organization that is weak and poor, unable to engage in legitimizing governance and suffering security deficits, towards an organization that is strong, endowed in resources, with capacity to perform various statal functions, enjoying more social legitimacy and better security. High operational costs mean only a few non-state armed groups will ever be interested or capable of establishing the sort of par excellence model of governance described by Weinstein. Yet, most organizations should seek at least some forms order as it has been proven to advance their self-serving goals. Now a question begs to be asked: What single factor is best suited to explain if the above progression occurs and how fast? The definitions of rebel governance from earlier in the chapter reveal that the determinant in question is territorial control, defined by Mampilly (2011) as "the ability of a rebel group to

exert its power over a defined territorial space and to induce collaboration from the civilian population living within this area," (p.59).

More elaborate systems of governance are something of a luxury. Only the privileged non-state armed groups can afford to truly explore positive reinforcement tactics, such as provision of protection or public services, to procure civilian loyalty. The capacity to foster civilian collaboration is a privilege, because it comes with "sufficient size and strength to challenge the government for control of specific territories," (Weinstein, 2007, p.85). Kalyvas seems to be of the same mind when he proposes a hypothesis whereby "the higher the level of control exercised by a political actor in an area, the higher the level of civilian collaboration with this political actor will be," (p.111). The control of territories is, then, precisely what turns roving bandits into stationary ones, with all that such a transformation implies for its relationship with civilians (Stewart, 2017). Perhaps the first to observe this simple interplay was McColl (1969), who spoke of the "territorial imperative" that paves the way to the formation of "territorially based anti-states" with their "own core areas and administrative units," (p.614). Decades later, Kasfir (2005) noted that "only when guerrillas establish safe zones can they introduce structures supplying social services or voluntary participation, if they choose to do so," (p.273).

However, if the definition is true, mounting proto-states is by and large not feasible until substantial territory is held for a sufficient period of time (Mampilly, 2011). It's a lengthy and context-specific process. What happens before an illegal armed group secures territorial control? What patterns of behavior does it espouse? What are the consequences for civilians? There are two stages that typically predate the phase of substantial territorial control period: competition and early consolidation. The forms of governance preferred in these phases are alike, but not identical. Most importantly, the main function of violence in each phase is different.

Competition over territories generates elevated levels of violence against civilians in irregular warfare. The reasons why non-state armed groups employ higher degrees of coercion at this stage range from limited trust towards the population and desirability of fear[27] to the perceived cost-efficiency of violence. Generally speaking, competition promotes adoption of short-term horizon by non-state armed groups. Because they prioritize present outcome over future concerns, their behavior at this stage is likelier to mirror that of the roving bandits, irrespective

[27] Kalyvas (2006) summarized this phenomenon as the preference to "be disliked and feared than liked but not feared when their rival is feared" (p.114).

of whether they strive to become stationary bandits in the long run. Mampilly (2011) specifies that "all insurgencies begin as violent entities, reliant on coercion and only minimally concerned about civilian welfare. Even groups that begin with a professed concern for civilians have little capacity to protect or provide for them in the initial phases of the conflict. Thus, in the early stages of a civil war, most rebellions look fairly similar in regard to civilian governance," (p.238).

The above is true because the activities worth pursuing in an event of a territorial dispute are those bolstering the group's war-making efforts and improving the odds of capturing the territory. As suggested by Tilly (1985), in order to become more effective at war, non-state armed actors must, first and foremost, locate more capital. However, in the midst of territorial competition, weaker, unsettled groups—even those ideologically driven or otherwise not extremely violent—simply lack the capacity to amass funds by constructing mutually beneficial arrangements with civilians. In this extraordinary setting, the access to capital needs not to be overly rule-bound or time-consuming. Thus, the circumstances pressure the armed actor to "shift to quick but 'more efficient' means of extraction from locals," (Hough, 2011, p.387). Consequently, the capital is located via targeting of civilians in a rapid and predatory fashion (Wood, 2010, p.601). Nevertheless, exploitation isn't the only function of violence when a territory is disputed. More notoriously, non-state armed groups employ violence to prevent their competitors from achieving advantage in a turf war. This type of violence has a predominately arbitrary character and can often result in waves of homicides (Berg & Carranza, 2018). When the objective is to compete militarily with the enemy, for strictly strategic reasons, any form of social contract with the local population "becomes a burden" (Arjona, 2016, p.10).

In other words, in a highly competitive environment, non-state armed groups "lack the incentives or the capacity to establish social contracts," (Arjona, 2016, p.55). Metelits (2010) argues that even in situations where there had existed a social contract before, the switch to more predatory tactics as a result of active rivalry "essentially ruptures the implicit 'contractual arrangements' previously established between insurgents and locals over the long term," (Hough, 2011, p.387). This is especially true due to the limited access to information about civilian activity in the disputed territory. Having no other means of approaching the population, these actors rely on wholesale terror in deterring potential civilian defection (Kalyvas, 2006). What ensues in the absence of contractual restraints is a variation of a wartime social order Arjona (2016) simply calls 'disorder'. When disorder emerges, civilians are confined to life in uncertainty due to the lack of clearly defined rules.

3.1.5. The effect of territorial consolidation on governance by non-state armed groups

Having secured the upper hand over its competitor, the prime concern of a non-state armed actor has to do with maintaining the newly acquired territory. Since order is instrumental to the task at hand, illegal armed groups soon engage in "temporary or temporal forms of governance," (Worrall, 2017, p.716). However, rebelocracies are hard to come by in the consolidation period.

It is worth remembering that, shortly after a territory is captured, the security circumstances on the ground will likely stay volatile. In consequence, there exist high levels of mistrust between the armed actor and the population while the room for consensual deliberation remains narrow. What's more, in a space deemed highly strategic, be it for their yield of resources, placement on the map or symbolic significance, non-state armed actors are generally less willing to accept civilian autonomy. Thus, a newcomer group is more likely to opt to go about the process of constructing the order in a unilateral fashion.

In this scenario, coercion continuous to be the protocol, particularly when a non-state armed group sustained no previous arrangements with civilians living in the territory. According to Mampilly and Stewart (2021) should the organization find itself up against a population unresponsive to their rule, they might initially "need to increase the degree of coercion, leading to the implementation of martial law," (p.25). Mampilly (2011) observes that the first course of action of a rebel group in a new territory habitually comes down to formation of a quasi-police force to control the population and clinch the monopoly over the use of violence (p.63). Installing an efficient security system helps exhibit authority and obtain credibility in the eyes of the civilian populations. In this period, the informal police force may also pursue to impose early rules on behavior and conduct (Wickham-Crowley, 1987, p.486). The natural next step is the introduction of a broader legal apparatus to facilitate the application of these rules (Mampilly, 2011). A narrow order, or aliocracy, if you will, is gradually being established.

While civilians can now enjoy some protection from the outside, there is no respite from violence at this stage. Force remains the vehicle of compliance for non-state armed groups, albeit it is now used in a more tactical way. Any act of resistance to the "new broom" may lead to bouts of violence via displacement or public execution (Arjona, 2016). All these measures serve the creation of what Arjona (2016) calls "expectations of strict enforcement," (p.60). The embracing of violence is strategic inasmuch as it "signals both might and the capacity to establish and enforce effective institutions" in the eyes of the local populace (Arjona, 2016,

p.165). Violence, or the threat thereof, is then “a pillar of their authority when rebel movements start to establish their rule” (Förster, 2015, p.204). Only having successfully exerted power over the area and induced collaboration from civilians, rebels may finally shift their attention towards political and social affairs in the territory.

To sum up, we have labored under the following assumption borrowed from Arjona: in the longer term, non-state armed groups are compelled to engage in governance cognizant of the benefits it brings them. Although it may seem counterintuitive at face value, there are reasons to believe that even strictly criminal organizations, too, eventually move beyond sheer coercion in their interactions with civilians and seek more legitimacy-based rule. Yet, as we have seen, some degree of territorial control is a prerequisite to the kind of governance Arjona calls rebelocracy. Since it is not bestowed upon any group by nature, they first have to come into possession of territory. More importantly, still, in an attempt to seize and consolidate territorial control, violent means are preferred, especially in an event of competition. Thus, it can be argued that coercive strategies precede consensual governance in an evolutionary sense. Put differently, legitimacy doesn’t much concern non-state armed groups until territorial control is fully established (which is typically after weeks or months since fighting erupts) (Mampilly, 2011). When the competition is less intense, the non-state armed group can decide to protect the civilian population instead of just exploiting it (Berg & Carranza, 2018). Only then can force be complemented by practices meant to generate popular support, such as delivery of services and implementation of informal institutions. However, before non-state armed groups arrive at complex governance, they are likely to pass through periods of competition for territory and consolidation of territorial control. These phases will feature high levels of violence against civilians.

All in all, the above sequence should be read much like a hypothesis with regards to the evolutionary stages of non-state armed groups vis-à-vis power vacuums. Admittedly, it makes various sweeping assumptions about the nature of these organizations and their divergent motivations. Some non-state armed groups, for example, will not consider it necessary to replace coercive approaches in controlling civilians with consensual governance, even in spite of potential drawbacks. Other groups will not even be interested in territorial control or interactions with local populations in the first place, etc.

At the risk of oversimplifying, however, the sequence can serve as a model to predicting post-demobilization security scenarios and their consequences for civilians. With the demobilization of the FARC, large swathes of territories were expected to be up for grabs across the Colombian

countryside. Territorial control, the bread and butter for most illegal armed groups, was within reach. Thus, assuming a degree of rationality, we can speculate that the remaining illicit armed groups should follow the above pattern in power vacuums left by a demobilized actor. We can expect competition for these territories, followed by consolidation of the victorious group, followed by its attempts at recreation of some of the FARC's rebel governance solutions with the aim to maintain the territory. Likewise, in terms of their interactions with civilians we can expect non-state armed groups to move along the continuum from more coercive to more consensual in the newly available territories. This would mean that civilians are likely to be highly vulnerable to violence at an early stage in post-demobilization power vacuums. With that being said, the above process is tentative as groups aren't alike in all territories, and neither are circumstances on the ground, etc. We can expect for there to be significant deviations entirely dependent on the particular context. These deviations should be a valuable source of knowledge on security in post-demobilization.

3.2. Security in peacebuilding and post-accord

Thus far we have established that it is common for territories with limited or no state presence to fall under the control of diverse non-state armed groups. In the absence of the state, these organizations opt to implement certain state functions that they deem conducive to achieving their objectives. The manner in which they impose their order upon the civilian population living in this area varies from more coercive to more consensual, but always involves a degree of violence.

We have also speculated that in post-demobilization, a period following the dismantling of non-state armed groups' governance, outsider non-state armed groups may engage in competition and, eventually, consolidation of control over the power vacuum. In such a scenario, coercion is the leading instrument used by non-state armed groups in their interactions with inhabitants of post-demobilization zones. That is why this period carries more violent potential than the hitherto existing order. In a scenario where there is no dispute or one side defeated its competition, non-state armed groups are likely to reproduce forms of proto-state governance as a means to strengthening their territorial control. Hence, elements of legitimacy will be incorporated in the governance model. Although it may imply a decrease in civilian violence, such an outcome is just as undesirable from the state's perspective, as it allows non-state armed groups to cement their territorial control and grow.

Peacebuilding operates on the premise of (re-) establishing the state's monopoly on the use of force and legitimate authority, thereby removing the conditions for reproduction of proto-state orders. Thus, the competition and consolidation of illegal armed actors in power vacuums is a highly undesirable outcome from the perspective of a peaceful transformation. In sum, non-state armed groups disputing control over power vacuums is a potential spoiler of peace (Stedman, 1997)[28].

In order break the above cycle and prevent spoilers from undermining the political process, peacebuilders have to go back to the beginning and revert the state absence, thereby snatching away the source of power of non-state armed groups. State absence is not alleviated by piecemeal interventions however—boosting of both its coercive and legitimate functions is key. In addition, in the context of a post-demobilization with diverse active non-state armed groups, peacebuilders must act fast. Unfortunately, past experiences demonstrate just how onerous this task is.

In this section we will analyze the policies the state can adopt to prevent the scenarios of the above reorganization of non-state armed groups. In other words, we will consider potential strategies for the state to recover its lost authority, or a share thereof, and eliminate or lessen the conditions that reproduce proto-state orders in a short-term scenario of post-demobilization. We will explore the existing experiences on the overlap of literature on such policy spheres as peacebuilding, state-building, and stabilization.

3.2.1. Engaging spoilers

There is a growing body of literature on the ways in which the state can engage non-state armed groups within the peace-building framework (Grävingholt, et al., 2007; Stedman, 1997). These studies attempt to think of non-state armed groups not just as part of the problem for peacebuilding, but as part of the solution. They offer a range of strategies for dealing with peace spoilers in the context of peace- and state-building framework. Hofmann & Schneckener (2011) systematize these approaches based on their belonging to different international relations paradigms. The realist perspective, for example, which over decades has shaped the counterinsurgent doctrine worldwide, revolves around the use of force and repression in tackling non-state armed groups. It interprets these groups as selfishly motivated, greedy actors, who shall be confronted, eliminated, deterred, contained or marginalized (p.608).

[28] In fact, instances of this behaviour can be observed in various post-conflict situations, from Bosnia and Kosovo to Haiti to DRC and even Colombia as is documented in the case of the demobilization of the AUC.

Institutionalist approaches on the other hand, emphasize grievance as the driving force for many non-state armed actors. Recognizing their political pedigree, the proponents of this method believe certain illegal armed groups are best dealt with via negotiation, settling of demands or integration into a legitimate political setting. Finally, the constructivist approaches assume that spoilers can be reasoned with, involved in certain processes and institutions and, in the longer-term, transformed at the core by means of norms and arguments. According to this view, the best way to neutralize these actors is by appealing to their public image and the standards of morality and legitimacy it projects. The state usually employs a mixture of realist and institutionalist approaches.

In this study, the approaches the state has on its disposal when engaging directly with non-state armed actors are given lesser prominence. Rather, we focus on the kind of peace- and state-building that engages with the environment these actors operate in. In other words, while dealing directly with non-state armed actors undoubtedly plays a part in preventing violence in post-demobilization, this research brings more attention to the structural conditions that allow these actors to fill power vacuums, reproduce proto-state orders and grow. The reasons for this are manifold.

In the context of the Colombian conflict, dealing directly with illegal armed groups is problematic due to sheer quantity and the volatile nature of the phenomenon in the country. The process of near ceaseless transmutation and proliferation of new non-state armed actors across rural Colombia proves any attempts at approaching them difficult, regardless whether the chosen strategy is based on force, negotiation or socialization. In the fleeting context of post-demobilization vacuums, it may take time to gather intelligence that would allow to understand who these actors really are and what their underlying motivation is. One good example here are the offshoots of the demobilizing organizations, such as the BACRIMs in the aftermath of the Justice and Peace Law, which tend to take months and years to identify and diagnose. Hence, seeking political solution may not be an option for the initial phase of post-demobilization. The realist, counterinsurgency strategies, too, present a set of serious drawbacks. Overreliance on force, or threat of force, can trigger more spoiling and violent reactions from non-state armed actors (Hofmann & Schneckener, 2011). In Colombia, coercive responses by the state against the resilience and tenacity of illegal armed groups in the country have time and again proven largely counterproductive. This has bred a situation in which the military is considered a violent actor while trust from civilians is scarce. Additionally, with the Colombian military marred by scandals of its own, the credibility of the counterinsurgency

solution is meagre. Arguing and persuasion, the key elements to constructive approaches in dealing with non-state armed groups are by nature bound by longer timelines. Norm changing takes a lot of lengthy effort that cannot be expected to produce effects in early post-demobilization. Moreover, constructivist strategies are commonly the domain of international actors or the civil society, which aren't the focus of this study.

That being said, the realist, institutionalist and constructivist paradigms are a useful source of insight, as power vacuum filling by the state requires a combination thereof in order to prevent the reproduction of non-state armed actors' governance. We shall see below that such integrated approach to spoilers is, in fact, most likely to limit their negative impact on peace.

3.2.2. Disarmament, Demobilization & Reintegration (DDR)

The most commonly applied security practice in post-conflicts around the world is that of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR). DDR is a form of engaging with spoilers from an institutionalist standpoint. Following the UN (2014) definition: "Disarmament is the collection, documentation, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons of combatants and often also of the civilian population … Demobilization is the formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces or other armed groups … Reintegration is the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income," (p.25). A successful DDR implementation procures neutralization of an important belligerent in a conflict and constitutes the *fons et origo* for a peace process at large. At the same time, by disarming and deterring spoilers, DDR creates an opportunity for the state to recover the monopoly of violence and authority in territories where its influence was sparse.

However, the state cannot afford to lead with DDR or substitute legitimate and complex political processes with it (Muggah, 2005). Particularly in cases of on-going conflict with multiple non-state armed groups, such as Colombia (and in an increasing number of civil conflicts worldwide), the state cannot rely on DDR as the sole source of security for civilians in post-demobilization zones. In such a multi-level conflict scenario, a DDR process can help mitigate one of the levels, but it has limited capacity to address violence elsewhere[29] (Ball &

[29] The benefits of DDR remain the subject of debate. Some of the weaknesses of this practice include: ill-defined evaluation criteria (e.g., preference for the sheer number of weapons collected over long-term security indicators), mismanagement of expectations (leading to counterproductive outcomes), as well as the emphasis the DDR professionals lay on disarmament and demobilization part over its arguably most critical and tricky element, reinsertion. For more discussion see: Muggah (2005).

Van den Goor, 2006). On the contrary, as discussed in the previous chapter, it can often lead to new security challenges and even an intensification of conflict. What's more, the DDR itself is conditional on larger security situation, meaning that it may collapse if improvements to security are negligible and the demobilizing actors feel threatened or lose confidence in the peace process (Knight & Ozerdem, 2004; Walter, 1999). For this reason, already on the occasion of the paramilitary demobilization, it was advertised that, in Colombia, the DDR processes cannot stand by itself, but should instead be integrated in a broader peace process together with a security sector reform and arms control program. According to this view, a failure to follow up the implementation of DDR with a security sector reform engendering a more credible security apparatus or a police force attuned to the needs of communities, runs the risk of "generating a vacuum which will eventually be filled by other insurgent groups or parastate actors," (Paes, 2005, p.14). To put it short, disarming, demobilizing and reintegrating one rebel group out of the constellation of many, not matter how successful the process might be, is not enough to guarantee security to Colombians living in post-demobilization zones (Grasa, 2016).

3.2.3. Security Sector Reform (RRS)

Serious reforms of the security sector are necessary. In war-to-peace transition, the public attitude towards armed forces is characterized by distrust due to a record of brutality or inefficacy throughout the conflict. Hence, the other security-related activity customarily employed in post-conflict situations, the Security Sector Reform (SSR), is an initiative meant to fix the shortcomings of the wartime security sector. The SSR entails a transformation of the police and the military, with the aim to promote good governance: democratic administration, transparency and accountability in the security apparatus (Ball & Fayemi, 2005). Yet, the SSR is designed with a more comprehensive assessment of security needs in mind. The advocates of the model call for a succession of multi-sectoral measures overlapping the fields of security and development. In this view, an effective and democratic security is imperative to economic, social and political development, and vice versa. At the same time, greater civilian participation and oversight is encouraged as it increases access to security. Some concrete measures contributing to the betterment of security governance include: analysis and management of public spending on defense and security, administrative reforms, military justice reform, anti-corruption measures, promotion of social equity and human rights, fostering the civil society's capacity to influence defense and security, etc. (Ball et al., 2004).

Following decades of hefty armament, counterinsurgency conditioning and relative exemption from supervision, the Public Forces of Colombia are a major political player in the country. Evidently, there can be no lasting peace without the Public Forces' constructive participation in the process. Likewise, sustainable solutions to conflict will not take hold without serious modifications to the functioning of these forces (Grasa, 2016; Schultze-Kraft, 2012). Simply put, some version of SSR is required should Colombia part with its violent past for good.

Nevertheless, since rebuilding of the security sector is admittedly a "massive, lengthy, and costly process," (Ammitzboell & Blair, 2011, p.4), it is beyond the scope of this research to discuss the future of the SSR in the aftermath of the FARC peace deal. While the notion of more democratic and development-oriented security is meritorious and should be put into practice without delay, strategies must be encountered to make this reformative spirit more compatible with the hard realities of the post-demobilization timeframe. It needs to be borne in mind that overhauling the security forces—e.g., by its partial defunding—in a situation of an on-going conflict can negatively affect the state's capacity to confront the spoilers (Fernandez-Osorio, 2018). What's more, before embarking on their complete overhaul, it is necessary to give confidence to security actors by first stabilizing and de-conflicting the security sector. For the above reasons, the SSR as the sole solution to the security threats in post-demobilization simply isn't viable. In such diverging circumstances, short-term security and protection in power vacuums need to be reinforced by more immediate means.

3.2.4. State-building

As outlined in the context chapter, the Colombian conflict features a characteristic inherent to protracted civil wars worldwide whereby an absent or weak state increases the likelihood of violence and, in reverse, violence further undermines the state. We also saw that this relationship extends beyond the conceptual frames of war and can be just as egregious in non- or post-war situations. Little wonder, then, that in recent past, peacebuilding and state-building have increasingly converged both in theory and practice.

Peace-building is an activity the ambitions of which extend far beyond mere crisis intervention or settlement of war. The belief in the interconnectedness of state fragility and conflict means that in order to build sustainable peace, state's fragility must be reversed. In other words, state-building is indispensable to peace-building as it bears the responsibility of addressing the drivers of both political and non-political violence.

Although inherently distinct, peacebuilding and state-building overlap on many levels. Both adhere to similar liberal rules, norms and institutions. What's more, both share the proclivity for the same tools of post-conflict transition management in the realms of "elections, institution-building, security sector reform, economic reconstruction, promotion of civil society, rule of law and justice, reconciliation, and transitional justice," (Visoka & Lemay-Hébert, 2022, p.46). Some of the priority areas at the intersection of the peacebuilding and state-building agendas in conflict-affected countries are: "inclusive political settlements and processes, basic security, justice and peaceful resolution of conflict, capacity to raise revenues and meet expectations through service delivery, effective management of resources and sustainable economic development, societal capacities for reconciliation and peace, and capacity to maintain constructive relations with neighbors and the region," (OECD, 2012, p.28).

Peacebuilding's underlying desire is "to identify and support structures that will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict (Boutros-Ghali, 1992, para.46). More often than not, the structures identified and supported by peacebuilders—the pillars of peace—are state and non-state institutions. Therefore, institutional consolidation constitutes the foremost state-building activity in post-conflict.

Criticism of the state-centric approach to state-building (which largely ignores the role of the civil society and community participation) has led to a departure from more top-down approaches. Nowadays, state-building and peacebuilding tend to converge in their appreciation of the importance of the relationship between the state and society. It is believed that successful peacebuilding has to be accompanied by endogenous efforts to construct not just capable, but accountable, responsive and legitimate state (Taydas et al., 2010).

How does state-building improve security in post-conflict? For one, successful state-building efforts address the security, capacity and legitimacy gaps commonly exploited by non-state armed groups. By revamping the state's institutions in the security sector (the police, the armed forces, prosecutors and judges), the state recaptures its monopoly on coercive violence, which, in turn, increases its capacity to combat the spoilers and effectively protect the civilian population. However, in order to speak of bona fide state-building, the state's capacity has to be improved across the board, not just in the security sector. This is where state-building marries with development, as both hold true that a capable state is one that delivers public services to the populace under its rule. Institutions that tackle poverty and unemployment can have positive impact on crime reduction. Finally, in order to fill in the gap in legitimacy, state-

building fosters open and inclusive political institutions and processes that opens space for expressing of grievance. The conventional wisdom suggests that legitimate state reduces the desire of the population to challenge the authorities via violent means.

3.2.5. Stabilization

Until now we have outlined various security strategies commonly employed in the aftermath of wars. It can be concluded that the above processes are discrete, non-linear and long-term. They are typically conceived as components of more sweeping designs, often times working towards a profound transformation of state institutions and societies. As such, they take time—Belloni & Moro (2019) estimate that "at least a decade or more" (p.451)—vast resources and somewhat permissive circumstances on the ground, all of which are at a premium in the immediate aftermath of demobilization. Hence, approaches such as DDR, SSR or state-building initiatives can hardly ever be completed in short-term, nor should we expect them to deliver quick fixes to the security challenges that mount in countries affected by wars. In other words, as well-intended and effective as they may be, the above strategies are not ideally suited for the period and the security settings discussed in this study, particularly when applied one at the time.

The post-demobilization scenario falls squarely into the gap between immediate humanitarian assistance in war and peacebuilding with its long-term development, state-building and security sector reform agenda. The idiosyncrasies of this period and its impact on the future trajectories of peace call for intermediate, comprehensive and context-specific security strategies that cater to its most urgent needs and deal with the built-in threats. Nevertheless, these strategies shouldn't stand apart from the larger peacebuilding efforts. Rather, they are in the vanguard of these efforts, paving way for the more complex processes that can only be developed with time. Thus, these rapid security strategies are at the service of long-term peacebuilding in so far as they help to sustain peace and create favorable conditions for reconstruction.

3.2.5.1. Definition and goals of stabilization

A policy sphere that best espouses the features described above is stabilization. Although the concept under its current name has gained increasing popularity in recent past, particularly in the context of international peacekeeping and peacebuilding interventions[30], forms of

[30] In the past two decades, the UN established various stabilization missions in the Western Balkans, Haiti, the DRC, the Central African Republic, Mali etc. (Muggah & Zyck, 2015), while the US implemented stabilization operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

stabilization have been around for decades[31] under a distinctive syntax[32]. Today, references to stabilization can be found in official mission statements by all major governments and multilateral organizations. Yet, even in spite of its widespread rhetorical and practical application across the world, the task of defining stabilization continues to prove awkward (Muggah, 2014). This is why stabilization is often considered more of an umbrella term, or "a form of branding" (Barakat et al., 2010), rather than a set of concrete principles and measures. The discursive conundrum with stabilization is rooted in its core conviction that security may be achieved most effectively when advanced by diverse policy areas working in tandem, rather than in isolation. Based on the logic of symbiotic relationships and mutual reinforcement of agendas, stabilization mixes and matches elements of security with development, counter-insurgency with humanitarianism, conflict management with peace and state-building (Collinson, Elhawary & Muggah, 2010). This multidimensional character requires of the practice of stabilization to hinge on accordingly "comprehensive," "integrated," or "whole of government" approaches (Belloni & Moro, 2019).

Depending on which organization does the defining, or which specific actor does the implementation, the definition of stabilization varies. This is perhaps because the mere notion of *stability* is in constant flux. Generally speaking, the stabilization spectrum runs from a more conservative "hot stabilization," with its hard security-centered agenda and narrow focus on violence reduction in one corner, to a more transformative approach, skewed towards soft development assistance, good governance and institutionalism on the opposite end. The US government defines stabilization with broad strokes as "a political endeavor involving an integrated civilian-military process to create conditions where locally legitimate authorities and systems can peaceably manage conflict and prevent a resurgence of violence," (U.S. Department of State, 2018, p.3). Similarly, the UK Stabilization Unit (2014) sees the process in question as predominately preoccupied with laying of groundwork for wide-ranging peacebuilding. The British interpret stabilization as an approach "used in situations of violent conflict which is designed to protect and promote legitimate political authority, using a combination of integrated civilian and military actions to reduce violence, re-establish security and prepare for longer-term recovery by building an enabling environment for structural

[31] Barakat et al. (2010) demonstrate how the central premises of what today is known as stabilization accompanied numerous historical cases of interventions, from the US operations in the Philippines (1898-1902), Vietnam (1967-75) and El Salvador (1980-92) to the French pacification attempts in Algeria (1954-62).

[32] Other terms to describe similar undertakings in the past included counter-insurgency (COIN), pacification, peace-support operations or reconstruction.

stability," (p.1). Likewise, the French Ministry of Defense (2010) identifies stabilization as an attempt at terminating the violence and restoring of "the minimum viability of a state (or of a region)" in pursuit of "a return to normal life through a civil process of reconstruction," (p.15) The NATO's (2015) take on stabilization isn't all that dissimilar, with concepts such as mitigation of crisis, reduction of violence, support for legitimate political authority, civilian and military co-operation and "set[ting] the conditions for long-term stability" (p.1) all spelled out verbatim. Finally, while the UN has not developed a compact definition, its missions under the stabilization label in Haiti, the DRC, the CAR, and Mali, include among their objectives: protection of civilians, strengthening of the rule of law, as well as restoration, extension, and consolidation of state authority.

Based on the above definitions, what attributes bind diverse policy spheres together under the stabilization label? First of all, stabilization takes place in the context of an ongoing or recently concluded conflict. The time-frame extends from pre-political settlement to immediate aftermath of war. In other words, stabilization is neither a peacetime intervention nor does it correspond to a period far removed from the conflict. Secondly, it is implemented in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. Thirdly, stability in post-conflict is generally pursued via three-pronged approach. Above all, stabilization aims at cessation or prevention of renewed violence and provision of basic human security (I). At the same time, it seeks more effective and equitable service delivery (II). Finally, stabilization promotes legitimate political authority (III). These three reasonably universal, mutually reinforcing processes entail civilian and military actors working together towards a common goal (long-term stability and reconstruction), another central feature of stabilization.

The above propositions clear an admittedly low bar for a cohesive and exhaustive applied definition. The official definitions leave much room for speculation and what is urgently missing are more concrete measures along with the rationale for their implementation. Hence, to make more sense of the stabilization *portmanteau* it is necessary to answer some of the most basic questions in more detail. First, I discuss the theoretical assumptions informing stabilization. I then note down some practical approaches and specify the staple elements of stabilization operations on the ground. Subsequently, I expound on the timeframe, identify the actors involved in the implementation of stabilization, and engage with the level upon which stabilization is operationalized. Finally, I propose a brief summary of the challenges and critique of the concept.

3.2.5.2. Theory of stabilization

While it might have been around for decades, the conceptual roots of stabilization can be traced back to the arrival of the *New Wars* at the turn of the last century. This distinctive kind of conflict—predominantly intrastate, fueled by the swelling forces of globalization and abundant in acts of extreme violence—replaced the anachronic, Clausewitzian wars fought between states and their professional armies. The new war is based on the logic of identity politics rather than ideology. It features diverse sets of violent actors, including non-state and organized crime groups, while victims are found proportionately more often among civilians. The latter inference paved way for new conception of security, whereby national security was complimented by human security.

According to the author of the term, Mary Kaldor, a crucial factor inextricably tied to the emergence of new wars is the "erosion of the autonomy of the state and in some extreme cases the disintegration of the state," (2007, p.5). This erosion is expressed most notably by the loss of monopoly of violence. In the worst-case scenario, the state no longer has the capacity to perform its basic functions, particularly that of security provision. The resultant security gaps are then violently exploited by rebellious armed groups and criminal non-state actors.

Since modern conflict is more likely to occur in fragile or failed states, a discussion on the topic of state fragility has dominated the academic and policy discourse of the past two decades. The security implications of failed states are vast and extend far beyond the border of the given country, as proved emphatically by the *9/11* events. For this reason, the international community moved decidedly in favor of "humanitarian interventionism," in which foreign powers interfere (without invitation) in domestic affairs of failed states with the overarching objective to restore human security. The realist reasoning behind this decision was that, in an interconnected world, ending a domestic conflict and fixing a weak state "is not an act of simple charity, but a smart investment in the … safety and stability" of the rest of the planet (Eizenstat, Porter & Weinstein, 2005; Fearon & Laitin, 2003).

Just as the nature of wars changed, so did the project for international security. The blueprint for this new approach was conceived largely by the UN Secretary-General, Boutros-Ghali, in his seminal paper "Agenda for Peace." The document effectively overhauled the nature of peace operations worldwide. Due to the "growing demands," no longer was the UN's activity after or during conflict limited to simple peacekeeping and humanitarian formulas. The old strategies were adjudged largely unsuccessful in effectively assisting vulnerable populations in

medium-to-long term (Macrae, 2000). Thus, the international society developed an itch for a more comprehensive political framework—one that would enhance security in a proactive fashion, while concurrently applying more sustainable post-conflict peacebuilding schemes. As this paradigmatic shift made its way into real-world implementation throughout the 1990s decade, the mandate of peacebuilding missions grew ever so expansive.

It is at this point that the stabilization discourse came to light as an exercise in devising an operational strategy fostering peace and early recovery in the immediate aftermath of conflict[33]. The plethora of stabilizing activities that have been proposed since then is the result of the conceptual ambiguity as to what "the conditions for basic stability" really are in a fragile state coming out of war (Paris & Sisk, 2010, p.7). Initially, the bulk of these conditions came to be associated with broadly understood development. In short, the coalescence of security and development themes is grounded in the evidence-supported assumption that violence and insecurity are the product of underdevelopment—poverty, inequality, unemployment, dearth of opportunities, social exclusion etc. Since fragile states are incapable of delivering basic services to their populations to alleviate the above ills, they are doomed to experience waves of renewable violence. Thus, more than a simple correlation, what we are dealing with here is a vicious cycle in which state fragility, poverty, and violence feed into each other without end. According to the proponents of this view, it is only by promoting development and, more specifically, through service delivery that state fragility, violence, and insecurity can be successfully curtailed (OECD, 2008). Not only do better health care and education services, alongside rural infrastructure, sanitation, roads[34], and the likes, strengthen the state, but they also promote "optimism about the future, stimulating broader reforms of government and buying time to reduce the chances of the state slipping back into violence," (Gordon, 2010, p.369). Collinson et al. (2008) sum up this positivist reinforcement: "Development interventions are expected to bolster security by providing immediate peace dividends and legitimizing a host government or intervening force, security, in turn, creates the virtuous cycle that fosters long-term development that is assumed to consolidate peace," (p.279). Thus, the

[33] In parallel to the stabilization doctrine taking shape, the United National Development Programme set about promoting the *Early Recovery Agenda*. The approach at the intersection of humanitarianism and development shares a number of features with stabilization, not least its struggles with major inherent conceptual disparities (Pavanello & Darcy, 2008).

[34] Building roads is believed to be of vital importance to stabilization due to its positive effect on economy, governance, as well as security (Rebosio & Wam, 2011).

new prescription for stability in war-torn countries was found at the meeting point of peace, security, and development (Duffield, 2001).

Such interlinkage of disciplines contained in peace mission mandates required the UN and individual governments to integrate diverse interventions into progressively comprehensive peacebuilding approaches. Considering the conflation of the polar opposite-tasks—the negative one of ending violence and the positive task of building durable peace—internal tensions were inevitable (Ramsbotham et al., 2011). The dissonance becomes particularly acute when the development and peace operations co-exist with chiefly military endeavors. Most notable example are the counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, which interpreted offensive and defensive kinetic operations as perfectly compatible with stabilization and reconstruction (Bensahel et al., 2009). Consisting of military officers working hand in hand with diplomats and reconstruction experts, the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT), looked to promote governance, security and reconstruction in the aftermath of war. Nevertheless, the active involvement of the military in stabilization efforts became subject of criticism as it blurred the distinction between combatants and humanitarian workers (Perito, 2006).

Yet, there are some undeniable similarities between COIN and stabilization. Like COIN, stabilization is geared towards eliminating of spoilers. Stabilization hinges on a belief that spoiling actors are mitigated via effective territorial control by legitimate armed forces and delivery of basic services. In other words, it confronts spoilers by boosting the state's coercive and legitimacy functions. Therefore, stabilization borrows from COIN the 'hearts-and-minds' approach, which posits that quick and visible humanitarian or development projects have a direct impact on alleviating insecurity in post-conflict settings. By providing immediate peace dividends the intervening power, or the domestic political authority, can garner trust and turn local populations into allies (Gordon, 2010). At the same time, such a ploy weakens the spoiling actor by depriving it of the source of support. Barakat et al., (2010) explain that "a government that controls its territory and contributes to the fulfilment of basic needs (such as education, food, health care, shelter and water) has the ability to gain popular support and hence discourage and/or defeat insurgent elements," (p.311). Both COIN and stabilization are predicated on the conjecture that the "stabilizer" is capable of consolidating its own legitimacy or that of the peace process in a complex environment in short time by asserting territorial control and providing basic socio-economic services to the population in that territory. Therefore, in its most rudimentary form, stabilization resembles counterinsurgency, insofar as

it seeks to create conditions for reconstruction via the combination of "hard" security and development.

However, mindful of the rather limited success of an out-and-out counterinsurgency operations, the proponents of stabilization looked to disassociate the concept from its questioned counterpart (Belloni & Constantini, 2019). In this way, the discourse of stabilization expanded beyond the security-development dichotomy and became more political.

The argument, rooted in the literature on state-building in peacebuilding, is that the same way security and development reinforce each other in post-conflict, so do security and "good governance." What's more, the latter relationship is central from the international peacekeeping point of view in that it guarantees a sustainable peace once outside forces inevitably shed their influence over the given country.

In his rather critical assessment of international peacebuilding missions in countries such as Bosnia, Cambodia and Kosovo, Fukuyama (2004) bemoaned the lack of foresight to build up self-sustaining states with enough capacity to perform basic functions without having to rely on outside assistance. Paris (2004) saw the source of this capacity in strong institutions, the lack of which can make the routine liberal peacebuilding toolkit—a combination of democratic politics and capitalist economics—destabilizing and counterproductive. The author observed that restoration of the monopoly over the legitimate use of force is top priority as "a peaceful and limited state presupposes an effective state that can, at a minimum, ensure public security," (p.207). Therefore, the institutions in the most urgent need of strengthening in this critical period are those operating in the justice and security sector. Analyzing attempts at state-building in various post-conflicts around the world, Chesterman (2004) reached a conclusion that the "failure to prioritize law enforcement and justice issues" proved to be a major blunder of the international missions in Kosovo, Afghanistan or East Timor (p.181). However, state-building in post-conflict shouldn't be limited to strengthening of state's efficiency. The accumulation of legitimacy, understood by Call (2008) as "internal acceptance of and support for a particular governing authority" (p.61) is just as vital for state formation, especially if the perception of the state is one of illegitimacy (which is typically the case in war-ravaged territories). Indeed, cases from around the world demonstrate that security capacity and the legitimacy of the state are entirely interdependent (Sherman, 2008; Cox, 2008). Villegas and Rebolledo (2009) point out that a state which ascertains its authority via force alone and without adherence from the population eventually loses the capacity to establish itself. At the same

time, a legitimate state incapable of combating illegal actors will eventually lose its legitimacy in the eyes of the population.

However, achieving efficiency and legitimacy of the state in post-conflict countries is not merely a function of strengthening state institutions. Carothers' (2007) observations regarding non-sequential construction of democracy pushed the state-building in peacebuilding discourse to reevaluate how good governance can be promoted in post-conflict societies. In short, Carothers posited that construction of democracy must not wait until the rule of law and a well-functioning state (i.e., a state with capable, efficient, and impartial institutions) are attained, and should instead be introduced gradually. What does it teach us about state-building in the context of peacebuilding? That parallel to the capacitation of formal institutions at state level, efforts must be made to bolster local governments and the civil society. Thus, it can be argued that, mirroring the Tocquevillian analysis, both strong states and peace are best constructed in a bottom-up direction. The reasons why this is the case is because civil society is best positioned to engender societal ownership of a peace agreement (Prendergast & Plumb, 2002). By bringing to the fore the people most affected by conflict (all too often left out of the peace process), stimulating dialogue and fostering social bonds, civil society organizations embedded in insecure territories can help stimulate of what is known as "societal buy-in" for peacebuilding. Should the civil and economic society not have clear vested interest in the new political order, top-down state-making has little chance of succeeding (Lake, 2008). This is why in order to truly end conflict, peacebuilding frameworks have to see the people within a conflict setting as the answer rather than the problem. They "must actively envision, include, respect, and promote the human and cultural resources from within a given setting," (Lederach, 1995, p.212). Indeed, studies have shown that access to and participation in political processes makes the reliance on violence in settling of political disputes less likely (Walter, 2004). At the same time, it promotes healing at the community level.

The stabilization policymakers took note of this argument, recognizing the local governments and civilian associations' contribution to security. The idea of local ownership of the political process was seen as a vital auxiliary improving the sustainability of peace at its most delicate stage.

Just as socio-economic grievances don't preclude political grievances as drivers of violence, so is service delivery far from the only source of peace dividend. Improving the core political capabilities and legitimacy of the state at all levels can have positive impact on security. In recent past, stabilization agencies have progressively embraced its political nature, recognizing

that "lasting peace is created through political processes, not by using various combinations of development aid and military means," (Andersen et al, 2019, p.9). The logic here is that formal security and development measures, no matter how well-intended, can easily become undone when assigned to or embedded in corrupt or illegitimate public institutions. Dennys (2013) argues that stabilization can only be successful if it extends beyond security and development, and addresses the political threats at a subnational level. The argument goes that political stabilization is essential to the sustainability of peace insofar as it strengthens the civilian leadership of the process. The author claims that "any intervention that does not engage with the local political system is simply hot air blowing over an area while local political actors wait out the interveners to continue their own way of life," (p.5).

Indeed, the political component—though shrouded in some ambiguity—can be found in the various existing definitions of stabilization. The RAND Corporation defines stabilization as including "efforts to develop and redevelop institutions that foster self-governance, social and economic development and security," (Bensahel et al., 2009, p.9). The PCRU (2007) (the predecessor to the UK Stabilisation Unit) mentions "creating the conditions for non-violent politics" (p.6). Although state-building efforts as part of an integrated stabilization schemes may seem counterintuitive, especially in the short-term, there seems to be growing agreement that fast-track injections of institutionalism are necessary for a sustainable process. Yet, it is important not to assume stabilization merely as an extension of liberal state-building. The largely inconclusive reformist attempts at democratization and marketization of Afghanistan and Iraq proved just how problematic state-building in conflict-affected countries is (Belloni & Constantini, 2019). Hence, while the stabilization's *omnium gatherum* assimilates some of the state-building and governance principles, it does so in a typically pragmatic, restorative fashion. By way of illustration, instead of overhauling entire systems with externally-fashioned frameworks, stabilization's political engagement occurs via development of capacities of local authorities and restoring an effective political order (Rotmann, 2016). By "imbuing national government and local authorities with greater legitimacy in the eyes of the governed" (Lang & Al Wari, 2016, p.4), stabilization is essentially a gambit to buy time ahead of a more comprehensive reconstruction. Based on the above, we can conclude that the concept of stabilization has been conceived of as a product of the marriage between counterinsurgency and state-building.

3.2.5.3. Stabilization in practice

In the previous section, we saw how the theoretical origins of the stabilization concept inform its multifaceted nature. But how does this overlap of policy spheres translate into practical approaches to stabilization?

To begin with, stabilization is the first stage of a post-conflict. As already touched upon in the previous section, stabilization is conceptually bound by short-term time horizons. This, too, sets it apart from larger peacebuilding and COIN operations. Although there exists no cut-and-dried stabilization timeframe, common-sense dictates that the shorter it is, the better. The simple reason for this is that turning the page on stabilization implies that the territory in question is now stabilized, and so longer-term, more transformative peacebuilding processes can be prioritized. In practice, however, a moment ripe for transition is hard to pinpoint, much less if chosen in advance. The only way to be sure whether the situation is good enough is by having effective monitoring and evaluation systems in place (UK Stabilisation Unit, 2019).

Secondly, stabilization operations are designed to involve a plurality of actors. The inter-agency, cross-government approach stems from the assumption that challenges of the early post-conflict require the involvement of military and civilian institutions alike. Synchronization between multiple civilian and military bodies is further complicated when we consider the major variance in planning and decision-making structures and habits. Hence one of the principal stabilization dilemmas pertains to the distribution of functions between the two. The UK government's approach, for instance, is adamant about the significance of the civilian leadership. The military should provide support whenever deemed necessary by the civilians and only enter the fray as a last resort. The embracing of closer civilian co-operation and the cross-sectional expansion beyond the realms of security is clearly visible in the contemporary doctrines adopted by the Western military forces. Various armed forces from around the world see their involvement in stabilization embodied by the "clear, hold, build" principle. As specified by the strategy, the military role comes down to defeating the threat (clear), preventing the return of the threat (hold), and assisting civilian organizations in restoring local institutions and infrastructure or in providing essential services (build).

3.2.5.3.1. Security

Considering the impact security capacity has on the legitimacy of the state (together with its political processes) in the aftermath of conflict, perceivable improvements in human security are an early stabilization priority. The desired outcome of the hard security component of

stabilization should be securing environments for peacebuilding via short-term violence reduction and civilian protection.

This is accomplished through the following tasks: regaining territorial control, direct combat of spoilers (typically non-state armed groups), promotion of the rule of law, as well as protection schemes for civilians, key assets and infrastructure[35]. Moreover, improvements in the administration of criminal justice shall also form part of the stabilization security package (across such functions as investigation, arraigning, prosecution, sentencing, prison, corrections, etc.)[36]. While direct military actions may be necessary to establish security in the early stages[37], stabilization should also represent a transition towards civilian-led, democratic forms of managing security (UK Stabilisation Unit, 2018). One process that encapsulates the spirit of change well is the transferring of duties from the military and towards a democratic, civilian police force.

3.2.5.3.2. Development

Irrespective of the level of success, provision of hard security may not, by itself, guarantee stability in post-conflict scenarios. Supplementing the coercive capacity of the state are developmental processes, which in the aftermath of war usually revolve around some form of basic service delivery. Just as it can have bearing on the scope and trajectory of conflicts, service delivery has the potential to smooth the path to stability at the conflict's end (Di John et al., 2017). It does so by enhancing the economic and social opportunities for civilian population with an eye to divert its members, especially the youth, from violence[38]. The

[35] The UN, for example, granted its stabilization mission in Haiti the authority to use force with the aim to "protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence, within its capabilities and areas of deployment," (UN, 2017, par.4). In order to offer safeguards to the civilian population at large, the peacekeeping force "sought to establish territorial control and to consolidate its hold through the establishment of a tangible presence in priority or 'red' zones," (Muggah, 2010, p.450). In practice, the establishment of territorial control was carried out via repressive operations, physical confrontation of spoilers, and, not without controversy, neutralization of urban gangs, as well as their subsequent incorporation into DDR programs (Lemay-Herbert, 2015).

[36] Strengthening of the justice system was one foremost achievements of the UN stabilization mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO). Zerrougi (2018) describes the approach as "focused on three key areas: fighting impunity; establishing functioning justice institutions and prisons in areas affected by armed conflict; and launching judicial reform," (p.10). Among the mechanisms introduced by MONUSCO were Joint Investigation Teams with DRC authorities or mobile courts.

[37] The hard security component of the UK military mission in Sierra Leone significantly contributed to the momentum shift that eventually bailed out the state in the face of renewed challenge from the RUF insurgents (Ucko, 2016). What made the intervention so effective at first was the rapid and strategic deployment of small-but-strong units to act "as a glass of water to douse an early fire, thus obviating the need for a massive fire brigade-sized response," (Connaughton, 2002, p.84).

[38] The MINUSTAH offered some alternative, civilian-led, service-based approaches to addressing insecurity in Haiti (from temporary employment to professional skills training and business development [UN DDR Section, n.d.]). The combination of coercive measures directed against 'armed gangs' and basic service delivery was

provision of services by the government can also serve as a catalyst for improved legitimacy of the state on the grounds that it bridges the gap between the expectations of conflict-affected populations and the socio-economic realities on the ground. Likewise, in post-war transition, it can act as a major peace dividend, galvanizing popular support for the process. On the other hand, failing to deliver basic services, the state disadvantages the struggling populations, giving rise to more grievance and a heightened sense of political disaffection (UK Stabilisation Unit, 2019).

However, in order to contribute effectively to stabilization, service delivery programs have to eschew blanket implementation and be based on in-depth understanding of the context (e.g., the clientelist mechanisms that underlie service delivery in a given region). What should the service delivery component of stabilization focus on? During this critical period, service delivery must zero in on the means of survival. Differently put, the number one objective of the development component of stabilization should be "allowing the population to resume their livelihoods and access to markets and services without fear of predation, exclusion or denial of essential resources," (UK Stabilisation Unit, 2019, p.19). Of equal importance to what is delivered is how it is delivered. Because time is paramount, stabilization employs the quick-impact projects (QIPs) model aimed at producing immediate visible results (Belloni & Moro, 2019). In its QIPs handbook, the UK Stabilisation Unit (2009) describes this approach as delivering "quick wins," i.e., "tangible benefits to the population … that underpin their confidence in the state and the political process it represents, (p.11)[39]. In the framework of stabilization, these interventions should moderate their levels of ambition, while at the same time maintaining an ample, non-exclusionary disposition. Rather than circumventing the existing systems, it should see to their accountability and responsiveness.

---

deemed somewhat effective insofar as tangible security dividends are concerned. The UN stabilization mission in Haiti made gains in deterring gang violence, political and social unrest, as well as drug-trafficking. It also reduced the incidence of armed violence and perception of insecurity. Finally, it improved confidence in the police (Kolbe & Muggah, 2010; Lemay-Herbert, 2015).

[39] The UK stabilization approach in Afghanistan engaged with development by combining reconstruction projects of high symbolic value with the delivery of essential services. With regards to the former, the QIPs concentrated on security infrastructure (e.g., revamping of police stations), but expanded to include civilian infrastructure (e.g., clinics, roads, schools) with time. As for service delivery, the British military became involved in, among other things, medical services outreach. The provision of health care was believed to have concrete security and governance benefits as it allowed the military to generate "influence and intelligence opportunities, encouraging populations to share information and changing underlying attitudes towards the military force and the Afghan Government," (Gordon, 2010, p.379).

3.2.5.3.3. Governance

Now, let us turn to the third pillar of stabilization: governance. This aspect remains slightly understated as it expands the well-established security-development nexus. Stabilization shouldn't be considered a purely technical activity. Indeed, the narrow treatment of post-conflict security challenges is identified as the reason for stabilization's limited success in the past (UK Stabilisation Unit, 2018). Hence, key political factors must not be ignored. As seen in the various definitions presented above, political activities, such as promotion of good governance and capacity building of state institutions at local level, have become valid concerns for governments practicing stabilization.

This is because, like with service delivery, early political interventions have a legitimizing potential. Yet, they are thought to improve the capacity and effectiveness of the state just the same. Hence, early political interventions build trust of the populace towards the state and the process it sanctions. Although stabilization isn't, in of itself, endowed to substitute for peacebuilding, state-building and development, nor should it pretend to be so, it is nevertheless earmarked for paving the way for long-term transformation. Engaging in the political is necessary if these conditions are to be fostered. However, instead of going to unrealistic lengths of nurturing Western-style institutionalism, stabilization political discourse often reverts to the phrase "good enough" when setting political targets (particularly when discussed via the prism of foreign interventions). Good enough are such policies and plans that center on limited, sequenced and attainable goals (UK Stabilisation Unit, 2008).

When discussing the British stabilization mission in Afghanistan, Gordon (2010) sorts the political approaches of stabilization with respect to their desired outcome. He arrives at three main areas of focus: "ensuring the state's survival functions (particularly provincial and district leadership and the generation of security structures and institutions), building social capital (within civil society that was capable of connecting with government), and enhancing the capacity of sub-national government structures to connect with the population," (p.370). These outcomes clearly reflect the assertion made by Dennys (2013) about the critical role played by the local political systems in the maintenance of stability[40]. At the same time, they reinforce

[40] Indeed, the adoption of the aforementioned Helmand Roadmap by the UK government meant a shift away from the hitherto strategy based on security and service delivery and towards a governance-led approach. Rather than via QIPs , the British mission in Afghanistan sought stabilization by "strengthening of political outreach by the provincial authorities, underpinned by the reform of sub-national governance structures," (p.375). Some of the softer interventions were meant to stimulate dialogue on community necessities, but also lending support to local NGOs and the media (Gordon, 2010).

the objective of producing “a legitimate indigenous government, which can better serve its people,” (UK Stabilisation Unit, 2019)[41].

In keeping with the theoretical debate touched upon before, the political goals of stabilization have to do with, first and foremost, preliminary strengthening of state and non-state institutions, particularly at local level. This translates into improved interfaces of the state vis-a-vis the affected populations. In a nutshell, strengthened institutions are such that represent fairer, more inclusive, more accountable and transparent governance. In practice, strengthened institutions are better equipped to dealing with grievance, social tensions and, thus, preventing violence. What’s more, in contrast to the neo-Weberian institutionalism characteristic to conventional state-building, stabilization shows interest in both formal and informal—or customary—institutions, up to and including capacitation and training of individual leaders (Zyck & Muggah, 2015).

3.2.5.4. Criticism of stabilization

Due to its conceptual bloodline, a fair share of criticism levelled at stabilization in reality amounts to a critical assessment of the *liberal peace* at large, together with the assumptions it builds upon. The most obvious place to start here is the contentious dogma linking poverty, and thus development, with violence. The causation drawn between the two was found to be over-reductionist (Selby, 2011). To boot, promotion of market economies to combat poverty has also been widely questioned due to the high levels of instability it brings about. What’s more, according to some critics, governance reforms in the context of international interventions are a form of neo-colonial imposition of rules forced upon states under the threat of penalties (Mac Ginty, 2011). Carter (2013) points out that the stabilization practices are yet

[41] In post-conflict recovery in Sierra Leone, re-establishing state capacity and legitimacy was just as important a component of the stabilization campaign as the use of force or development interventions (Zhou, 2009). Operation Silkman, the most underrated chapter of the UK involvement in Sierra Leone, aspired to leave a more lasting mark on the country’s transition, building up the government and security forces (among other things, by institutionalizing civilian control of the military or creating anti-corruption units). According to Ucko (2016), the program ended up “giving the government new confidence, greater capability and strategic direction,” without which the possibilities of a new civil war would have been a lot higher (p.865). That being said, rather than assuming the responsibility for the rebuild, the foreign stabilizers backed worthwhile local processes (deftly balancing between “doing something” and “doing everything”). What guided the governance angle of domestic stabilization in Sierra Leone was political, administrative and fiscal decentralization based in a belief that federalization makes governments more accountable, responsive and inclusive, while at the same time empowering local communities (Brancati, 2006; Sambanis and Milanovic, 2014). Decentralization was thought up to address some of the root drivers of the conflict in Sierra Leone, such as poor governance, corruption, inequality in service delivery, exclusionary and unaccountable clientelist politics. To put it succinctly, it aimed at countering the perception of illegitimacy of the state. Scholars found this approach to be successful in preventing renewed violence in Sierra Leone (Edwards & Yilmaz, 2015).

to engage with the criticism of, what the author believes is the mother-concept, the liberal peace.

More direct criticism of stabilization has to do with its flawed conceptualization. While the multiplicity of the arenas of intervention and assistance under one roof is an advantage to some, to others it points towards stabilization's leading conceptual and practical weakness. Historical evidence provides little support that the "all good things come together" approach is an effective tool in promoting stability (Barakat et al., 2010). That is why stabilization has to own up to the trade-offs[42] it inevitably has to entertain.

A major criticism of stabilization pertains to the suspicion that it usurps and compromises genuine development and peace- and state-building activities in furtherance of hard security. By doing so, stabilization blunts the legitimizing and transformative edge of peacebuilding. What best explains the contention is the friction between the two vectors on the inside of the stabilization paradigm: the more conservative, "hot stabilization" with its hard security agenda and strategic interests in one corner, and the long-term, transformative approach skewed more towards peace-building on the opposite end.

Due to this tension, claim the critics, stabilization and peace-building are conceptually at odds, and major differences between the two abound. While peace-building is intrinsically oriented towards governance, deep reforming of institutions and promotion of democratic values, "stabilization emphasizes the containment of armed groups as 'spoilers' of stability, often by military means, and prioritizes the delivery of basic services over governance reforms," (Piccolino & Ruette-Orihuela, 2021, p.2396). Secondly, "stabilization tends to be focused on quick-impact projects whereas peacebuilding operations aspire to set the foundations for and develop a new social contract among the population," (Belloni & Moro 2019, p.451). The humanitarian community raises a similar concern when pointing to stabilization's appropriation of needs-based activities for political or military purpose (Stapleton, 2003). As a result, the rationale for stabilization strategies is visibility—rather than sustainability—oriented (Barakat et al., 2010; Belloni & Moro, 2019; Mac Ginty, 2012; Piccolino & Ruette-Orihuela, 2021).

[42] One example that illustrates the trade-offs of stabilization well is the quest for the right balance between the political deal-making and elite bargaining for short-term security benefits, and the implementation of broader, more inclusive institutions that represent a clean break from the wartime power structures. Studies have shown the risk of misalignment between the peace agreement and the real division of power in the territory.

Stabilization's hard security focus has been manifested by copious empirical evidence from around the world. In spite of some positive impact on stability in Haiti, the MINUSTAH came under criticism for responding primarily to symptoms of violence and not to its causes. It was suggested that the mission would have benefited from tipping the balance away from enforcement-led operations towards development. Instead, soft security programs were outweighed by military interventions[43]. In Iraq, on the other hand, the transformative aspirations of the US government in the early phase of its intervention have over the years been abandoned, giving way to limited stabilization hollowed of much of its state-building, civilian ambitions. In fact, this version of external stabilization, best captured by a slogan "forget about reforms, focus on ISIS," is little more than a counterterrorist strategy in which resilience, not transformation, is the preferred outcome (Belloni & Constantini, 2019). For many, this sudden sequencing shift from thinking of stability as a result of transformation towards regarding it as a pre-requisite for transformation "overlooks the structural deficiencies in the country to focus on quick fixes delinked from a broader strategies approach" in which "pragmatism and speed prevail over other considerations," (Belloni & Constantini, 2019, p.519).

The above contradiction is well reflected in another central aspect of stabilization: the integration of civilian and military interventions. As mentioned above, the dual aspiration of this approach means it rests on the cooperation of the two. This has practical consequences: civilian and military actions "working towards a common goal in a streamlined approach [that] benefits the local population," (Barakat, 2016, p.2). However, due to their incrimination in war and its atrocities, the engagement of state security and justice actors in post-conflict reconstruction is deeply contentious. Both the military and the police tend to be perpetrators of human rights violations with a record of corruption and failure to protect civilians from violence (OECD, 2008). Indeed, stabilization tends to downplay or overlook the fact that these institutions are typically a side to the conflict or even its underlying driver (UK Stabilisation Unit, 2018). In that regard, the simple gesture of strengthening their capacity does not only miss the point, but can create more insecurity.

The coalescing of civilian and military activities is the source of conceptual and practical inconsistencies within stabilization. For instance, many scholars and humanitarian workers reject the normalization of the military, or other security agencies, in the role of leading peacebuilders or reconstruction actors. Such tendency, referred to as "securitization" of service

[43] It led one of the officials of the community violence reduction program to tellingly remark "we constantly have to stabilize a situation previously destabilized by military units," (Lemay-Herbert, 2015, p.729).

delivery or state-building, significantly narrows the scope of stabilization[44] (Colletta & Muggah, 2009).

Stabilization with a heavy counterinsurgency coloring (limited to neutralization of spoilers) is oriented predominately towards the preservation of the status quo (the so-called "victor's peace") and does little to engage with the underlying drivers of violence. This uneasiness with the intrusion of the military into traditionally civilian-led policy spheres is only compounded in situations where armed forces continue to be engaged in full-scale armed operations (and so are required to deal with a sort of conceptual schizophrenia). Case studies from different cultural context demonstrate rather unequivocally that the military simply isn't a suitable source of humanitarian or development support. What's more, the reverse is also true. As pointed out by Barakat et al. (2010), "when NGOs are instead tasked with providing assistance as a form of 'force protection', they too have been rendered less effective by the need to consider the hard security—as opposed to human security—outcomes of their work," (p.315).

Another point of criticism has to do with the mere plausibility of stabilization. In order to be impactful, this approach calls for what Hoyos & Muggah (2009) refer to as the "3 Cs": an agenda of coherent, coordinated and complementary action at both policy and operational stage. According to the scholars, such synergy of relevant institutions, agencies and other actors with "locally derived, clear and unambiguous objectives and appropriate benchmarks of 'success' and 'failure'" (Hoyos & Muggah, 2009, p.46) is necessary if reducing state fragility is the goal. Nevertheless, the ambition to achieve more policy coherence and coordination in the aftermath of conflict clashes with the irreconcilable reality "characterized by competing objectives, priorities, time frames and principles," (Collinson et al., 2010, p.284). The heterogeneity of mandates and approaches produced tensions at the moment of civil-military integration in stabilization missions from Afghanistan and Haiti to Timor-Leste[45] (Lothe & Peake, 2010). The critics claim that stabilization's "personality split" renders it virtually inarticulate in practice. In other words, stabilization suffers from a serious existential quandary

[44] Gordon (2010) exemplifies this phenomenon when discussing the tensions caused by the British military involvement in health provision in Afghanistan. Seemingly innocuous, if not advantageous, the initiative was deemed impractical (e.g., treatment devoid of any continuity is bound to have negligible health impact) at best, and unethical (carried out with the sole purpose of achieving military objectives) at worst.

[45] This exact scenario played out in Haiti, where—in spite of some co-operation between the peacekeepers and the civilian personnel—"the lack of political, administrative and financial centralization to mediate heterogenous (and often competing) interests and institutions" prevented a true integration of the MINUSTAH components (Muggah, 2010, p.450). In consequence, the constituent parts of the UN mission acted mostly independently.

with regards to what it really is, what timeframes it occupies, how it relates to other policy spheres, and what the practical implications are (Gordon, 2010).

Aside from the criticism of the security component of stabilization, the other two elements also meet with some resistance. The hearts and minds approach informing the short-term development projects has also generated a fair share of skepticism. Overly optimistic goals jammed into extremely short time-frames have proven not only unrealistic but counterproductive. As explained by Barakat et al. (2010), the "ambitious, short-term objectives for stabilisation actors are often unmet—or fulfilled in an unsustainable manner— thus resulting in popular discontentment in the conflict-affected country[46]," (p.311). In fact, there exists little evidence supporting the hypothesis that "hearts and minds" projects have positive impact on violence and deterrence of non-state armed actors. On the contrary, development aid is believed to exacerbate conflicts by nurturing corruption and, thus, further eroding the legitimacy of the state (Wilder, 2009). Even well-executed development-related dividends and the resulting support from populations may, in reality, have negligible impact on spoiler activity. Using service provision as a form of incentive to extract acquiescence from local populations has also generated suspicion of superficial commitment, a phenomenon referred to as "rented peace" (Carter, 2013).

Based on the case study from the Helmand province of Afghanistan, Carter (2013) offers a valid critique of the state-building element of the stabilization narrative. The sudden shift of power from the *de facto* local and regional proto-statal structures towards formal state institutions "seems intensely destabilizing, as many powerbrokers may simply resist the appropriation of their power and resources," (Carter, p.13). The task of transforming of age-old power structures is so complex and delicate that it outgrows the conceptual and practical confines of peacebuilding, let alone those of stabilization (Krause & Jutersonke, 2005).

This is, of course, if we assume these structures need to be transformed, or removed, in the first place. The above question is tied to the dismissal of the Western, state-centric nature of stabilization (larger peacebuilding notwithstanding) that has permeated the contemporary debate on peace. Later generations of scholars claim the universal and reductionist thinking anchored in liberal peacebuilding sees all conflicts as essentially similar, to be addressed at the nation-state level (Beswick & Jackson, 2011). As such, it tends to shun any serious analyses of

[46] The medical outreach program by the British military in the Helmand province of Afghanistan, for instance, failed to meet the high beneficiary expectations, generating resentment towards the Afghan government.

micro-level violence while failing to capture the diverse interactions between formal actors and informal powers (Reisinger, 2009). In other words, it ignores the so-called "hybrid political orders" and the diversity of social forces competing for control, favoring the simplistic state-fragility view (Boege et al., 2009). What's more, the ambitious pursuit of apolitical, Western-style institutionalism is often doomed from the very beginning due to patterns of patrimonialism, clientelism and rent-seeking behavior of the local elites (Whaites, 2008). As a result, strengthening the state in its centrical, liberal democratic form at all costs may, in fact, only weaken the state further (Eriksen, 2009). Especially in such context where the state is considered a negative actor (and for good reasons).

What has become clear is that stabilization is an approach inherently marked by tensions and trade-offs between short-term stability and a more transformative agenda. Flawed as it may seem, the stabilization approach is rooted in what seems a largely sensible diagnosis. That multidimensional security interventions are necessary to fill the operational gap between humanitarian activities and long-term development and peacebuilding initiatives is a valid assumption.

The much-discussed duality accounts for the volatility of the post-conflict and post-demobilization environment. Hard and soft interventions are thus required and should be made complementary. The presence of spoilers in the immediate aftermath of war, and the high-risk of extreme violence they precipitate, make the prospect of civilian-only stabilization scenarios feel remote. As Dennys (2013) points out, citing the mistakes of peacekeeping missions in Srebrenica and the DR Congo, "we must not assume that aspirations of peace can be realized without the ability to resort to force," (p.2). What's more, scholars such as Lake (2008) argue that the legitimacy of the state cannot be attained without prior provision of security and stability. Differently put, the stakeholders of peace will only carry the load of building a sustainable peace if they enjoy the benefit of freedom from violence. Lessons from Haiti, Afghanistan and Sierra Leone produce evidence as to the indispensability of the coercive element. Both the UN and, to much lesser degree, the US security-first approach played the key role of reclaiming space for humanitarian activities. According to the humanitarian and development NGOs, their gains wouldn't have been achieved "as quickly or on an equivalent scale without military interventions and stabilization," (Muggah, 2010, p.457).

With that being so, Dennys (2013) and other scholars, reassert that the role of the military in providing stabilization should be a constructive and secondary one at best. What stabilization operations must resist is the imbalance of straying towards hard security, preserving their

ambitions in contributing to broadly understood peacebuilding. Even more so, they should only resort to oppressive measures in extreme situations. The best guarantee of that is a transparent cooperation with civilians based on clear criteria. Shedding prominence to the civil society responds to the critique of stabilization's state-centric approach. Citizens in at-risk territories are documented to seek security and justice with family, religious, ethnic and group networks. These informal systems are legitimate, representative of community norms and values and readily available. As such they can be the source of insight and support in the state's stabilization efforts in zones affected by conflict (UK Stabilisation Unit, 2018).

Furthermore, the realism of the stabilization approach must shun binary narratives of complete success and utter failure. Setting objectives should be accordingly moderate. Thus, in spite of the difficulty to reconcile the inconsistencies, the three-pronged approach is well-positioned to contribute positively to the process of restoring of both the coercive and legitimate functions of an absent state (better than a standalone activity such as counterinsurgency or humanitarian relief). Therefore, stabilization shall rely on "a combination of means and approaches and should be understood as the outcome of a combined, multi-part strategy," (Muggah & Zyck, 2015, p.7).

All in all, the above chapter was divided into two parts. In the first part, literature on rebel governance was explored. This exercise included surveying of the existing definitions of the concept, highlighting the variations in rebel governance by discussing its diverse typologies, and linking these variations to differing degrees of violence used by rebels in their interactions with civilians. Next, we established that the variations of governance (and thus the variations in the use of violence) depend, to a large degree, on the level of territorial control a rebel group has. Therefore, we then zeroed in on scenarios in which territorial control is disputed to assess the extent of security threat such a sequence of events entails for the civilians. The purpose of engaging with the theory of rebel governance was to, first, better interpret the nature of the FARC rule in territories it operated in, and, second, to speculate on what the dissolution of the guerrilla could imply from the security standpoint.

In the second part of the chapter, we explored literature on security responses in post-conflict. We established that the approach best suited for the potential challenges of post-demobilization is stabilization due to its emphasis on a rapid and multidimensional response. Thus, in the sections that followed stabilization was dissected. First, the existing definitions of stabilization were compiled. Next, based on the definitions, the most important goals of stabilization were identified. Additionally, the theoretical foundations of the approach were traced back. In this

way, the evolution of the concept over time was captured. The chapter also discussed the practical dimensions of stabilization, bringing up examples of stabilization interventions from post-conflict transitions around the world in the process. Finally, addressed were also some of the main tensions and points of criticism of the approach to-date.

Chapter 4. Methodology and analytical framework for case studies

The following chapter outlines the research methods guiding the thesis along with the analytical framework for the case studies. It begins by briefly stating the goal and the research questions. Next, it briefly explains the key terms used in the research questions. By examining the research questions in more detail, the underlying research problem and the goals of the study are identified. In the subsequent section, the research design is broken down into its integral components. First, arguments behind the methods adopted are given, followed by the reasoning behind the selection of territories and timeframe. The data collection techniques are summarized next. The chapter concludes with the data analysis section, in which an explanation is provided on how the thesis intends to answer the research questions, and how the literature informs the analysis.

4.1. The goal and research questions

As explained in the introduction and the first chapter, the following thesis explores the security situation in two post-demobilization zones in the immediate aftermath of the FARC's laying of arms as a result of the 2016 Peace Accord in Colombia.

By rigorously examining the security dynamics in the territories previously controlled by the FARC, the study endeavors to answer two principal research questions:

1. What short-term impact did the demobilization of a governing non-state armed actor, the FARC, have on security in Tumaco and South Tolima?
2. How effective was the response of the Colombian government to the short-term security challenges generated by the demobilization of the FARC in these two territories?

The above research questions indicate that the study gravitates around two focal points. First, it observes and makes sense of the security dynamics existing on the ground in a post-demobilization setting. Secondly, it takes a critical look at the state's role in the shaping of these dynamics.

Before continuing, let us briefly breakdown some of the key concepts used throughout this study. First, a "governing non-state armed actor" is any non-state armed group (i.e., not part of the state's regular armed forces) exercising a significant degree of power and providing social and political order in the absence or weakness of the legitimate state. It bears repeating that the bulk of the studies published thus far is dedicated specifically to governance by rebel groups. However, since it has been shown that governance is not exclusive to guerrillas, this study uses

a more general term that better captures the ambiguity of the "new war" actor. As already mentioned, the noun "post-demobilization," a term previously used by Nussio & Howe (2016), among others, refers to the period following the demobilization of a hegemonic non-state armed group. Throughout the text, the adjective "post-demobilization" is also used to describe a territory where the demobilized non-state armed group was present (a post-demobilization zone) or a non-state armed group with origins in the demobilized organization (a post-demobilization group). It is important to keep in mind that post-demobilization is not the same as post-conflict, albeit it usually is part of a larger post-conflict transition. Next, following the dictionary definition, by "dynamics" I understand the forces or properties that stimulate change within a system or process. "Change" is a keyword here inasmuch as post-demobilization spaces are inevitably pervaded by a sense of alteration and transition. It is precisely the said change in the system that the study sets out to dissect. The term "security," on the other hand, stands for human security. As opposed to state security, the main concern of the human security paradigm are the manifold vulnerabilities of civilian populations affected by conflict (CHS, 2003). Thus, when speaking of security, this study denotes human safety or the state of being free from danger or threat.

Let us now expound on the objective behind the two research questions. As discussed in the preceding chapters, upon signing the 2016 Peace Agreement, the Colombian state faced an immense challenge of overcoming the security legacies of the fifty years of civil conflict. In the context of the FARC demobilization, the two most pressing legacies were the weak state presence in a significant proportion of the national territory and the diverse non-state armed groups operating throughout that territory. The negative potential of these legacies for civilian security was discussed in more detail in the literature chapter, where we saw that the confluence of territories with weak state presence and non-state armed groups is likely to produce a phenomenon referred to as rebel governance.

To recap, based on the literature, we established that in territories with limited state presence, non-state armed groups engage civilian populations via diverse mechanisms of governance. Controlling populations is believed to advance the goals of non-state armed groups, no matter whether the goal is ideological or pragmatic. The most basic form of rebel authority involves provision of security or protection. More elaborate forms of governance entail provision of justice services or other benefits. Generally speaking, the variants of governance range from coercion-based to consensus-based ones.

There exist practical reasons why non-state armed groups would opt for at least a degree of consensus-based governance (e.g., more loyalty means better support system). In the "evolutionary" sense, however, groups are not capable of ruling via consensus until they acquire territorial control (predominately because without territorial control they are not capable of gaining proper access to civilian populations). Until then, they rely on violence in asserting the control over these populations, extracting resources, and improving their chances of defeating the enemy.

Based on the above observations, and holding the state absence/weakness and presence of non-state armed groups as controlled variables, we can hypothesize that in post-demobilization two things happen. First, power vacuums occur in which governance functions hitherto exercised by the non-state armed group, including provision of protection, justice and services, cease. Second, non-state armed groups seek to fill the power vacuums, but are likely not capable of governing until they take possession of territories. Following the demobilization of a hegemonic non-state actor, it is unlikely that any one group will simply inherit control of territories, and instead territorial competition over power vacuums is the most probable scenario (in fact, this is precisely what happened in Colombia after the AUC demobilized in 2006). The above is especially likely if the other security legacies of armed conflict, such as illicit economies, faltering security apparatus and corruption, converge (such as is often the case in Colombia). Since competition promotes disorder, whereby coercion, rather than legitimacy, forms the fulcrum of the non-state armed group rule over civilian population, post-demobilization brings about a deterioration of security conditions for civilians. What's more, even if one group gains an upper hand, it will still opt to use violence in its interactions with civilians as it consolidates in the given region. Legitimacy only becomes a concern for an illegal armed group once it secures the territory. Until then, the use of violence is not expected to be moderated in a meaningful way. Thus, we are faced with a paradox, whereby not only doesn't demobilizing of a hegemonic non-state armed group contribute to improved security in post-demobilization territories, but it makes it worse.

In its first part, this study strives to find out if the above theoretical assumption on the relationship between demobilization and insecurity indeed held true in Colombia following the FARC demobilization. By comparing the two Colombian regions vacated by the FARC (case studies), it aims at testing if vacuums of power, territorial competition and, consequently, more violence are an inevitable outcome in post-demobilization zones, where state is weak and other non-state armed groups persist. By the same token, based on the literature on rebel governance

the study inquiries about other security dynamics triggered by demobilization of non-state armed actors and their determinants. Hence, complementing the first research question are the following auxiliary questions: What kind of security trajectories are likely to ensue once rebel governance ceases to exist? How discreet are these trajectories? What specific factors determine the discrete outcomes?

On the basis of the analysis of the Colombian post-accord, the study adds to our understanding of the security implications brought about by the demobilization of a hegemonic non-state armed group hitherto engaged in forms of governance in a given territory. In other words, the research generates hypotheses on the security ramifications of dismantling what the literature refers to as rebel orders in an environment where the state is weak and there persist other non-state armed groups.

In parallel, the study aims to provide new evidence on the viability of state responses to the security challenges of the early post-demobilization period. Against the background of the theoretical discussion on state security approaches at the end of conflict, I hypothesize that stabilization is best suited to mitigate the short-term security legacies of civil wars, i.e., state weakness, non-state armed groups, illicit economies, problems with the security apparatus and corruption. Due to its emphasis on rapid, multidimensional, and integrated approach, when properly implemented, stabilization is uniquely positioned to prevent the scenario of an increase in violence in post-demobilization. The reason for this is that the approach in question is designed to promptly boost the state's presence both in military and civil dimension, bridging the gaps in security, capacity, and legitimacy in a given region. Differently put, stabilization is conceptually predisposed to eliminate power vacuums as the source of territorial competition and consolidation of non-state armed actors in post-demobilization territories.

Therefore, the study examines the stabilization strategies implemented by the Colombian government and assesses their impact on the security trajectories in two post-demobilization territories. The assessment is done with the help of the criteria of successful stabilization approaches extracted from the literature. In addition, the research seeks answers to the following secondary questions: Had the Colombian government an identifiable stabilization strategy to contain the security legacies? What were its main features? How different were they from the earlier approaches? By evaluating the Colombian government's efforts to bring peace to former FARC strongholds, the study arrives at hypotheses regarding how states can best go about stabilizing post-demobilization territories ahead of long-term reconstruction and peacebuilding.

In addition to answering the two principal research questions, the investigation considers how the above security dynamics in post-demobilization impact larger peacebuilding efforts. Broadly speaking, this heuristic study contributes to the literature on the micro-dynamics of peace and conflict. More specifically, it expands the fast-growing body of research on non-state armed groups' governance by drawing attention to an understudied aspect of the phenomenon: what happens when the governing non-state armed groups demobilize. By doing so, the thesis strives to advance the knowledge on the determinants of violent behaviour in post-demobilization and post-conflict scenarios. Finally, the study endeavours to yield new evidence on state-level security approaches to stabilization in the specific spatial and temporal context of post-demobilization.

4.2. Case study: justification, selection of cases, timeframe

This section of the methodology chapter breaks down the process of case selection for this case study research. First, it briefly discusses the case study methodology. From there, it moves to provide the rationale behind the selection of Colombia and, more specifically, Tumaco and South Tolima as subjects of the study. Finally, the specific timeframe in which the study explores the problem is set.

4.2.1. Justification

This case-oriented research employs a single case study methodology. A single case research is an "intensive study of a single unit with the aim to generalize across a larger set of units," (Gerring, 2004, p.342). The abovementioned unit usually refers to a spatially-delimited phenomenon observed over given period of time. In the case of the following research the phenomenon in question is, broadly speaking, the 2016 Colombian Peace Process, while the period of time is the early post-demobilization phase of the process (both the spatial and the temporal are discussed in more details below). The inherently limited scope of the so-called within-case studies notwithstanding, it is believed that they can be of much aid for theory development. Single case studies contribute to knowledge production by providing generalizations and early results. Rather than aspiring to explain compound problems, it theorizes individual processes and generates "testable proposition," about them (Geddes, 2003, p.27). In simple terms, a single case study lays groundwork for further research into the topic.

Rather than taking a holistic approach, it is important to emphasize that the study employs the embedded case design (Yin, 2009). Contrary to Gerring's definition, embedded design digs deeper into the single unit of analysis, zeroing in on multiple sub-units of analysis. This is

precisely the strategy of the study here as two sub-regions of Colombia are considered. Thus, albeit a within-case study, the research incorporates elements of the across-case approach. Colombia constitutes a perfect subject for the chosen methodology due to the varied spatial and temporal nature of the armed conflict in the country. The abundance of discrete patterns within one country, single conflict, and even particular armed actor, make Colombia a versatile and fairly universal case for the embedded design.

4.2.2. Selection of cases

This section presents the methodological justification for the case selection. Rationales behind the selection of cases, both on the maxi- (the Colombian peace process) and the micro-level (Tumaco and South Tolima) are provided. In other words, the section explains why the Colombian peace process in general, and the two territories in particular, make for a good subject for a study on security in post-demobilization.

4.2.2.1. Colombian Peace Process

Why does the Colombian peace process justify the election of the single case approach? Both for its universality and distinctiveness. To put it differently, the rationale for researching Colombia is that it represents a peculiar paradox: on one hand, both the conflict and post-conflict here contain elements typical to similar instances worldwide. On the other, there are various aspects that make Colombia a *sui generis* case with regards to the theory of peace and conflict.

The Colombian example is typical insofar as the conflict that has plagued the country for decades displays the most important features of a “new war,” i.e., the thinning of boundaries between diverse state and non-state actors in war; the opulence of illicit economies as the source of war finance; violence against civilians as a technique of controlling populations, etc. (Kaldor, 2007). In addition, as demonstrated on earlier pages, the Colombian state has limited presence in vast territories within its borders, suffering from gaps in security, capacity and legitimacy characteristic to an increasing number of countries affected by conflict worldwide (Call, 2011). Finally, the FARC’s role as an informal authority is also fairly representative of the phenomenon of rebel governance. The attributes of the proto-state orders constructed by the rebel group in territories where the Colombian state’s presence had been inadequate are not unlike many others found elsewhere in the world. Differently stated, the legacies of the Colombian Armed Conflict summarized in the first chapter are fairly universal to most countries in war-to-peace transition across the world.

With that being said, the Colombian post-conflict is a case like no other for a variety of reasons. First of all, the Colombian peace process is an almost entirely domestic affair. In other words, it isn't brought about by international intervention. What's more, the Colombian government made no attempt to involve the UN peacekeeping missions in any significant proportion. It must be noted that a large share of the literature on peace and conflict, with its stabilization thread in particular, centres on Western-led or the UN peacekeeping missions. For this reason, the mere fact that the post-conflict is Colombia's internal affair allows us to add a new dimension to the state of the art.

Another salient trait of the Colombian Peace Process is that it doesn't equate to an ultimate end of conflict. Whereas an effective demobilization of the FARC helps contract the crowded arena of illegal armed groups, a significant quota of hostile actors was largely unaffected by the 2016 agreements. Most patently, the second largest guerrilla organisation, the ELN, was going nowhere. In spite of attempts by the President Santos administration to bring it to the negotiating table, the ELN refused to follow into the FARC's footsteps. Even assuming that the government's struggle against the new generation of non-state armed actors was technically no longer a war (but rather combatting of organized crime), the persistence of the ELN on the battlefield, with its insurgent heritage rooted in the ideological clashes of the Cold War era, precluded Colombia from claiming the end of conflict. Thus, it was rather axiomatic that such "partial peace" scenario would have consequences on security in transition unlike in many of the other, more generic post-conflicts worldwide.

Going back to the context chapter, in which the absence of the Colombian state was discussed, we are faced with another paradox that makes this case so attractively distinct. Colombia has always escaped the narrow definition of a failed state, at least in the most conventional sense of the term. This is due to the relatively robust tradition of institutionalism in the country. As established in the context section, however, strong as they may be, the institutions are located almost exclusively in the core territories of Colombia. Therefore, the preferred term is differential presence—or partial collapse. Yet, as a seasoned democracy with developed institutions and relatively healthy economy, Colombia is well-equipped to face the challenges of post-conflict, especially when compared to the majority of war-torn states.

4.2.2.2. Tumaco & South Tolima

In general, the spatial element of the following case study are the regions of Colombia which fit the bill of what the research refers to as post-demobilization zones. To recap, the study

understands post-demobilization zones as such territories in which a non-stated armed group that hitherto exercised the role of *de facto* authorities (imposed some elements of a wartime social order) lays down its arms and begins the process of reintegration into the society (that is, participates in the DDR process). As a consequence of demobilization, these territories inevitably experience a period of organizational change over the course of which power dynamics are in a state of flux with considerable security repercussions.

By the time the FARC demobilized in 2017, there were approximately 250 municipalities in Colombia in which the guerrilla had operated, which amounts to nearly 22% of the country's national territory (Valencia et al., 2017). The abundant post-demobilization zones were distributed fairly evenly across the map of Colombia. From the department of Norte de Santander in the north of the country to Caquetá in the south, from Arauca in the east to Cauca in the west, the sheer number and diversity of the zones reflect the vast territorial influence the guerrilla had accumulated in the country; even in spite of the heavy losses towards the later stage of the conflict. The 250 territories were affected by the armed conflict and its legacies, albeit to a varying degree, and all were expected to be the centre of attention of the peacebuilding efforts. Yet, they were also fundamentally distinct in their local dynamics, what made the imminent challenges of post-demobilization less predictable.

The two post-demobilization zones chosen for this investigation are the municipality of Tumaco in the Nariño department in south-western Colombia, and the region of South Tolima in the Tolima department in the centre-west of the country. In short, the two cases were expected to follow dissimilar security trajectories in post-demobilization, reflecting the diversity of the FARC zones in Colombia. In other words, we can say that the case studies chosen are "extreme cases," in that Tumaco and South Tolima demonstrated contrasting security trajectories heading towards post-demobilization, despite both being controlled by the FARC (Seawright & Gerring, 2008; Seawright, 2016).

Before discussing the differences, these two territories have plenty in common. As regions severely affected by the Colombian Armed Conflict, particularly in its later stages, they are conditioned by the security legacies of the civil war described in the context chapter. For the above reasons, both Tumaco and South Tolima were named among key territories for the implementation of the Peace Accord. The two feature such important modules of the post-conflict transition as the Territorial Training and Reincorporation Spaces (ETCR), which serve to train the members of the FARC ahead of their reincorporation into civilian life, the National

Integrated Program for the Substitution of Illegal Crops (PNIS), and the Territorially Focused Development Plan (PDET).

First, Tumaco and South Tolima are regions in which the phenomenon highlighted in this study as state absence, or state weakness, has been rife. Likewise, in tune with the literature, in both regions illegal armed actors have historically exploited the precarity of the state to their own advantage. Moreover, in both territories, the FARC had in recent history exhibited a degree of social and political control. Alternatively stated, the guerrilla had at some point in the period immediately before demobilization carried out certain functions of the state there. Moreover, Tumaco and South Tolima are both illicit goods manufacturing centres and/or trafficking corridors. They are also either borderlands or transport hubs, meaning the goings-on in these regions are directly related to the national and international markets. What's more, the two zones had witnessed heightened presence of the Public Force in the past. In either territory, this presence has been marred by on account of gross incompetence, human rights abuses, and corruption.

Similarities notwithstanding, there exist salient differences between the two regions studied. With regards to size, Tumaco covers a much smaller area (3,760 km^2) than South Tolima (6,008 km^2). However, this discrepancy balances out when comparing the populations: Tumaco is how to 2012,692 inhabitants (ICP, 2018), while South of Tolima is much more scarcely populated, with 118,274 residents (ART, n.d.). The ethnic demographics of the two areas also differ. In contrast to the afro-Colombian majority in Tumaco, the population of South Tolima is predominantly mestizo. Another disparity has to do with the scope of illicit economies. While Tumaco is Colombia's coca growing and illegal mining capital, South Tolima is generally less abundant in resources, especially since the eradication of the poppy cultivation in the 2000s. The importance of Tumaco to the drug-trafficking industry in Colombia is predicated on the fact that it encompasses every stage of cocaine production, from growing to processing to export. South Tolima may be a strategic corridor due to its central location, but illicit crops cultivation is comparatively negligible here.

Whereas South Tolima is one of the FARC's historical strongholds, Tumaco hadn't become a sphere of influence for the guerrilla until later in the war. As a consequence, the FARC hadn't managed to establish a long-standing territorial hegemony there. While in Tumaco power had traditionally been contested between several armed actors, certain zones of South Tolima had witnessed periods of hegemony of the FARC. Finally, it is fair to argue that Tumaco had been afflicted with a comparatively more volatile security situation in the years prior to peace

process than Tolima. These contrasting historical trends, elaborated in more detail in the next section, suggest that the two territories were likely to experience the period of post-demobilization differently. The discrete patterns may thus offer a wealth of insight into what factors determine diverse security dynamics in post-demobilization.

4.2.3. Choice of timeframe of post-accord

Generally speaking, the most accurate term to describe the period following the signing of the ratification of the peace agreements between the Colombian government and the FARC on November 30, 2016 is post-accord (*posacuerdo*). While this expression is akin to what in peace and conflict studies is usually referred to as post-conflict, in Colombia, as already mentioned, the conflict is technically not over.

However, considering the main interest of this study, the timeframe chosen is best referred to as post-demobilization. Now, early post-accord and post-demobilization aren't dissimilar in the sense that both refer to the timeframe after the singing of peace. Of course, there is about a month worth of difference—after all, post-demobilization hadn't begun until the early months of 2017, when the FARC fronts gradually left their posts and moved to the ETCRs (subject to regional variations). Nevertheless, by speaking of post-demobilization, we bring into focus the specific aspects of post-accord which are a direct result of the FARC demobilization process.

The period is restricted to the first two years of post-demobilization, 2017 and 2018. This limits our observations to the short-term effects of demobilization. Importantly, the chosen timeframe covers the entirety of the implementation efforts under the President Juan Manuel Santos' administration. That is to say, in this period, the architects of the peace agreement, President Santos and his cabinet, implemented the peace accord according to their vision. While it is true that Santos' presidency ends with the swearing in of Ivan Duque as the president of Colombia on August 7, 2018, it can be argued that in the first five months of the incumbent administration we are still dealing with the consequences of the decisions taken by the previous government. As such, it is presumed that the analysis of this phase of implementation is likely to be more focused and coherent, without having to consider the change of administrations as a red herring or a convenient explanatory factor.

The selected period was critical to stabilization efforts. As was discussed in detail in the previous chapter, in the immediate aftermath of a violent conflict, the government is faced with the task to stabilize the affected territories "in order to prevent the continuation or recurrence of conflict and destabilizing levels of non-conflict violence," (Zyck et al., 2013, p.19). As we

have seen, the literature on stabilization assumes that the more immediate and multidimensional the security response is, the better conditions for peace implementation. Thus, the timeframe chosen should overlap with any rapid response program or stabilization strategy employed by the Colombian government along with the peace agreements.

Additionally, it should be noted that there exists a salient "public relations" aspect to this two-year period. During the early stages of post-conflict, peacemakers must promote peace initiatives among the population. By showcasing the benefits of the peace process, the government hopes to garner enthusiasm and participation of the society. Still, this can only be achieved via dividends, i.e., visible positive change in the territories affected, in the immediate aftermath of the peace agreement. Indeed, according to scholars, peace dividends demonstrate potential to "incentivize elites, combatants and citizens to support stability over warfare," (Zyck & Muggah, 2015, p.1). As mentioned in the previous chapter, without the societal buy-in, the already delicate endeavor of sustaining peace becomes only more daunting.

In spite of the above arguments, it came to my attention that not enough has been made of this stage of peace implementation in the academia and its role in determining the outcome of the entire peace process. The following study makes an attempt to rectify this state of affairs. Admittedly, considering how daunting and disadvantageous the immediate aftermath of conflict is, expectations have to be kept at bay. Sure-fire solutions to endemic violence and underdevelopment simply don't exist. Yet, by the same token, this period offers as many opportunities as it does challenges.

4.3. Field research and data collection

Case study research is typically based on qualitative data collection. Since the following study has an embedded, single-case design, different qualitative data collection techniques, both primary and secondary, were used at each level. The secondary data presented in this case-study is a product of extensive desk-based research. As part of the desk-based research, I gathered in-depth data on post-demobilization in Colombia extracted from reports on the progress of the peace process (compiled by various UN agencies, as well as Colombian and international NGOs), news articles by diverse media outlets, scholarly articles, and official documents and databases released by the Colombian government.

The other data collection technique used in this study is the semi-standardized interview. The interviews were conducted via fieldwork in Colombia on three occasions (in 2020, 2021 and

2022 respectively[47]). During the fieldwork, I travelled to Tumaco and South Tolima to interview the people living in the two post-demobilization zones. Among the informants consulted were: ordinary citizens, civil society representatives, members of local administration, former members of non-state armed groups, members of the Public Forces, etc. At the same time, I conducted a series of interviews in Bogota—some of them face-to-face, others via videoconference—with experts in the field, academics, journalists, government officials, as well as individuals who had lived, worked, travelled to Tumaco and South Tolima in the timeframe chosen, or had otherwise analyzed them in their academic work. The interviews are annotated in more detail in tables at the end of each case study (with date and description of the subjects) and included in the annex section. All interviews were transcribed by me using the non-verbatim transcription method for more clarity and better reading experience (Poland, 1995). I then translated the quotes featured and verified them with native Spanish speakers.

In general, while the interviews followed a fairly definite structure, a degree of flexibility was welcome. In the conversations, the two axes of questioning were: the perception of security in the territories in the period given (2017-2018), and the perception of the efforts of the Colombian government (specifically under the President Santos' administration) to stabilize these territories. Thus, in the first part, the interview would follow the structure of a narrative interview, insofar as the respondents were asked open-ended questions inviting them to reminisce on the security situation in the given territory in the first two years following the demobilization of the FARC. Later, I would ask more precise follow-up questions in reference to the key themes mentioned by the interviewee (e.g., "Can we speak of *peace* in the aftermath of the FARC demobilization?"; "Were there power vacuums?"; "What security dynamics characterized the power vacuums?"; "What were the notable trends in violence and crime in the region?" etc.).

Subsequently, the interview would shift towards the perception of the state efforts to stabilize post-demobilization territories. Individual questions would be asked with regards to the particular components of the stabilization strategy: the military (e.g., "Was there a quantitative or qualitative change about the Public Force in the region?") and civilian constituents ("Did the state replace the FARC in its governance functions?"). I would then inquire about the strengths and weaknesses of the stabilization strategy, and a degree of novelty about the state

[47] The fieldwork was affected by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is why it had to be resumed and completed in later periods once freedom of movement was reinstated.

approach to stabilizing post-demobilization zones ("Was there anything novel about the state stabilization approach?"). In sum, this part of the interview would gauge the level of satisfaction of the target population with the stabilization strategies. Finally, more general questions were asked with the intention of linking the experience of the first two years of post-demobilization to the broader peacebuilding efforts in the territory.

4.4. Analytical framework for case studies

In the following section, I elaborate in more detail on how the study endeavours to answer the two leading research questions. The data gathered via the above collection techniques is presented and discussed in separate case studies for Tumaco and South Tolima. In other words, each case study combines results with elements of discussion. For each region, the results chapter consists of four main sections: background, pre-demobilization period, post-demobilization period, and discussion. The post-demobilization period is further subdivided into the following sections: FARC demobilization, benefits of peace, power vacuums, illegal armed groups, data on violence and crime, military response, civilian response, and community response.

The opening segment of the case study provides a summary of the key characteristics of the given region, including pertinent information on geography, demography, and economy. Although its function is chiefly expository, the background section hints at certain important analogies and inconsistencies between the two cases selected, pointing to how certain conditions on the ground shape, or are shaped, by the security legacies of the armed conflict.

The next section is based on secondary sources and follows a chiefly chronological order. It offers a historical outline of the region in question, recounting the most important security dynamics at play throughout the Colombian armed conflict in each territory. However, rather than chronicling remote events, it focuses on the modern period, i.e., approximately the two decades preceding the demobilization of the FARC in 2017. In both cases the structure of the historical overview is the same: origins of conflict, non-state armed actors present, FARC governance, state interventions, and the last years of FARC hegemony.

The purpose of this section is to depict in more detail the security landscape in Tumaco and South Tolima in the years leading up to the peace accords. Central to this overview is the historical status of the FARC in each region. Hence, the scope of the guerrilla's governance practices, its fluctuations over time, and its impact on the security of civilians, are discussed and placed in the context of the rebel governance literature. This exercise is considered

necessary if we are to grasp the security implications of the dismantling of the FARC governance in both territories.

In addition, the historical account establishes the security legacies of the conflict in each of the regions. It discusses the themes of state absenteeism, the presence of other non-state armed actors and their relationship with the FARC, the evolution of illicit economies, and the status of the Public Force in the region (the size, reputation, notable feats), as Tumaco and South Tolima headed towards post-demobilization. The latter means that the historical overview touches upon any noteworthy stabilization approaches tested by the Colombian state in the two territories in the past. The research then links the various renditions of stabilization in the modern history of Colombian conflict with the parallel evolution of the larger discourse on the scope of stabilization approach presented in the literature chapter.

Having presented the necessary background, the study engages with the data from the time frame selected for the analysis. The main goal here is to characterize the security dynamics in both regions in the immediate aftermath of the FARC demobilization.

What each of the case studies aims to highlight are any significant changes in security dynamics in post-demobilization in comparison to the preceding period. To this purpose, major developments with relevance to security in the aftermath of the FARC dissolution are reported. This is done by combining the material taken from the interviews with the results of the secondary research. Primary data is reported via a narrative account based on the major themes identified across the semi-standardized interviews. Throughout the account, a handful of direct quotes is used. The first part of the account presents pertinent insight on themes of security dynamics in post-demobilization, such as: level of completion of the DDR of the FARC; positive effects of the peace process; emergence of power vacuums, activity of other illegal armed groups; violence and crime, etc. The second part of the account compiles observations of the interviewees on state strategy, both military and civil. The final section of the account collects the information on community efforts vis-à-vis the above security dynamics. In short, in the last section of the results chapter, primary data is corroborated and complemented by secondary research, to offer a phenomenological perspective on the major security dynamics, as well as on the responses to these dynamics in the post-demobilization period.

In order to substantiate the qualitative data, some statistical data on violence and crime in Tumaco and South Tolima is used. In order to accurately capture the major changes in security dynamics, statistical data covering a six-year period between 2013 and 2018 is presented

(reflecting the two timeframes used—before and after demobilization). The compiled dataset comprises a series of diverse indicators of violence and crime. The indicators of violence are as follows: homicide rates, forced displacements, and a category labelled "violent incidents related to armed conflict" (that encompasses violent acts usually associated with on-going hostilities, such as disappearances, sexual violence in armed conflict[48], terrorist acts, antipersonnel mines fatalities, and child recruitment[49]), and the number of victims. The indicators of crime, on the other hand, are robbery (of people and businesses), extortion, threats, and—in the case of Tumaco—coca crops cultivation (coca crops are not present in large enough quantities in South Tolima). What's more, in reviewing the role of the Public Force in stabilizing post-demobilization zones, data on the number of arrests, as well as seizures of narcotics and weapons is also exhibited. The sources consulted include: the Colombian National Police, the National Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Science, the Colombian Victims Unit, Colombia's anti-personnel mines program, the *Somos Defensores* NGO, and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. The numbers and figures are then briefly discussed and illustrated with relevant examples.

The above primary and secondary data are analysed here using the inductive approach. Rather than examining data with a rigid, predetermined framework in mind, the inductive approach "uses the detailed readings of raw data to derive concepts, themes, or a model through interpretations made from the raw data by an evaluator or researcher," (Thomas, 2006, p.238). Therefore, the data analysis in this study is of exploratory nature insofar as it looks to suggest answers to open questions instead of aiming to confirm narrow hypotheses (Guest et al., 2012).

In order to arrive at said concepts, themes or a model, the research employs thematic content analysis. To an extent, thematic content analysis relies on techniques inherent to grounded theory, such as close reading of transcripts, identification of themes, comparing and contrasting, searching for structure between the themes, etc. (Bernard & Ryan, 1998). In a nutshell, as far as the first research question is concerned, the themes identified among primary and secondary data reflect the key security dynamics in post-demobilization Tumaco and South Tolima. When it comes to the second research question, the themes are the distinguishable elements of the stabilization strategies implemented by the Colombian state in the two regions.

[48] The full name of this category in Spanish is: "crimes against sexual freedom and integrity during an armed conflict" (delitos contra la libertad y la integridad sexual en el desarrollo del conflicto armado).

[49] This category is actually broader and covers the "involvement of children and adolescents in activities related to armed groups" (vinculacion de niños, niñas y adolescentes a actividades relacionadas con grupos armados).

While the study is predominately inductive, it doesn't mean that it's atheoretical or that theoretical considerations are altogether missing from the attempts to interpret the results. On the contrary, in the analysis, the themes derived from the data are set against the backdrop of the literature reviewed earlier in the thesis. In the results chapter, references to the central concepts from the literature on rebel governance are made, including: roving and stationary banditry, civilian-combatant interactions, tactical use of violence by non-state armed groups, stages of development of rebel governance, rebel orders (rebelocracy, aliocracy and disorder), competition for territorial control, and consolidation of non-state armed groups. As already stated, in the case of the first research question, the literature guided the development of a rough hypothesis positing that demobilization of a hegemonic non-state armed group exercising governance may have negative impact on human security in the region it controlled. The assumption serves as a jumping-off point for the analysis. The findings from both regions should allow us to test whether the sequence behind the hypothesis was true in post-demobilization territories in Colombia, i.e., whether power vacuums were created; whether they were filled; whether they were competed for; whether the competition produced violence.

Yet, the literature on rebel governance is used on various stages in the interpretation of data. First, the study reviews the major practices of rebel governance and their function discussed in the literature in order to establish the "size" of vacuums created following the FARC's demobilization. This has to be made clear should the implications of the guerrilla's exit be better understood. The study then makes sense of the post-demobilization security dynamics in Tumaco and South Tolima by turning to what the literature has to say with regards to civilian-combatant interactions in situations of contested territorial control. In doing so, it places the behaviour espoused by the actors in post-demobilization Colombia within the typologies of non-state armed groups governance. If violence is indeed the preferred mode of interacting with the civilian population, the literature will be consulted to understand why non-state armed groups rely on this method in post-demobilization settings. The theoretical chapter will also be referred to when examining if the non-state armed groups in Tumaco and South Tolima showed any interest in laying the groundwork for a more complex, legitimate forms of governance.

At the same time, the findings on the stabilization interventions used by the Colombian government in the aftermath of the FARC demobilization are linked to the literature on stabilization discussed in Chapter 3. The strategies employed by the Colombian government in stabilizing the post-demobilization Tumaco and South Tolima are evaluated against the criteria of successful stabilization approaches mentioned in the literature. What's more, the analysis

locates the responses of the Colombian government in the evolving discourse on stabilization presented in the literature chapter. It also compares the strategies used in Colombia with some of the examples of successful stabilization strategies from the past cited earlier in the study. Lastly, the study uses the overview of the prominent criticism of the stabilization approach to identify if the Colombian state steered clear from the errors identified by the literature.

The results regarding security dynamics in Tumaco and South Tolima in the period studied, now organized into themes and grounded in theory, are then compared and contrasted in an attempt to find common patterns, as well as salient divergencies. The reasons explaining both the commonalities and variations across the two regions should help us understand what factors determine security dynamics in post-demobilization. Likewise, the identified and systematized stabilization strategies by the state are assessed. Thus, the ultimate purpose of the thematic content analysis used in the study is to turn the abovementioned themes into general hypotheses on security in post-demobilization that can be used in further studies on the topic.

Chapter 5 Case study 1: Tumaco

The first case study sheds light on the security dynamics and stabilization efforts in the municipality of Tumaco in the first two years following the demobilization of the FARC guerrilla in 2017. The case study is divided into four sections. The opening section outlines the most important background information about the region. Next, the chapter presents a historical account of the Colombian armed conflict in South Tolima. The purpose of this section is to give an overview of the most important security developments in Tumaco before the 2016 peace process. In the following sub-section, findings from the post-demobilization period are presented. The results are split into data on the security dynamics on the ground between 2017 and 2018, as well as data on the efforts to stabilize the region in the same period. The case study closes with a discussion of the most significant findings.

5.1. Background

The municipality of San Andrés de Tumaco is located in the department of Nariño in the south-east corner of Colombia, on the Colombian Pacific coast, and on the border with Ecuador. With the total area of approximately 3,778 km^2, it is the second most extensive municipality in Colombia. The municipal capital, Tumaco, is the second largest port on the Colombian Pacific. However, the municipality is otherwise largely rural with no other major urban center within its borders. The population of Tumaco is about 212,692 inhabitants, of which 120,569 live in the urban areas and the remaining 92,123 reside in the rural zones (Tobón & Cajamarca, 2018). Around 62% of the population is younger than 30 years old (DNP, 2018). When it comes to ethnicity, the municipality of Tumaco is mainly of Afro-Colombian descent, with small indigenous minority. The demographic structure of the region has been shaped by several economic cycles, most notably the extractive industry's reliance on slavery. The economic activity revolves predominately around agriculture (palm, cacao, banana, etc.), fishery and harvesting of shellfish, in addition to tourism (Araujo, 2020).

Tumaco has historically been among the country's most neglected and underdeveloped municipalities. It has traditionally been more closely influenced by more peripheral social, economic and cultural processes of the Pacific coast, rather than those occurring in the Andean part of Colombia (Tobón & Cajamarca, 2018). However, its rapid social and economic

degradation can be attributed to the fact that, due to its geostrategic characteristics50 and endemic absence of the state, Tumaco became a fertile ground for criminal economies and a safe haven for a plethora of illegal armed groups towards the end of the 20th century.

It suffices to say that Nariño is the department with the largest area dedicated to coca cultivation in Colombia, what makes it one of the biggest suppliers of cocaine in the world. The amount of land used for coca growing in the region has shot up drastically since the 2010s (UNODC, 2018). Apart from coca fields, Nariño is home to large deposits of minerals, particularly gold. In parallel to coca, gold mining has recorded a significant increase in recent years (Escobedo et al., 2018). Tumaco represents the nerve center for all illicit activity in the department. From vast coca fields to countless clandestine laboratories to convenient export routes via the Pacific and the border with Ecuador—all stages of the drug trade take place here (Molinares & Reyes, 2012). In sum, this comparatively small territory offers unique financial prospects for illegal armed groups.

Today, Tumaco suffers from deficiency of services and infrastructure. Weak institutions are reflected in limited access to justice, high levels of corruption, administrative inefficiency, and low credibility of the local government (Vélez et al., 2015). The infrastructure of Tumaco is equally inadequate as evidenced by the paucity of good-quality roads (there is only one main road linking Tumaco city with Pasto, the capital of Nariño, hence the inhabitants have traditionally used water highways for transportation instead). Together with endemic violence, the above characteristics deter major investment. The neglect experienced by Tumaco has brought economic, social and political precarity for its inhabitants. Poverty and unemployment indicators are well above the national average, while the population suffers from a shortage of basic services (e.g., housing, potable water or sanitation) (DANE, 2015). Scarce economic and educational opportunities make life easier for illegal armed groups who feed on the sense of desperation of the local youth in order to recruit new members and forge a sense of dependence. It is hardly a surprise that Tumaco has over the years constantly featured among Colombia's most violent municipalities (Salas, et al., 2019).

The limited state presence has been an impulse for manifold forms of autonomous community organization, functioning in parallel to the de facto orders imposed here by non-state armed groups (Hoffman, 2007). In fact, in 1993, in acknowledgement of the lay of the land, the

[50] The border with Ecuador, access to the ocean; major harbor; immense, humid forests; numerous rivers and waterways, etc.

Colombian government passed the groundbreaking Law 70, which guaranteed state protection of territories belonging to black communities. These collectively titled landholdings make up an important share of the total land in Tumaco. As such, while they have constituted a pillar of strength for afro-descendent population in the region, these parcels have also put a target on their back. Yet, besieged and persecuted by disparate powerful interest, the population of the municipality has nonetheless had a long tradition of resilience, as well as of political mobilization and organization against violence, crime and the infringement of basic human rights (Aponte & Benavides, 2016).

5.2. Tumaco pre-FARC demobilization

In this section, a historical account of the Colombian armed conflict in Tumaco in presented. The section is divided into five parts. The account follows a mostly chronological order and starts with the background of the conflict in the region. Next, outlined are the historical trajectories of the leading non-state armed groups in Tumaco. The section then discusses notable state interventions in the municipality. Finally, the years leading up to the FARC's demobilization in 2016 are characterized.

5.2.1. Origins of conflict in Tumaco (1980s)

The legacies of the armed conflict in Tumaco are relatively recent and largely associated with the expansion of the drug industry, rather than the insurgency and counterinsurgency wars. As argued by Aponte & Benavides (2016), the origin of conflict in the municipality "is not endogenous" and can be better explained by the strategic choices of armed actors at the national level (p.120). Already in the 1980s, the coastal portion of Nariño became a strategic corridor for drug-trafficking from Bolivia and Peru. Although primarily a transit zone, it was around that time that the Cali Cartel commissioned the construction of the first laboratories and airstrips in the municipality, especially in the district of Llorente—along the only road from Tumaco to Pasto—and along the several rivers flowing into the Pacific. Both Llorente (referred to as the coca farming capital of Colombia [Jaramillo, 2018]) and the territory around the uppermost part of Tumaco's largest river, Mira, turned into "ground zero" for the drug trade in Colombia. They were to remain in the eye of the conflict for decades to come. The arrival of powerful drug interests in the area meant that the local political elites and criminal underworld gradually coalesced (Aponte & Benavides, 2016).

It wasn't until the 1990s that the nationwide fighting reached Nariño by way of the arrival of the FARC, the ELN, and the paramilitary groups, the *Libertadores del Sur* and *Libertadores*

Central Bolivar (Fundación Ideas para la Paz, 2014). However, the 1990s decade was a period of low intensity conflict. With the rest of the country suffocated by violence, it was, comparatively speaking, a "haven of peace" (*remanso de paz*). The most violent epoch commenced in the early 2000s, and lasted, roughly, until 2014. The main culprit for the intensification of the war in Tumaco was the irruption of the drug industry, transplanted to the Pacific as an indirect result of vigorous eradication campaigns and crawling military operations under *Plan Colombia* in the south of the country, especially in Putumayo and Caquetá (Observatorio, 2009). In only 3 years, the coca cultivation shot up from 776 hectares in 1999 to over 5,000 hectares in 2002 (UNODC-SIMCI, n.d.). While the impulse came from outside, there can be little doubt that the aforementioned process was facilitated by the scarcity of the Public Force on the coast of Nariño[51].

5.2.2. Non-state armed actors in Tumaco (1980s-2016)

The FARC's *Frente 29* made its way into Nariño via Cauca in the 1980s. At first, the rebel group didn't engage in hostilities or drug-trafficking in Tumaco. Instead, it used the mountainous stretches of the department as a refuge (Salas, et al., 2019). This dynamic changed substantially after the fiasco of the Caguán negotiations in 2002. Chased away from their positions in the center of the country by the Colombian armed forces, the guerrilla was desperate to find a new place of shelter. At the same time, in consequence of the defeat to the paramilitaries in the Uraba region, the rebel group was now effectively cut off from the sea (Garcia, 2011). Since, as discussed before, in the new millennium, the FARC became more heavily involved in the drug business, it couldn't afford to lose access to vital drug-trafficking hubs. In this regard, Tumaco offered a perfect combination of a sanctuary, on the one hand, and a hotspot for the illicit economy, on the other. By transferring troops from the east of the country and decidedly increasing its manpower, the FARC turned Nariño into a priority. The newly set up mobile columns, the *Daniel Aldana* and *Mariscal Sucre*, engaged in extortion of both the producers and buyers of cocaine as an early form of profiteering from the booming industry (Observatorio, 2009). Such was the swiftness with which the guerrilla found its feet in Nariño that by mid-2000s, it was in charge of the better part of cocaine production in the department (Álvarez et al., 2017). It should be noted that, thanks to the political and social

[51] The Observatorio (2009) reports that up to fifteen municipal capitals on the coast of Nariño and Cauca had no police presence until 2002 (p.54). Likewise, the armed forces hadn't established permanent presence in the region until the 2000s.

work in the communities, the rebel group enjoyed some popular support in the Tumaco region in the initial years (Funacion ideas para la paz, 2014)[52].

As for the paramilitaries, their presence in the municipality dates back to the second half of the 1990s. In the early 2000s, the AUC expanded, making use of the tried-and-tested methodology that featured displacement and massacres of local population, elimination of alleged guerrilla collaborators, and social cleansing campaigns (Aponte & Benavides, 2016). At this stage, the guerrillas and the paramilitaries ran distinct links in the drug-trafficking chain. Yet, the paramilitaries weren't fully satisfied without direct control over coca cultivation, and so didn't need many excuses to attack both the FARC and the ELN in rural Nariño (Salas, et al., 2019). Be that as it may, even at the peak of its powers, the organization didn't manage to dominate the countryside, and had to contend itself with the urban and peri-urban zones of Tumaco.

After 2006, various BACRIMS competed between each other over the corridors and manufacturing facilities vacated by the demobilized AUC. Not unlike in other territories that saw the paramilitaries demobilize, the competing factions were small and dispersed at first, but showed a tendency to converge bit by bit (Defensoria del Pueblo, 2005). Once consolidated into hierarchical structures, these post-paramilitary criminal bands mounted a serious challenge against the FARC, especially since the guerrilla also set their sights on taking over the post-AUC power vacuums (Rodriguez, 2015). The turf wars sparked a wave of terror and violence against civilians like the urban Tumaco had never seen before (Molinares & Reyes, 2012). Ultimately, the *Rastrojos*, the most formidable of the BACRIMs, steadily gained prominence in both the urban center of Tumaco, as well as the upper Mira region. As opposed to their predecessors, the post-paramilitary groups were oriented almost exclusively towards drug-trafficking. As mere overseers of the trade, they exerted less influence over the population. On the contrary, the new generation of paramilitaries relied chiefly on the use of violence in their interactions with the local communities, much to their own detriment. While such modus operandi might have been enough to recruit members and assert a degree of territorial dominance, the failure to develop a rapport with the population was to become a major handicap, especially when the conflict with the FARC flared up (Aponte & Benavides, 2016). The post-paramilitaries did, however, meddle in local politics, successfully infiltrating state institutions in the region (Observatorio, 2009).

---

[52] The ELN followed a similar, Pacific-bound trajectory at around the same time, even though it was, by and large, the illegal mining of gold that the organization pursued in the Pacific.

5.2.3. FARC governance in Tumaco (2000-2016)

While we already glossed through the years after the demobilization of the AUC, the second part of this period coincided with the resurgence of the FARC under a new commander-in-chief, Alfonso Cano (CNMH, 2014). Pressured by the Public Force, the guerrilla fled to its rearguard along the border with Ecuador. The hit-and-run tactics revived by *Plan Renacer* allowed the rebels to come out of the hideaway and steadily recover strategic territories. In this way, they drove the Rastrojos away from the strategic rural areas (e.g., the mouth of the river Mira) and the urban zones of Tumaco (Fundación ideas para la PAz, 2014)53. Thus, two years before its demobilization, the insurgents finally defeated the remaining neo-paramilitary organizations, gaining full control of all the links of the drug production chain, and securing the status of the only political and social powerhouse in the region (Silva, 2017). Immediately prior to its demobilization in 2017, the consolidated FARC acted as de facto authority, regulating nearly all aspects of the socio-economic life in Nariño. As a result of the FARC's territorial dominance and the ceasefire between the guerrilla and the Public Force, disputes and confrontations became more infrequent, whereas all indicators of violence dropped compared to the preceding years (Salas et al., 2018).

Nevertheless, the FARC's reign in Nariño pre-2016 was far from benevolent. Already since the late 1990s, the guerrilla had cut back on political groundwork in favor of a more militaristic and predatory profile in the department (Álvarez et al., 2017). Such doctrinal shift was due largely to major reshuffling at the leadership level, whereby more ideologically oriented regional commanders were replaced with more militant ones (Rodriguez, 2015). Following the broken peace negotiations in 2002, the rebels thrusted themselves into this still fairly unfamiliar territory employing mostly coercive tactics. Since resources were badly needed, they opted for extortion, kidnappings and disruption of the economic life of the municipality, in addition to forced recruitment, predominately of the indigenous Awá population, to make their presence known (Aponte & Benavides, 2016).

In Tumaco, the FARC underwent an even more thorough conversion into a drug-trafficking organization than it did in other departments of Colombia. As narrated by Fundación ideas para la Paz (2014), towards the end of its reign, some of the leaders of the *Daniel Aldana* column conducted themselves as *narcos*. What's more, there were rumors of extensive business

[53] A paradox should be noted here that the above would not have been possible if it hadn't been for the significant blows the Rastrojos, along with other BACRIMs, received from the government forces in the period discussed in this section.

arrangements between the guerrilla and the Sinaloa Cartel. The systematic conversion into a criminal organization over the years entailed a sense of moral degradation of mid-ranking officers and foot soldiers (Álvarez et al., 2017). In sum, in few other places was the political involution of the FARC more clear-cut than in Tumaco.

The above was manifested in the FARC's relationship with informal governance bodies. Perceiving it as a threat to its authority in the region, rather than a potential liaison, it openly targeted the community council (JACs) leaders with assassinations, bans, intimidation and smear campaigns (Molinares & Reyes, 2012). Whereas in certain zones the guerrilla succeeded in subjugating these local entities, in others, traditional forms of governance remained relatively autonomous in their capacity to contest the rebel rule. On the one hand, the ability to quickly penetrate the community life played a pivotal role in the early success the insurgents enjoyed in Nariño. The rebels were in charge of most aspects of the social and political life of rural Tumaco very soon after their arrival in the region. On the other hands, unlike in most strongholds across the country, the FARC never moved past the use of violence as means of fostering co-operation with the recalcitrant host population in Tumaco. Failing to understand the radically different context impeded the guerrilla from forming a steadfast social base in Tumaco. Without proper access to the population, the rebel group displayed comparatively "limited capacity to recruit and control territories," (Aponte & Benavides, 2016, p.123).

Moreover, the constant pursuit of new territories for coca cultivation was another source of discord between the FARC and local communities. The guerrilla was responsible for mass waves of displacement, more often than not in collective lands belonging to the indigenous or afro-Colombian communities (Salas, et al., 2019). More systematic land dispossession campaigns began with the coca boom, as a wave of colonization by the largely mestizo plantation workers from neighboring departments swept the region in the early 2000s. Once again, the FARC command stirred up tensions by blindly copying the colonist mechanisms successfully applied in the south of the country, without paying attention to the robust tradition of collective property in Nariño. Those campesinos who grew licit crops were regularly forced to switch to planting coca what dramatically altered the sustainability of local economies. Refusal was equivalent to treason in the eyes of the guerrilla and punished adequately.

5.2.4. State interventions in Tumaco (2000s-2010s)

With Nariño in the spotlight of drug-trafficking, the Public Force visibly strengthened its commitment to the long-abandoned department throughout the 2000s. The demobilization of

the AUC, in particular, afforded the state an opportunity to seize control of the territories where the counterinsurgency groups had hitherto exercised their authority. A number of key localities were identified wherein the police force would be bolstered. The armed forces, on the other hand, were expected to protect these spaces via the newly launched mobile brigades (Observatorio, 2009). Over the next few years, a plethora of organisms were established to fight the guerrillas and drug-trafficking. To ensure smoother coordination, battle plans (*Plan Espada de Honor*) and task forces (e.g., *Fuerza de Tarea Pegaso*) were called into life (Fundación Ideas para la Paz, 2014). In the end, as was the case elsewhere in the country, the vacuums of power left by the paramilitaries were filled not by the state, but by a motley crew of illegal armed groups.

As Plan Colombia was running out of steam, the government conceived of a new integrated stabilization program in areas most heavily affected by drugs and conflict. In order to consolidate the state in these territories, the authorities vowed to, first, foster the necessary security conditions and, then, introduce functioning state institutions. However, in contrast to the La Macarena region, where security indicators improved, in Tumaco the approach yielded virtually no change in this regard (Isacson, 2011). The sequence was forever stuck at the first hurdle. Bound by the prescriptions of the War on Drugs, the Public Force focused, for the most part, on coca eradication activities and tearing down of the infrastructure used in production of illicit drugs, whereas the development component of the policy left much to be desired. The success of this approach with respect to security and coca production was questionable, while its effect on local economies proved adverse54. Therefore, an argument can be made that beyond the progressive militarization of Tumaco, the quality of state presence in the territory barely moved an inch over the past two decades (Molinares & Reyes, 2012). This has generated great reservoirs of mistrust from the population towards the state. Various overlapping reasons have been brought up to puzzle out the sustained lack of success by the Colombian government in Tumaco in the years leading up to the 2016 peace accords: from the simple fact of a demanding topography to insufficient funds to faltering coordination within the Public Force to ubiquitous corruption (Isacson, 2011).

[54] The substance used in eradication of coca has negatively affected licit crops. Coca growing is also a vital source of sustenance for many ordinary campesinos. The substitution programs, on the other hand, have been criticized as oblivious to local agricultural and economic contexts.

5.2.5. Last years of FARC hegemony (2008-2016)

The FARC's rampant recruitment in the later stage of its activity in the Pacific meant that a fair number of former paramilitaries, urban militias, and gang members infiltrated the ranks of the organization. The status of these individuals had remained obscure even until after the demobilization process. As recounted by Salas et al. (2019), such confusion arose from the rebel group's practice of sub-contracting remnant criminal networks to attain certain strategic objectives in Tumaco. This was particularly true in the urban center, where the guerrilla aspired to become a hegemonic actor. The then-commander of the Daniel Aldana column, "Oliver," orchestrated formation of what the authorities officially named Networks of Support for Terrorism, or RATs (Arenas, 2017). In reality, in the eyes of the high FARC command, these hired guns, known as "*ripios*"[55], were little more than cannon fodder (Duncan, 2016). Nevertheless, they were undeniably of great value in maintaining control and extraction of rents in Tumaco in that epoch (Arenas, 2017).

In sum, there existed a cluster of actors who inhabited a grey zone in Tumaco, insofar as they received no formal training and, thus, were never inducted into the FARC, but nonetheless collaborated closely with the guerrilla, often under the threat of being executed (Álvarez et al., 2017). Poor internal cohesion was further exacerbated by a sense of alienation from the central command and growing skepticism towards the peace process (mostly due to security concerns) at mid-ranking leadership level ("Jovenes sin esperanza," 2017).

The strategic significance of Nariño meant that retaining the hold of the region turned out to be a daunting task for the increasingly feeble FARC. Between 2015 and 2016, as the guerrilla readied itself to demobilize, a new post-paramilitary group, the AGC (*Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia*) penetrated into the Tumaco harbor with the aid of the local criminal networks (Álvarez et al., 2017). Smaller organized armed groups also swarmed the municipality in anticipation of the imminent power vacuums, while the ELN irrupted into Tumaco's rural outskirts (Florez, 2017). The above reconfiguration of non-state armed actors manifested itself in a wave of assassinations and overall increase in violence in the Pacific municipality in 2016 ("Tumaco, convulsionado", 2016).

All in all, even though the FARC were able to maintain a lid on full-fledged violence in the department pre-2016, the period of relative calm was by no means representative of the history

[55] Duncan (2016) explains that the word ripio stands for the rocks and gravel used to fill in holes. In the same vein, the FARC treated these young affiliates as something useful, but, ultimately, expandable.

of Tumaco. Since the 1980s, the municipality had changed hands time and again, and the balance of power continued to be volatile. All security legacies of the armed conflict were acute in the municipality. The levels of violence endured by the civilian population of Tumaco since the beginning of the 21st century have been nothing short of staggering. The above historical trajectories have resulted in an increase in homicide rates, displacement, injuries, and deaths from antipersonnel mines, as well as in extortion and forced recruitment (Fundación Ideas para la Paz, 2014). Certainly, all signs in late 2016 indicated that the government faced a herculean task to contain the post-FARC violence brewing in the Colombian Pacific.

5.3. Tumaco post-FARC demobilization

The following section contains the results from Tumaco from the timeframe adopted by this study (2017-2018). It is divided into two main sub-sections corresponding to the two major themes of this study: the security dynamics on the ground in the chosen region, and stabilization strategies used by the Colombian government, as well as the community in the aftermath of the FARC demobilization.

5.3.1. Security dynamics

In the opening segment of the section, the study presents data on the most important security dynamics in South Tolima. The aim here is to capture the most relevant trends in security together with the factors that shape them. The section is arranged in accordance with the major themes found in the interviews, i.e., the FARC demobilization, benefits of peace, non-state armed groups present in the region, statistics on violence and crime.

5.3.1.1. FARC Demobilization

The DDR process in Tumaco began on the 28th of January, 2017, with the first batch of troops transferred towards the concentration zones. The regional ETCR, the *Ariel Aldana*, was located in the village of La Variante along the road from Pasto to Tumaco, over 50 kilometers from the port town. The completion rate of the demobilization of the FARC in Tumaco can be described as high, but incomplete (Int.14). Although it may have seemed at first that majority of the combatants would participate in the program, with the passage of months, more and more individuals began abandoning the process and rearming (Int.7). One of the respondents, who assessed the procedure as "in no way … total," explained that non-demobilization occurred on two levels:

> "There were always groups of the FARC that from the beginning did not agree, did not share the peace process, did not support the agreement. There were groups that never endorsed it. And then comes what is known as the dissidences. Or well, the dissidents would be both those who did not support it, and people who had supported the peace agreement in principle, then they withdrew from that agreement," (Int.14).

There are at least three salient reasons for the incomplete demobilization in the municipality. The conventional explanation as to why many combatants shunned the DDR process points to the robust criminal economies in the territory. It is a fair evaluation. As the negotiations were coming to an end in Havana, in Tumaco, the Daniel Aldana column was at the peak of its military and economic powers. This being the case, it stood in contrast to the majority of the fronts elsewhere in Colombia, jaded with decades of conflict and anxious to retire. Compared to the uncertainty of civilian life, the prospect of steady profits from drug-trafficking and illegal mining gave the Tumaco-based militants a pause as they were about to lay down their weapons (Guevara et al., 2019). With the illicit rents now more available than ever, for many combatants the life of crime was, quite simply, a logical choice.

While the above reasoning applies to a degree, to refine it we have to first understand how the FARC units in Tumaco changed over time. As elaborated in the previous section, the organization's shifting priorities in the region left important question marks over its membership to begin with. The strong criminal undercurrent of the Tumaco branch prompted the FARC's central command to wash their hands and deny many of the guerrilla's affiliates in the region the opportunity to participate in the reincorporation program ("Corazón de Tumaco," 2017). Willing to demobilize, the young militiamen, the *ripios*, nevertheless found themselves in a legal vacuum (Arenas, 2017). The institutionalized protection after they laid down arms, along with other benefits negotiated in Havana, didn't apply to them for the simple reason of not figuring in the ranks of the FARC (Palau, 2019). What's more, all too aware of the potential dissidence problem that might ensue in Tumaco, the leadership of the rebel group ordered an internal purge of the support network (Sáez, 2018). The clear-out was responsible for the sudden uptick in homicides in July and August 2016, in the midst of the bilateral ceasefire. According to the interviews done by Álvarez, et al. (2017), the guerrilla command regretted the wholesale cooptation on the Pacific coast, which—in their own admission—cost them their cohesion and identity in the region. An arguably more serious error still was the lack of an exit strategy for the FARC's militia networks. It would come back to haunt them in the years to come, when the outcast *ripios* went after the heads of the now demobilized guerrillas

(Duncan, 2016). Yet, in the end, the onus was on the government for not preparing a legal framework to deal with similar cases. Finding no answer to their pleas, many of these petty delinquents were expected to return to the streets and enroll in one of the remaining non-state armed groups (Arenas, 2017).

The third reason as to why the DDR faltered in Tumaco has to do with the design and the procedures of the process itself. First of all, there was a perception of tardiness in the delivery of judicial guarantees preventing the ex-combatants from getting arrested and tried by the state (Castrillón, 2018). In a place like Tumaco, where the identity and practices of the FARC had been shrouded in ambivalence, this issue was, understandably, a source of apprehension. Likewise, the government seemed to drag its feet in the provision of socio-economic services to the ex-combatants in urgent need of sustenance (particularly those related to productive projects) (Guevara et al., 2019). The other important aspect were the special transition zones deemed to have alarming living conditions. Moreover, a great deal of combatants expressed doubts about the government's capacity to defend them from revanchism and forced recruitment (Thomson, 2019). The commander of the group, Henry Castellanos, alias Romaña, himself abandoned the ETCR citing security as the main reason (Cosoy, 2017). The first murder on a former FARC member was registered in April, 2017. Until mid-2019, 22% of all 121 homicides on ex-FARC members in the country occurred in Nariño, with as many as six killed in Tumaco alone (Garzón et al., 2019).

In sum, the historical trajectories, ambiguity of the personnel and the illicit economies in the region made full demobilization in Tumaco a nearly impossible task. Internal ruptures were evident for a long time before the peace process began. The Daniel Aldana column was by no means a solidified unit and there was no reason to believe the demobilization process would be complete. As 2017 came round, it was already quite evident who would demobilize and who decided to stay behind.

5.3.1.2. Security benefits of FARC demobilization

The Tumaco residents interviewed for this study corroborate that, in its later stage, the peace negotiations between the national government and the FARC brought about a period of respite for Tumaco. Likely as a result of the guerrilla's consolidation of the territory on the one hand, and the ceasefire that accompanied the talks in Havana, as well as the negotiation with the ELN, on the other, for 2-3 years, immediately prior to the signing of the Peace Accord, the municipality breathed peace (Int.14). For the first time in nearly two decades of high-intensity

conflict, armed confrontations subsided (Int.4). Additionally, there was a "very strong" drop in the rates of violence in the region (Int.9).

In consequence, Tumaco entered a different economic dynamic, reflected by the establishment of new businesses, developing entrepreneurial vision, stimulated construction, as well as growth of the tourism industry (Int.1). Owing to the truce with the FARC, military officials visited the area most heavily affected by conflict to demonstrate their willingness to improve their relationship with the local population ahead of the transition (Int.11). One representative of a state institution created under the 2016 Peace Agreement claimed that while the problem of violence didn't disappear in rural territories, people reported of a decreasing number of victims and attacks. The above trend fostered "a different climate," in the municipality (Int.2). What should be underscored is the cautious optimism experienced by the inhabitants of the region in this period. While it was "a very good time" (Int.9), characterized by a perception of "some peace" (Int.1) and "tranquility" (Int.4), there by no means came a "complete peace," at any moment to Tumaco (Int.14). Nevertheless, the uncharacteristically calm period was interpreted as a snippet of the things to come should the implementation of the Peace Accord go ahead. This also explains why the outcome of the peace plebiscite in Tumaco was overwhelmingly in favor of the agreement (Int.4). The expectations regarding the peace process were high in the community (Int.7).

Unfortunately, the moment of peace turned out to be evanescent. According to most informants, following the signing of the peace treaty in November 2016, there was an almost immediate resurgence of insecurity both in rural and urban zones of Tumaco. Thus, a contradiction in terms, as "with the end of conflict, the security situation got worse," (Int.11).

5.3.1.3. *Power vauums*

When asked about the reasons why violence made its return to Tumaco, the interviewees generally pointed to the emergence of gaping power vacuums in the aftermath of demobilization of the FARC. A majority was of the opinion that the vacuums constituted a magnet for the proliferating illegal armed groups who took advantage of the sustained state absence and reorganized in the spaces left by the guerrilla. As the armed groups were allowed to consolidate and benefit from the spoils of criminal economy available in the vacuums, conflict and violence, and not peace, were the reality of the civilian population of Tumaco.

It was a fast-moving sequence of events. After a short-lived spell of relative tranquility, the writing was on the wall for Tumaco already in the second half of 2017 (Int.7). By 2018,

however, the security situation was getting out of hand. From that point on, "there were kidnappings, extortions, disappearances, massacres. Every day. But the news never reports on that … Nothing is being said about Tumaco," (Int.5). To the local population it was becoming clear that the term post-conflict only applied to select few aspects of the public life in the municipality, whereas for majority of the people the war continued unabated (Int.8). The overall feeling was one of lack of protection in the face of the gaps left by the demobilizing FARC (Int.5). As the vacuums were getting filled, the civilian population of Tumaco had no choice but to conform to the rules dictated by the newcomer armed actors.

In competing for control over the power vacuums, illegal armed groups employed diverse forms of violence against civilians in Tumaco. An early harbinger of the worsening security situation were the first instances of assassinations of social leaders. Drugs-related assassinations of young people became rife (Int.4). The abuse mechanism most frequently mentioned by the subjects were indiscriminate extortion campaigns predominately against the entrepreneurs and small businessmen (Int.3,15). Those who refused to pay up were threatened or worse (Int.1,7). In addition, characteristic of this period was the return of the so-called "express kidnapping." Reminiscent of the FARC's *pescas milagrosas*, the express kidnapping was a tactic whereby an illegal "armed groups would carry an individual out of their business, take him to an undisclosed location, and ask for 50 million Colombian pesos[56] to be delivered within the next 2-3 hours," (Int.1). Extortion and kidnappings were not the only form of victimization used against business owners, small entrepreneurs and storekeepers. One of the interviewees added: "The companies are the victims of this whole situation. Administrators of companies have been killed because of coca here. Workers in companies have been kidnapped because of coca. Companies have been extorted because of coca. Mines have been planted in certain companies to impede the passage towards where coca was grown," (Int.8). In effect, the economic momentum came to a halt. Potential investors were put off by the violence. Rather than continuing along the path of growth, Tumaco entered a new phase of decline (Int.9).

Furthermore, there was "a series of permanent displacements of [the] communities as a result of confrontations between illegal armed groups," (Int.3). Also mentioned were the invisible borders erected between the different spheres of influence, especially in the urban areas of Tumaco. Likewise, there reportedly existed territories that were off limits for outsiders unless

[56] Approximately 10,000 USD.

they received explicit permit of the non-state armed groups controlling the zone (Int.3). What's more, some of the interviews brought up a revival in the practice of child and youth recruitment by the new groups (Int.2,9).

The limited demobilization of the guerrilla certainly contributed to the sense of turmoil in the eyes of the respondents. As elaborated in the previous section, long before the two negotiating parties put the pen to the paper in Havana, everything had indicated that the demobilization of the FARC on the Pacific coast may run into potential stumbling blocks due to the internal fissures of the rebel group. The people of Tumaco knew it as well: "at the time, Daniel Aldana was the FARC's strongest group, economically speaking. But it is clear that the dialogues between the secretariat and Daniel Aldana were broken. Noticeably broken," (Int.2, 6). The state seemed to be playing hot potato with the guerrilla command over the responsibility for the issue of the unrecognized militias. They went on to form the dissident groups: "people say this in each territory where there used to be a rearguard [of the FARC] and that now they are practically the same commanders, the same groups […] With different name, different identification […] but they are not new," (Int.2).

There was a shared sentiment of frustration among the interviewed with regards to the lack of appreciation on the part of the government for the idiosyncratic context of the power vacuums in Tumaco. One of the respondents pointed out that the interest in the drug-trafficking business was so high, it was "logical" that "if the FARC isn't there, others will [control] it," (Int.3). The view that the emergence of the vacuum and its subsequent filling by other armed actors "was to be expected" (Int.2) seemed to be shared by many Tumaco residents. Another tendency was to criticize the purported naivete of the authorities: "Perhaps the state thought that nobody was going to enter, that there was no need to protect [post-demobilization territories]." Yet others lamented the subdued approach towards the persisting threats: "More actions [was necessary] to prevent the regrouping of illegal armed groups." Finally, complaints were made as to the tardiness of the response: "They fell a little short and were not quick in action to be able to put a stop to it, and [if they had] we would not have the consequences that we have," (Int.6).

It is important to note that, while the physical space vacated by the FARC came to be occupied by other non-state armed groups in a short span of time, both the symbolic and practical functions of the guerrilla's authority in the region were largely not taken up. In comparison with the preceding period, when "the FARC controlled it all" (7), the lack of authority upon the dismantling of the rebel group was evident, especially in rural Tumaco. For some of the residents accustomed to rely on the FARC for matters of organization of the public life, the

disappearance of the guerrilla represented a rupture in a functioning system (Int.4,11). One person even commented that "the Tumaco society, to some extent, took for granted the role of the FARC in organizing, and [the fact that] there was order. … [now] there is no order and that generates, in some way, the fears of the civilian population," (Int.11).

The perception of power vacuum was exacerbated by the fact that the population of Tumaco found it difficult to understand "who was who" (Int.5), "where do they come from" (Int.2), or "who's in control," (Int.1) among the new generation of illegal armed actors exploiting the gaps created by the demobilization. Whereas under the FARC's control, local residents possessed a degree of knowledge with whom to negotiate or to whom to appeal, now there was not a single dominant group with enough power to regulate the life in the region. Without a predominant authority, "all small groups that possessed arms converted into their own bosses," (Int.3). Consequently: "now everybody is the boss," (Int.1).

5.3.1.4. Illegal armed groups in post-demobilization Tumaco

The new iteration of the conflict in Tumaco was fought predominately over the territories with strategic significance due to the abundance of illicit economies relinquished by the demobilizing guerrilla. The disintegration of the flywheel of criminal governance in the region, in the FARC, followed by the collapse of the previously devised division of labor along the drug production chain, led to an all-against-all violent competition for power vacuums between 2017 and 2018. As for the protagonists of the dispute, post-demobilization engendered a "proliferation" (Int.3), "fragmentation" (Int.4), and "dispersion" (Int.5) of non-state armed groups in the municipality. The sheer number of groups meant a radically different scenario from the perspective of civilians, who previously had at least known the armed actors present in their municipality (Int.4). In spite of arrests and kinetic operations against them, the groups rapidly increased in scope in post-demobilization (Int.15).

On the whole, the interviewees counted up to around fourteen different non-state armed groups in Tumaco in post-demobilization (Int.3). Among them, were the FARC dissident groups, the ELN, paramilitary groups, the Urabeños, the Contadores, the Mexican cartels, etc. (Int.3,4,5). Yet, during the early phase there were many smaller entities emerging and re-emerging in the region on a nearly monthly basis. In total there were at least 10 post-FARC splinter groups consisting of around 700 combatants (Álvarez et al., 2018). In addition, other strictly criminal organizations, such as the Empresa, which brings together various gangs from Valle Aburrá, dedicated to the administration of transnational drug-trafficking networks, showed interest in

this stretch of the Pacific coast (Matta, 2018). Their origin notwithstanding, it is not a secret that most of illegal armed groups in Tumaco work indirectly at the orders of Mexican cartels. The following non-state armed actors were the leading protagonists of the turmoil in Tumaco in post-demobilization.

5.3.1.4.1. Gente del Orden & Guerrillas Unidas del Pacifico

The word about a dissident armed group under the name of *Gente del Orden* (People of Order) first spread around Tumaco as early as mid-2016. It was formed by the FARC militias and the associated RATs, who initially refused to partake in the DDR process. As the guerrilla began their withdrawal, the original commander of the People of Order, "Don Y", lingered on, appropriating the money and arms left behind. The group was quick to apply intimidation tactics against civilians as a way to announce the changing of the guard. It committed a series of murders on supposed "snitches" (*sapos*) that were to send a clear warning sign to the population living in the area ("'Don Y' el disidente", 2016). Among the victims of selective assassinations and disappearances were community leaders. "Don Y" was allegedly contracted by his former comrades-in-arms from the Daniel Aldana front to protect them and their interests in the face of the imminent arrival of post-paramilitary structures in Tumaco (Álvarez et al., 2018). Yet, the indiscriminate violence against civilians and the fact that "Don Y" hijacked the coca venture for himself, led the ex-FARC leaders to order his elimination („Las Farc mataron", 2016). The brother of the slain kingpin, "David", took over and later renamed the group to *Guerrillas Unidas del Pacifico* (United Guerrillas of the Pacific, GUP). In all likelihood, the killing of "Don Y" severed the ties between the demobilized rebels and the splinter group.

Being the first dissident organization in the region, the group soon became the target of a military offensive (Valencia et al., 2017). However, it fared quite well with the challenge as in the first half of the period under analysis the GUP was the most powerful illegal armed group in the region, accruing up to 250 members. It operated in the town of Tumaco, the surrounding bay area, and the region around the northernmost stretch of the road from Pasto (Salas et at., 2019). It formed various ephemeral alliances with different actors along the way. "David" remained in charge until he was assassinated by the Public Force in November 2018 (Human Rights Watch, 2018). While the GUP endured the killing of its leader, the event took a serious toll on its internal cohesion and coordination capacity (Guevara et al., 2019).

In terms of its relationship with the community, the GUP cut down on the casual use of violence in comparison with the early period. Whereas it made an effort to "present itself as a new source of security in the zone, and […] establish contacts with the JACs to generate social acceptance," the civilians remained skeptical of the criminal element of the organization (Álvarez et al., 2018, p.123). In consequence of the progressive fragmentation of the group (partly due to the successful military operations against its leaders), it reverted back to a more predatory profile. The most drastic measures were reserved for those purportedly collaborating with rival armed groups. Just as grave was any involvement of the population with the illicit crops' substitution program. In order to deter the above behavior, the GUP pursued strict social control.

Aggravating the sense of anarchy in Nariño were the antagonisms between various post-FARC groups, especially when compared to the typically cooperative relationship between these breakaway organizations in other regions of Colombia (Álvarez et al., 2018). The aforementioned internal ruptures and the progressing criminalization of the guerrilla in Nariño translated into a highly fragmented panorama of dissidences. The split between the GUP and the People of Order is the first example. In mid-2017, over 120 former members of what was then still People of Order structure sent out a desperate plea to the government and the command of the FARC asking for permission to re-join the process. A group of lower-ranking militants had already been at the ETCR, but left due to alleged mistreatment from their superiors. Now they found themselves under attack from all sides: the GUP (who accused them of conspiring to murder "Don Y"), the looming post-paramilitary groups, and the government forces. However, as alluded to above, the FARC leaders turned down the petition arguing its authors were nothing more than drug-traffickers (Sáez, 2018). Eventually, only a handful of requests were granted individual demobilization schemes (as only about half of the applicants had belonged to the rebel group) (Álvarez & Restrepo, 2017). The rest continued to operate as a separate dissident group under the name of the People of Order.

5.3.1.4.2. Frente Oliver Sinisterra

One of the main drivers behind the spiral of violence in the Pacific was the confrontation between two leading dissident groups: the aforementioned GUP and the Frente Oliver Sinisterra (FOS)57. The FOS was established in the early 2017, just months after the demobilization of the FARC. The founder of the group was an Ecuador national "Guacho".

57 Also known as *Resistencia Campesina*, *Guerrillas Unidas del Sur* or *Los de Guacho*.

Other than an expert in explosives, he had become a competent criminal entrepreneur during his ten-year spell with the rebel group. Once the combatants transferred to reintegration camps, "Guacho" put the business acumen to use. Making use of the network of contacts accumulated over the years, he offered his services to the intermediaries of international drug cartels in great need of an enforcer to re-organize the industry in Tumaco (Human Rights Watch, 2018). In return, the drug cartels aided the FOS to recruit members and build up military might with financial incentives and weapons (Álvarez et al., 2018). Most importantly, however, the dissident group moved swiftly to control the highly strategic Alto Mira y Frontera region that had until then been subjected to criminal anarchy and violent incursions by the GUP. The urgency was well-founded—the area had by now become the largest coca producing location in the world. Seizing control of the region, the FOS not only presided over immense coca fields, but also the corridors along the rivers Mata and Mataje, used to ship and export the narcotics. Thus, while the territory itself wasn't especially vast, nor was the group more populous than e.g., the post-FARC structures in the Llanos, it boasted access to the kind of revenues other splinter groups could only dream of (Miranda, 2018). Moreover, the proximity of the border with Ecuador gave "Guacho's" group refuge from the Colombian law enforcement. Having rapidly consolidated its control over the coca-rich south-western edges of the municipality, the FOS began expanding. To this end, it relied on the toolkit previously used to good advantage by the FARC in Nariño: accumulation of wealth from drug-trafficking, carrying out high-impact military operations with relatively low effort[58], and sub-contracting militias. As it spread out, it absorbed smaller non-stated armed groups. Thus, the membership of the group was diverse—other than combatants with origins in the FARC, it was an amalgam of opportunistic actors, including former ELN members (Palma, 2021). All in all, towards the end of the period analyzed, the prosecutor general's office estimated that the group had up to 450 members (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

Aiming to increase its reach over urban Tumaco, the group approached the marginalized members of the People of Order. With their assistance, the FOS entered various neighborhoods of the port town in the second half of 2017, sparking an open confrontation with the GUP. In the following months, violence escalated, largely reminiscing of the aftermath of the AUC demobilization. By mid-2018 the balance in urban Tumaco was tipped the GUP's way, as the FOS took a big hit with the arrests of the commanders of the People of Order ("Frente Oliver",

[58] One example of the FOS' terrorist tactic taken straight from the FARC textbook was the toppling of light towers that left the municipality of Tumaco without energy for two weeks (Jaramillo, 2018).

2018). Losing ground in the urban center of the municipality kick-started a downward spiral for the group. According to Johnson (2018), over the course of 2018, the FOS suffered significant territorial losses all throughout the municipality. As with the domino effect, the forfeited key posts negatively affected the FOS' capacity to safeguard the drug-trafficking chain. In consequence, the group's relationship with their main benefactors, the Sinaloa Cartel, deteriorated. This, in turn, had an adverse impact on the FOS' finances.

What's more, having used the unprotected border passage to commit crimes on the Colombian and Ecuadorian territory, the FOS showed up on the radar of the authorities from both countries in question. However, it wasn't until March 2018 when the group became the focal point of transnational intelligence campaigns after it had captured and executed two journalists and their chauffeur from Ecuador. One of such operations led to the assassination of "Guacho" in December 2018, which provoked internal fragmentation within the group (Guevara et al., 2019). However, in spite of the unfavorable series of events, the FOS persevered. Although it lost much of its momentum towards the end of the period considered in this study, the dissident unit remained a formidable force having been allowed to consolidate and grow in the early post-demobilization (International Crisis Group, 2019).

In official communiques, the FOS claimed to dissent against what it believed to be "fraudulent" peace accords. According to "Guacho," the group was born in response to the state's inability to guarantee safety of the ex-combatants and alleged unequal treatment between top-level FARC commanders and the rest of the guerrilla. The FOS portrayed itself as the rightful heir to the revolutionary cause. The accuracy of its accusations notwithstanding, in reality the dissident cell came from the tradition of the latter-day FARC fronts in Tumaco, with little-to-no political vocation, whose main interest was drug-trafficking. Still, the group did engage in some forms of governance, particularly in territories under firm control. Aside from regulating the economic life of the community, it invoked the strategies traditionally employed by the FARC, such as maintaining of public order, enforcement of rules, and engaging in exemplary justice (Palma, 2021). In effect, in its strongholds, it was even capable of constructing a relatively firm social base, especially among the recently arrived colonos.

Three factors helped the FOS develop bonds with the communities. First of all, a majority of the members of the non-state armed group either hailed from the region or stationed there before 2016, what created a perception of legitimacy (Valencia et al., 2017). Secondly, the civilian population felt that it depended on coca for survival. The FOS, similarly to the Daniel Aldana column before it, vehemently opposed the eradication and crops substitution programs,

supposedly with the interest of the residents of rural Tumaco at heart. By regulating the trade, the dissident group delivered a source of steady income to otherwise poor communities. Finally, some locals looked to the FOS as guarantors of protection from other illegal armed groups (Miranda, 2018). Nevertheless, outside of the Alto Mira y Frontera region, the FOS had much less success in asserting political control. In comparison with the GUP, which engaged in resolution of disputes and offered protection to the communities in territories under its jurisdiction, "Guacho's" group had little to offer (Johnson, 2018). At the heart of its interactions with civilians was the threat of violence and imposition of strict control. To an extent, the inability to operate on the political level may have contributed to the weakening of the FOS.

By the end of 2018, the two groups profiled above accumulated enough strength to turn the Tumaco conflict into a two-way affair (Escobedo et al., 2018). Remarkably, in the beginning of 2019, the FOS and the GUP signed a pact of non-aggression, which contributed to an immediate improvement of the security situation in Nariño. What made this development striking is that the pact was arranged by community members, without the involvement of the state. However, rather than a sustainable, long-term solution, the pact was believed to be an example of a fragile *pax mafiosa* in action (i.e., an agreement in the name of business). What's more, regardless of the respite in violence in Tumaco, in rural Nariño the situation was yet to show signs of progress (Duque, 2019b).

5.3.1.4.3. The Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia

Another strain of non-state armed groups active in post-demobilization Colombia were neo-paramilitary and organized crime groups. This cluster includes a number of organizations that have come about in the aftermath of the 2006 AUC demobilization. Emboldened by the transformation and expansion of criminal economies post-2016, these groups have entered the race for the spoils of peace, along the FARC dissidences and the ELN (Garzón-Vergara et al., 2016). Among such groups present in Tumaco were: the Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia, Empresa, Contadores, Aguilas Negras, Sicarios del Pacifico, Negritos, Nuevo Grupo, etc.

The *Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia* (AGC), also known as *Clan del Golfo* or *Los Urabeños*, was the largest neo-paramilitary group in the early post-demobilization Colombia. As an established leader of the drug-trafficking industry, it was also the country's chief criminal organization. According to official government figures from 2017, the *Urabeños* totaled an

estimated 1900-2000 militants (“Balance de la Operacion”, 2017). The organization could be divided into two segments: full-time members and subcontracted militias. The core command was based predominantly in Uraba Antioquia and Uraba Chocoano, Cordoba, as well as in multiple urban and semi-urban areas of Bajo Cauca. The loose network of affiliated lower-rank criminals, on the other hand, extended practically throughout the entire country. In that respect, the AGC functioned as a criminal franchise consisting of numerous units with defined presence on local and regional levels loosely attached to vertical central command (Cosoy, 2017).

The AGC was one of the main benefactors of the demobilization of the FARC. The group wasted no time in moving into the vacuum left by the guerrilla. In anticipation of the departure of the FARC, the AGC penetrated into Nariño’s Pacific coast to compete for territorial control and access to illicit economies since at least late 2015 (Defensoria del Pueblo, 2015). Approaching Tumaco from the east, the group initially had its sight set on the region around the rivers Mejicano, Patia, Rosario and Telembi, as well as the townships of Llorente and Tumaco (particularly the Tumaco harbor) (Álvarez et al., 2018). Early on, the Clan del Golfo announced its arrival distributing threatening pamphlets, warning of potential social cleansing campaigns (Defensoria del Pueblo, 2015). Moreover, it was collecting protection payments; the group was also attributed several selective assassinations in the region. Wary of the lethal threat presented by the neo-paramilitary groups, the demobilizing FARC would have given instructions to the People of Order to contain the influx of the AGC forces into Tumaco (Álvarez et al., 2018). Thus, even before the peace was officially signed, first clashes between the two groups occurred resulting in civilian displacement. As the dissident group grew in strength, the AGC was largely expelled from key territories in the municipality (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

One explanation for the AGC’s rather unsuccessful assault on Tumaco was that, according to the reports, it wasn’t the core group that operated here, but rather one of its sub-contracted local gangs. The AGC had a much higher profile in the municipality of Barbacoas, a historical paramilitary stronghold south-east of Tumaco. There, it engaged in confrontations with the ELN over the access to coca cultivation and illegal mining (Salas et at., 2019). Nevertheless, the Clan del Golfo maintained narrow presence in the urban center of the municipality, where it collaborated with the GUP, at least until the rise of the Contadores (Valencia et al., 2017).

5.3.1.4.4. The Contadores

Established by one of the most powerful drug-traffickers in the Pacific region, “Contador,” the Contadores were the drug-trafficking structure with the most ascendency in Tumaco at the end of the period studied. Although there pervaded an aura of mystery around the figure of “Contador,” he was suspected to have been one of the catalysts for the creation of the FARC dissident groups in Tumaco, offering financial support to the People of Order group, as well as to the FOS (Loaiza & Navarrete, 2020). As the latter attracted attention of the Public Force, “Contador” allied himself closer with the GUP. From then on, the drug lord and his allies teamed up against the FOS’, eventually putting an end to its control of Llorente and Alto Mira and Frontera in December 2018 (Johnson, 2018).

In the meantime, another prominent criminal figure was emerging in Tumaco. A former member of the paramilitary death squads, the Rastrojos and, eventually, the FARC, “Mario Lata’s” curriculum aptly reflects the changing power dynamics in the municipality over the years. Jailed for an alleged murder, “Lata” presumably coordinated all the activities of a criminal structure under the name of New People (*Nueva Gente*) from a Bogota prison (Fiscalia, 2016). After his pre-trial detention period ran its course, “Lata” was released from jail59 only to return to Tumaco in 2018 (Human Rights Watch, 2018). The two figures joined forces under the auspices of the Sinaloa Cartel, what changed the dynamic of the conflict in the municipality analyzed. “Lata” was instrumental in persuading several commanders of the GUP to switch sides. Thus, a new organization, known simply as the Contadores quickly rose to the top echelon of illegal armed actors on the Pacific coast. The truce signed between the GUP and the FOS in the town of Tumaco was a measure taken by the two dissident groups, in part, to prevent the Contadores from seizing more territory (Guevara et al., 2019). In contrast to the two FARC splinter cells, a significant number of the Contadores came from outside of the region in which they operated. The group was a highly professionalized drug-trafficking enterprise, and in that sense, it bore less semblance to a guerrilla than the GUP and the FOS.

5.3.1.4.5. The ELN

The ELN has had a considerable presence in the Pacific over the past decades. Nevertheless, before the demobilization of the FARC, the municipality of Tumaco hadn’t been a major sphere

[59] The releasing of serious criminals as a result of the expiration of the maximum pre-trial detention period has been recognized as a major flaw of the judicial system contributing to rampant criminality in Tumaco, and elsewhere in Colombia. Generally speaking, the flaw of the criminal justice system is due to the lack of adequate resources, most notably severe understaffing of municipal criminal courts. For more see: Quiñones (2021).

of influence for the second largest rebel organization in Colombia. The situation changed somewhat with the FARC's departure. Not unlike its older counterpart, the ELN had in recent years become heavily dependent on illicit economy. Against that background, post-demobilization Tumaco represented too good of an opportunity to pass up. While its presence in the urban sector of Tumaco was largely insignificant, the ELN's *Guerra Suroccidental* front expanded throughout the rural zone of the municipality in the period covered by this study (Defensoria del Pueblo, 2016). Moreover, the guerrilla increased its membership in the region—already since 2015, there had been a transfer of members of the 29th Front of the former FARC to the ELN (Álvarez et al., 2018). After 2016, the rebel organization could be found in the southern belt of the municipality, in territories on both sides of the border with Ecuador, the rivers Patia and Telembi (where it mined gold), and along the road from Pasto to the coast, especially in Llorente and La Guayacana (Salas et al., 2019). From there, the ELN planned an attempt to seize control of the town of Tumaco and its harbor. However, after a brief spell of dominance, it lost the all-important jurisdiction over Llorente (Johnson, 2018). The ambivalent results of its attempts to expand in the municipality were representative of a larger trend for the ELN in the Pacific (International Crisis Group, 2019). As pointed out before, the guerrilla's activity was more pronounced in the neighboring municipality of Barbacoas or Magui Payán.

It is important to have in mind that, as it held parallel peace negotiations with the Colombian government in Quito, the ELN signed a bilateral ceasefire with the military. Although it lasted only a little longer than three months (from October 2017 to January 2018), the ELN took advantage of the ceasefire by expanding more energy on confrontations with other non-state armed groups. In contrast to the mostly cooperative relationship the ELN used to have with the FARC Mariscal Sucre mobile column in the border region in the past, in post-demobilization violent clashes between the ELN and the FOS were not infrequent (Álvarez et al., 2018). No less detrimental to civilians were the clashes with the GUP ("Las grietas del Andén", 2017).

Although the ELN's interactions with the population of Tumaco were inherently tied to the extraction of illicit rents, it generally demonstrated less propensity for violence towards civilians than other illegal armed actors in the region (International Crisis Group, 2019). Nevertheless, Álvarez et al. (2018) found salient spatial inconsistencies with regards to the guerrilla's relationship with the local communities in Nariño. Whereas along the mountain range in the south of the department the ELN's fronts were "political, organized and with social base," (p.141), in the coastal part of Tumaco, the group was undergoing a process of

criminalization, much like the FARC did before them. In spite of the above, the ELN looked to distinguish itself from emergent FARC dissident groups by highlighting their predatory behavior and exposing them as mere drug-traffickers, underserving of the revolutionary status they claimed (Palma, 2021). The group also had to deal with a dissidence problem of its own with various members joining the splinter organizations of the FARC and even forming their own groups (Álvarez, 2017).

5.3.1.5. Statistics on violence and crime in Tumaco

In order to refine the picture of security in Tumaco in early post-demobilization, in the following section, the study examines the most significant violence and crime indicators. The numbers and figures presented below are consistent with some of the observations regarding the changing power balance between diverse non-state armed groups in the region.

Figure 1 Homicides in Tumaco, 2013-2018 (Source: Colombia's National Police)

Figure 2 Displacement in Tumaco 2013-2018 (Source: Colombian Victims Unit)

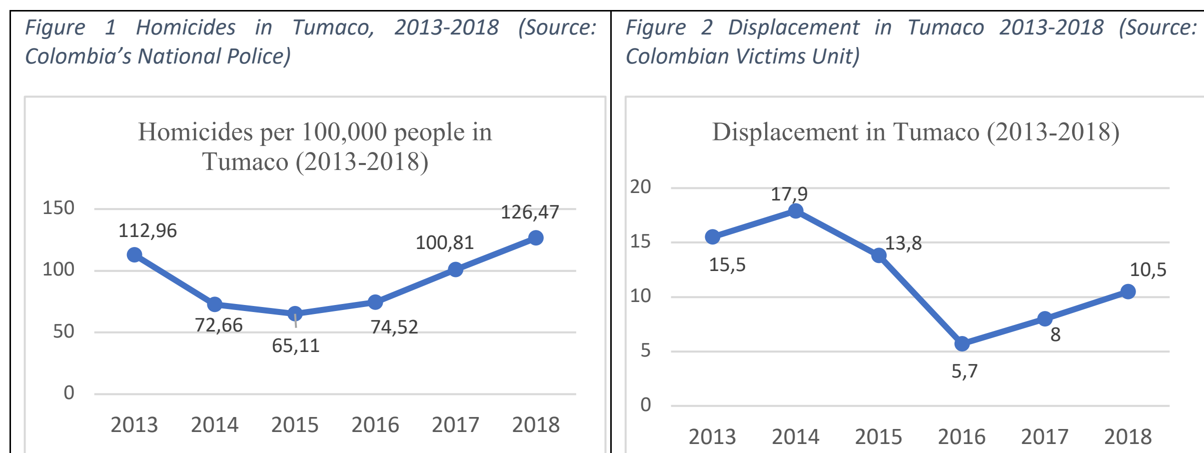
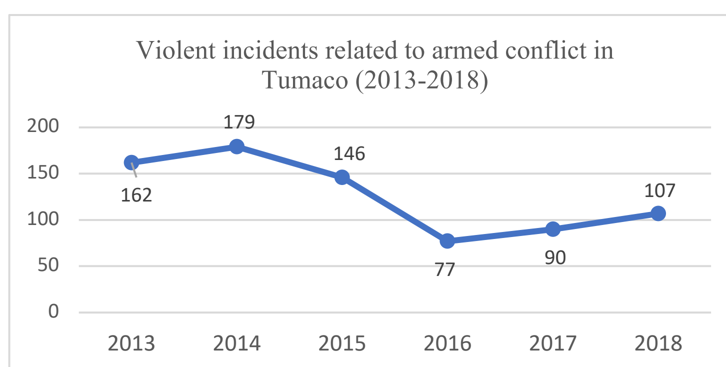


Figure 3 Violent incidents related to armed conflict in Tumaco, 2013-2018 (Source: Own compilation based on data from Colombia's National Police and the Colombian Victims Unit)



Based on the above graphs, we can discern three phases in violence dynamics in the period considered (2013-2018). In the first phase, between 2013 and 2014, the FARC was disputing territorial control over Tumaco with the post-paramilitary groups, most notably the Rastrojos. Next is the period of the FARC hegemony that fell on the years 2015 and, to a lesser extent,

2016. It should be noted that at this juncture, the guerrilla and the Colombian government observed a unilateral ceasefire, at first, and a bilateral ceasefire since June 2016. The third phase corresponds to what is referred to in this study as post-demobilization (2017-2018). It must be mentioned that the transition from one phase to another wasn't always clear-cut. This is most notably the case in the year 2016, which represented a shift from a hegemony to post-demobilization scenario. According to the reports, it was already over the course of 2016 that the FARC, readying itself to demobilize, began losing ground in Tumaco, and, hence, we could no longer talk about a hegemony. Nevertheless, it wasn't until 2017 that violence really took off. Without exceptions, the indicators show how the dismantling of the hegemonic authority in the FARC set in motion a phase of interregnum characterized by fierce territorial competition and high levels of insecurity and violence against civilians.

The security crisis in Tumaco is apparent when studying the behavior of homicide rates in the region. While the homicide rate had been falling steadily since 2013, reflecting the growing territorial control by the FARC, it went up again in 2016 as new groups began arriving in the port municipality in anticipation of power vacuums. At first, the rise was subtle and can be explained by the timid attempts to gain an upper hand ahead of the demobilization. However, in 2017, the rate soared with an increase of over 35% compared to the previous year. Yet, the situation got even worse in 2018 with another major hike of 25%. With the rate of 126.47, Tumaco's homicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants was more than five times the national average (22.64). All in all, between the year 2015 and 2018, the Tumaco homicide rate nearly doubled. Nevertheless, homicides are an ample category that, in of itself, paints a simplified picture of the violent dynamics in post-demobilization. Thus, the next paragraph reveals more detail as to the social groups targeted by extreme violence in Tumaco.

First of all, the homicide category encompasses multiple assassinations of civil society leaders and human rights defenders in Tumaco. During the two years of the FARC's hegemony in the municipality, two activists were assassinated (Somos Defensores, 2016). However, the security situation got substantially worse for civil society representatives in the following years. Between 2016 and 2018 as many as 14 leaders were assassinated in Tumaco converting it into the municipality with the highest number of such incidents in Colombia. In 2016, as the FARC were transitioning towards demobilization, four activists were killed, with Somos Defensores (2017) attributing three of the murders to paramilitary groups. The following year, the number

of slain leaders was again four60. According to Somos Defensores (2019), 2018 was the year with highest number of assassinated leaders, with five cases in Tumaco alone, and a total of eight in Nariño at large. Four of the five victims in the coastal municipality were assassinated by the FARC dissident groups. All in all, among the civil society activists killed in Nariño since 2016 were predominately afro-Colombian and indigenous (Awá) leaders61, but also civic leaders, human rights defenders, JAC members, as well as one head of a political movement, one union leader, and one LGBTQ activist. The perpetrators came in large majority from the FOS dissident group, although many remained unidentified. One assassination was linked to the AGC, while another occurred amidst a confrontation between the ELN and one of the FARC splinter groups (CINEP/PPP, 2018).

Another sub-category that needs not to be overlooked are killings of the former FARC combatants demobilized in the framework of the 2016 Peace Accords. In all of Colombia, 82 former guerrilla fighters were killed between November 2016 and June 2019. Of them, 22% were assassinated in Nariño (Garzón et al., 2019). Tumaco witnessed six killings of this kind, the third highest tally in Colombia (it should be noted that the statistics published by the FARC's political party suggest the number of ex-combatants slain in Tumaco was, in fact, 10 [Partido FARC, 2018]). Indeed, the first ex-FARC killed in Colombia was shot in Tumaco, the Llorente township to be precise, in April, 2017 (Unidad de Paz, 2017).

In the second graph, the displacement numbers (shown in thousands) speak volumes to the fluctuation of security dynamics in post-demobilization Tumaco. The displacement figures were extremely high in 2013 and 2014 due to continuous skirmishes between non-state armed groups, and the Public Force. Although the downward trend began in 2015, it was in 2016 that the number dropped significantly (predominately thanks to the ceasefire). In 2017, the cases went back up again only to soar further in 2018. In 2018, Nariño was the second department with the highest number of displacement events in Colombia (UNHCR, 2018). Nearly half of them occurred in Tumaco.

The last graph combines various categories of violence associated with armed conflict. It follows almost the exact trajectory as the other two graphs before. After the years 2013-2014,

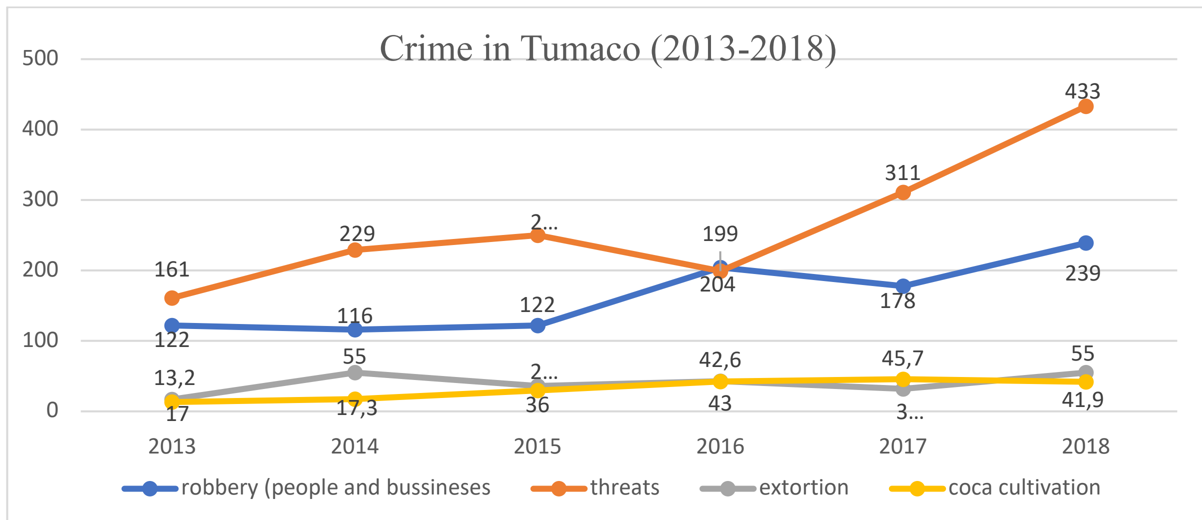
[60] The assassination that left the most lasting mark on post-demobilization Tumaco was that of Jair Cortés, an outspoken leader of the Alto Mira y Frontera community council. A longtime supporter of illicit crops substitution, he sought to lay the groundwork for the PNIS initiative as part of the Havana Peace Agreement.

[61] Whereas the FARC generally respected the autonomy of the indigenous community, the post-demobilization groups assassinated indigenous leaders, recruited children from the community and refused to leave the reserves (Soto, 2018).

when the armed conflict was in full swing in Tumaco, there came a downtick in 2015, followed by a major drop in 2016. In post-demobilization, the number of armed conflict-related incidents rebounded, and went up again in 2018. What should be noted here, however, is that even in 2018 the numbers were not as high as before the ceasefire. This may indicate that the conflict in Tumaco was fought in a slightly different way after the demobilization of the FARC. The slump in the number of terrorist attacks (from 47 in 2013 to only 3 in 2017), for instance, suggests that the remaining non-state armed group didn't directly target the Public Force.

However, other categories of violence associated with armed conflict didn't register such a significant drop. The recruitment and use of children in activities related to armed conflict or organized crime, for example, continued to plague Colombia, and Tumaco, in the aftermath of the FARC demobilization (Uberti, 2022). In fact, following the demobilization of the FARC, the percentage of children among the victims was on the rise in Nariño (Procuraduria, 2019). In addition, the number of children separated from illegal armed groups, published by the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare, continued to be high in 2017 and 2018 (ICBF, 2021). Indicators of sexual violence related to armed conflict were on the rise in Tumaco in the period studied. The coastal municipality was Colombia's capital of feminicide in post-demobilization (Lozano, 2018). The number of disappearances was also up, albeit not in a remarkable way. Although antipersonnel mines are usually associated with an armed conflict, in Colombia they are widely used by non-state armed groups engaged in drug-trafficking to prevent and discourage the eradication or substitution of coca crops. Considering the above, the high number of incidents involving mines in Tumaco after the demobilization of the FARC is perhaps less surprising. Indeed, it can be expected that the number of mines correlates with the expansion of coca crops during the same period. Likewise, the use of mine will likely be proportionate to the eradication efforts that come along with the implementation of the Peace Accord.

Figure 4 Crime in Tumaco, 2013-2018 (Source: Own compilation based on data from Colombia's National Police and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime' Monitoring System for Colombia)



Along with an increase in violence, there was an escalation in crime rates in Tumaco in post-demobilization. Every single metric chosen for this study was in an upward trend at some point towards the end of the FARC hegemony and, particularly, in the post-demobilization period. Key among the indicators of crime shown in the above graph was the total area of land dedicated to coca cultivation. The breakneck pace of expansion of coca in the municipality—the total area increased every single year until 2018—accurately captures how fast Tumaco was becoming a leading drug-producing region in the country. While the reasons for the swelling coca cultivation are complex, one of the hypotheses attributes the phenomenon to the reorganization of actors in former FARC zones (Garzón & Llorente, 2018). It should also be mentioned that in 2018 the trend was slightly reversed, most likely due to the intensified eradication campaigns in Tumaco. In addition, the above figures suggest a sudden upturn in cases of criminal threats and, to a lesser extent, extortion that fit with the territorial competition narrative signaled by the secondary data and evinced in the interviews. The two indicators may be regarded as a yardstick for the struggle over the control of the civilian population living in the disputed territory. Finally, the increase in robberies in post-demobilization may be a symptom of criminal anarchy that ensued in the absence of a hegemonic actor regulating petty crime in the area.

5.3.2. Stabilization

The next section contains findings on stabilization efforts in post-demobilization Tumaco. It is divided into three sub-sections, each corresponding to a different "stabilizing actor" i.e., the Public Force, the civilian government, and the community.

5.3.2.1. *Public Force response to security challenges*

According to the conversations with the residents of Tumaco, despite having substantial manpower in the region, the Public Force failed to guarantee effective security of civilians in early post-demobilization. Most informants agreed that the event that best explains the outbreak of violence in post-demobilization is the fact that the Public Force didn't secure the post-FARC zones decisively enough to prevent the arrival of new groups in the period immediately after the departure of the guerrilla (Int.10). A belief that this early error damaged the probability of success of the peace process in Tumaco isn't uncommon. One resident of the port town speculated that "the major conflict could have been avoided if the government had done its job. And the job was to, at first, occupy the spaces left by the FARC with the Public Force," (Int.4). While it may be slightly oversimplistic, the hypothesis speaks to the sense of frustration with the lack of urgency on the part of Santos' administration. And the warning had been there all along:

> I was governor of Nariño between 2012 and 2015, when the peace process was being promoted. And they have these bodies called security councils here, both at national level and at departmental level, where civil authorities and military commanders are. … I remembered [sic] that in some of those councils I expressly requested, once or twice, that there be a security plan in the face of the withdrawal of the FARC. … so that what finally happened would not have happened. The correct, the normal thing would have been [to have] a very defined plan, so that almost simultaneously with the departure of the FARC, the Public Force would be introduced, if it had not [already] been in these territories. And together with them, [there would be] programs to support the population, both in the productive field and in the social field; what one calls 'the integral presence of the state.' It was clear to me that the first was the Public Force. Because if it wasn't like that when the social programs arrived, other armed actors would already be in possession of the territory. In these security councils, the military commanders always said that 'yes, they had a plan,' ... But … the opposite happened," (Int.14).

In the run-up to the peace process, many security scenarios were floating around in Tumaco. The following interview provides a concise summary: "There was a lot of talk of rural police that would include the reincorporated ex-combatants, that they would install police stations to control territories. There was talk of a great battalion to be able to access territorial control." However, the interviewee concluded: "none of this occurred," (Int.3).

Many of the conversations held in Tumaco shared a view that it “was one the most militarized municipalities in Colombia at the time,” (Int.14). Yet, one thing was what the authorities said, another thing was the perception on the ground. There was a degree of discord as to whether or not the increase in the personnel of the Public Force was, in fact, perceivable in Tumaco. Some of the subjects acknowledged that there were more policemen and more soldiers, and hence, “from the military standpoint,” the state was, in fact, present (Int.5). In contrast, based on their extensive knowledge of the region, the representatives of a state institution set up within the frameworks of the peace deal, claimed otherwise. In their opinion: “the nine thousand or twelve thousand men that Santos announced were never seen. I didn’t see them anywhere. We travel to those villages, from here to the Pacific, [but] we haven’t seen this amount of Public Force here. If they have come, they have quickly passed through. They come and go,” (Int.2).

Another criticism of this stabilization approach is that it is reactive, rather than proactive. In the words of one of the subjects: “yes, I think the state generated greater Public Force, however, its activity aimed […] more at reacting to the operations by the [illegal armed] groups,” (Int.11). This modus operandi was deemed ineffective insofar as non-state armed actors kept reproducing. “One leaves, another one arrives,” observed the above subject. A different reactive activity that the Public Force expanded much of its energy on in the period researched was eradication of illicit crops. While it will be discussed in more detail below, it must be pointed out that being at the forefront of eradication campaigns took a toll on the Public Force’s reputation among the communities generally in opposition to this strategy.

What this “out-of-towner” approach also did is it pre-empted any stronger bonds from being created with the community. It is important to remember that the relationship between the Public Force and the community had been one of tension in Tumaco. While the peace process may have represented an opportunity to ameliorate this relationship, any hopes for a change were quickly dispelled. Trust was in very short supply for a wide range of reasons.

The most obvious place to start when trying to answer to explain the hostility is the Public Force’s repressive conduct towards civilians. The most illustrative case in the period analyzed was the massacre of campesinos in Tandil in October 2017[62]. However, this was by no means

[62] The case sent shockwaves throughout the community. The incident occurred during a protest staged by coca farmers against the sustained campaigns of eradication by the Armed Forces and the counternarcotic police (CINEP/PPP, 2019). When fire was opened at the unarmed protestors, at least seven people were killed, with many more injured. According to the statement published by the Ombudsman, the perpetrators were presumably members of the counternarcotic police forces.

an isolated episode, particularly in the context of eradication operations. The population of Tumaco, especially afro and indigenous communities, have suffered abuses at the hands of the armed forces in the past. Hence, the involvement of soldiers in these projects engendered controversy (Int.11).

Moreover, a number of people interviewed for this study pointed to corruption as the source of wariness towards the military and the police. Cases of arrests of rogue soldiers and police officers in cahoots with non-state armed groups were not infrequent. The implicit link between the Public Force and criminal groups played a role whenever an individual has a decision to make whether to cooperate or not. There existed a sense of fear that by providing information to the authorities, civilians left themselves vulnerable. One of the interviewees described this dilemma in a convincing way:

> "But we have another major problem here. Graver still than the insecurity of the violent ones. The insecurity is in the law itself. Let me explain. [Imagine] You're the police […] I tell you […] there is a group of delinquents. They are located in this and that place. They are called this and that. I tell you this as a citizen who lives in the territories, who suffers the consequences […] You put together a team, go with the troops, catch them. But on the way, as they are being taken to the prosecutor's, you tell them: 'Pastor "X" was the one to tell me where you were. It was him who denounced you.' It happens here. It's not speculation. When he gets on the phone […] calls […] 'go after Pastor "X". He was the one who denounced me, denounced us.' In two, three days the person is dead (Int.5).

Some doubts were also cast with regards to the intelligence capacity of the military. More than one of the subjects questioned why is it that even though the whereabouts of the commanders of illegal armed groups are well known to the community, the Public Force seems to be the only one in the dark. "The State has no force and capacities to be able to respond to the lack of territorial control. Despite the fact that there are enough men. But perhaps there is no, we as citizens believe, intelligence and counterintelligence to be able to do their job. Many of the civilians know who certain commanders, certain bosses are, but the police and the military don't know," (Int.3). Worse still, the authorities tend to use the locals as their sources of information about illegal armed groups. This practice was extremely risky for the population since it converted the residents of Tumaco into a target for criminal actors (Int.3).

So pronounced was the lack of trust in the Public Force that many communities preferred to allocate their trust in illegal armed groups rather than a soldier or a police officer. To put it simply, the local populations saw the Public Force as their enemy. Especially in the rural area, drug-trafficking groups lived side-by-side with the communities. They even rendered a wide-range of services to the residents, such as protection and income opportunities. As a result, "the communities protect the illicit [actors]," (Int.2).

In spite of assurances made, the feeling on the ground was that the military generally didn't go out of its way to engage in civil actions. One of the interviewees mentioned that whenever civilians gathered to build roads or to fix the effects of flooding, the Public Force was nowhere to be seen (Int.3). An exception that proved the rule were some social engagement activities realized by General Jorge Isaac Hoyos of the Task Force "Hercules" and the police chief Jose Luis Palomino (Int.12). Several of the interviewees emphasized that both officials expressed their concern with the precarious relationship between the Public Force and the local populations, promising on various occasions to bring the two closer together (Int.6). With their arrival in 2018, there seemed to come an acknowledgement that the Public Force may not advance security goals with exclusively military activities.

One of the few positive examples of community development initiatives implemented by the military was carried out in one of the most problematic neighborhoods of Tumaco city, *Nuevo Milenio*. An interviewee described the event: "They [the Public Force] arrived to recapture the place […] They built a small school. They said to the population: 'Here we are. Not just with armed presence, but with social work.' This allowed for there to be a kind of truce," (Int.11). Yet, such initiatives seemed largely incidental and not part of a coherent policy. Perhaps at fault were the short spell of the terms served by the military officials—by the time these interviews were held Tumaco, General Hoyos had been replaced as the commander of the "Hercules" task force.

In spite of numerous arrests and seizures of illicit goods, the perception of the Public Force remained largely negative in Tumaco in post-demobilization. There was even an opinion that instead of curtailing violence, the military and the police contribute to the sense of fear and insecurity in the region. "There is a kind of nefarious equation," observes one of the respondents, "the more Public Force, the more distrust," (Int.2). Nevertheless, in conversations held in Tumaco, high-ranking military officials insisted that the military and the police are largely getting their job done, but other components of the strategy are either delayed or inexistent. According to the representatives of the Public Force, the government failed to

address the root causes of conflict in Tumaco: adverse socio-economic conditions and corruption (Int.13, Int.15).

In sum, most interviewees agreed that the most damning aspect of the state's approach to power vacuums was that it had very little to offer outside of militarization. As much as the Public Force demonstrated glaring flaws, not all the blame for the security crisis in Tumaco can be placed on the military and the police. Critical to the security conundrum in the coastal municipality was the acute crisis in criminal justice administration. Such was the inertia of the justice system in the municipality that in the whole of 2018, only one case of homicide was convicted. The backlog in cases led to many criminals being released after the expiration of the maximum pretrial detention period (Gutierrez et al., 2022).

5.3.2.2. Civilian government response to security challenges

First of all, the subjects interviewed for this study were of the impression that while the military component of stabilization in Tumaco had received a fair amount of coverage and investment, the civilian aspect of the strategy left much to be desired by comparison.

As one of the most heavily affected regions in Colombia, Tumaco was an important testing ground for the new "sustainable and definitive solution to illicit crops issue" by the national government (Peace Agreement, 2016). Part of the Comprehensive Rural Reform, the Integrated National Program for the Substitution of Illicit Crops (PNIS) aimed at generating welfare conditions and incentives for communities that depended on crops for illicit use (Defensoria del Pueblo, 2018, p.297). In that sense, the program addressed itself to the rural population of Colombia that had suffered the effects of the armed conflict and weak presence of the state, by "providing them with public goods and productive resources," in exchange for uprooting of illicit crops (Acero & Machuca, 2021, p.4). Considering the ever-expanding coca cultivation in the region, the program was arguably the most prominent element of the Colombian government's vision for post-demobilization Tumaco. In fact, the PNIS was met with much enthusiasm in the municipality, with more than 13,000 families registering to participate in spite of the risk of becoming a target of persecution by drug-traffickers (Int.14).

However, if we were to measure the impact the PNIS had in the region based on statistics with regards to coca growing, we can only conclude that the program fell considerably short of its objectives. Voices from Tumaco reveal a similar tale of an incoherent and largely unsustainable process that failed to meet the high expectations of a population in desperate need of a transformation. The prevailing sense was that "the intention was good, the practice was not,"

(Int.4, Int.3, Int.14). The implementation of the PNIS presented various challenges in the period studied. First of all, its execution was piecemeal at best, with the state only truly dedicated to meeting the targets of forced eradication. While farmers were asked to manually eradicate coca, the provision of alternative crops as replacement lagged behind (Int.8, Int.13). Such a delay was greatly harmful for farmers who were often left with no source of sustenance. The following quote sums up an opinion held by many in the region:

> "Twenty-four months in and all families should have productive projects. Up and running. And today there is not a single productive project underway in Tumaco. … families received aid to feed themselves once coca was eradicated, they received aid for home gardens, which was for self-security, but the productive projects, which were of two types, short-term and long term, have not been implemented," (Int.14).

In the end, "those who eradicated coca were left without neither coca nor legal crops," (Soto, 2018). The most likely outcome was that people soon went back to planting coca, also because of the pressures from the illegal armed groups, which actively discouraged the farmers from partaking in the program. Having received no alternative crop to grow and counting with no protection from the pressures of the drug industry, the local campesinos came to oppose the eradication campaigns. This, as we already discussed, generated instances of direct violence by the Public Force. Meanwhile, the millions of pesos spent on eradication brought no perceivable effect. "It is more costly to fumigate than to use these resources for productive projects," commented one of the subjects (Int.4).

But productive projects were hard to come by in the period analyzed. There were also no major infrastructural projects that accompanied the illicit crops substitution. The most common complaint had to do with the lack of roads that would allow the export of produce, such as banana or coconut. "In the infrastructural sense, we didn't grow. There was no road, for example," commented one of the subjects (Int.1). The absence of adequate infrastructure made accessing markets a particularly daunting task. As an interviewee summed it up: "The government didn't have a strategy of telling [the campesinos] 'what you plant, we are going to buy.' Because the commercialization of produce from here, from the fields, is difficult due to the access to sites. Because there are no roads … We plant banana trees, but bringing it to the city is expensive. It's counterproductive," (Int.9). In the same vein, another respondent pointed out that building roads would be the most effective way for the state to penetrate into the former FARC territories and, thus, combat crime in the region (Int.8). Hence, in order to leave a more

lasting impact, the PNIS would have had to be accompanied by more comprehensive transformative projects:

> "The program speaks especially from the subject of substitution, but it is not consistent with the fact that producing requires other infrastructures or other dynamics. For example, the issue of productive structures, roads, energy, assistance in accessing markets; the issue of property formalization. Anyway. The program is not complete. It is not a comprehensive strategy," (Int.3).

Some of the subjects interviewed believe that the non-fulfillment was due to the fact that the program was simply too expensive. The budget of the program wasn't big enough to cover the needs of Tumaco, let alone the entire country (Int.3). Another view attributes some of the blame to the operators of the PNIS, the UN and its slow-moving bureaucracy (Int.14).

Another way in which the lack of an effective illicit crops' substitution program played a part in the eruption of violence in Tumaco had to do with the demobilization of the FARC. Coming from mostly campesino background, the former combatants were to be among priority beneficiaries of the PNIS. One of the interviewees summed it up:

> "A large part of those groups that tried to come back to life again … to get away from the weapons, have once again returned to … all these activities that are around illegality. Because we as the state are not granting them the measures, nor are we acting as guarantors so that they do not go back … The government had a series of strategies as part of the PNIS. But it is not meeting the obligation, nor does it reach the ones who it really needs to reach. If you are going to give it to a person who throughout his life has been outside the law, has been on the margins of what legal life offers us—e.g., education issues, social issues—you obviously have to give them a tool, but it has to be a constant tool … not only give them money, but also the necessary tools so that they will not reoffend. In this, we have fallen very short," (Int.6).

According to the interviews, a majority of the ex-FARC guerrillas either moved out of the region or went back to the life of crime shortly after the demobilization. Combined with precarious security situation, the feeling of abandonment by the government exacerbated some of the worst suspicions of former guerrillas, proving those skeptical of the intentions of the state right.

When it comes to tangible effects on the ground in post-demobilization, the PDET—the other essential initiative designed to boost state presence in territories formerly under the FARC

authority—was even less effective. The program may have created a sense of heightened state presence, all the while stimulating considerable social mobilization of the residents of Tumaco, but it hardly moved beyond the germinal phase during the period studied.

With a lion's share of the population unemployed and poverty indexes well above the already considerable national average, it is fair to say the people of Tumaco struggle against the toughest of socio-economic circumstances. The most basic needs, ranging from education to healthcare to public services require, are largely unmet. What's more, the municipality has a decidedly young demographic, with almost half of the population below the age of twenty. Considering that a large share of the recruits within the ranks of the illegal armed groups present in the territory are adolescents and children, it is perhaps not surprising just how much importance the respondents ascribed to the enhancement of the opportunities for young generations (Int.13). This concern was on display in the following statement: "Because in the end we are talking about the structures of the armed groups. But those structures are formed by the people from our family structures, from the Tumaqueño society," (Int.11). The mechanism behind the decision to join illegal armed groups wasn't difficult to grasp for the residents: "Since there are no job opportunities in Tumaco, there are no job opportunities in these towns, it is easy for young people to lose their ways. Instead of thinking of going to college, they are thinking of easy riches," (Int.9). According to several respondents, the youth suffered from a dearth of options to spend their free time productively. Another of the interviewees hinted at the interdependence between neglected young people and criminality in post-conflict: "The issue of sports, the issue of culture, the issue of attending non-formal centers, which are very few, the issue of higher education that there is none. So, who gives that attention to these young people? So that is where the issue of the peace process in the territory is aggravated.," (Int.1).

Unequivocally, the example of a social investment most frequently recurring in the interviews in Tumaco was reinforcement of education. This seems to mirror the broader concern of the population: "Last year I was working with the PDET […] The […] thing that we can see among what the communities requested the most was […] the issue of educational infrastructure," (Int.11). It comes as no surprise when we revise the official educational statistics in the region. Almost a fifth of the population received no formal education whatsoever and an analogous number of people can't read or write. Another 43,5% of the inhabitants of the municipality ended their career after primary school. Perhaps even more worryingly, the number of enrollments is on decline (Araujo, 2019). That last fact was linked by the interviewees to the ubiquitous lifestyle of drug-traffickers, that permeated the universe of young people in the

region, whereby quick material gains are preferred to academic achievements (Int.8). The residents of Tumaco insisted on reversing this negative trend through better educational offer. One of the interviewees with experience in educational administration recapitulated this argument: “the options [for the youth] are: go to the cartel, go into exile or be prosecuted. [But] we see that there are other ways, that it is possible. That there are alternatives and that the school is there to provide them with these options. An option to transform your reality [that is] a little adverse,” (Int.11). However, according to the opinions collected in Tumaco, no major investment in educational infrastructure was observed in the period in question. In fact, the situation was made worse when it comes to education as a result of violence against the teachers—in the rural zone of the municipality, threats directed at educators led to displacement (Int.11).

Based on the interviews from Tumaco, there are several reasons that explain why the PDET projects were stuck at the consultation phase in the period studied. The first, and the most obvious one, is that they were meant as long-term plans. Yet, this doesn’t mean that there weren’t any significant delays. The third reason had to do with the budget. The fourth is a consequence of the persistent presence of illegal armed groups (Int.14).

All in all, the general opinion was that there existed no clear strategy on the part of the state to boost the socio-economic conditions in Tumaco in early post-demobilization. It led one of the interviewees to remark: “There is a part that they have left a lot to one side […] it is the social part. In the social part we do have an impressive deficit. Because the needs, I think you have seen it a lot here, are still there. The [peace] deal was supposed to be very equitable. But there are many obstacles that have not been cleared for this to happen,” (Int.6).

5.3.2.3. Community response to security challenges

The last section of this chapter sheds some light on the community-level response to the post-demobilization turmoil in Tumaco. An upward trend in community mobilization in the municipality was an important by-product of the transient moment of peace described earlier in the chapter. Most of the interviewees agreed that the local community took advantage of the respite in violence to undertake the process of rebuilding the social and economic tissue of the municipality. The momentum was particularly palpable in the economic sector. As already mentioned, the municipality saw a return of commerce and establishment of new businesses. Nevertheless, it was precisely the entrepreneurs who bore the brunt of the recrudescence of violence (Int.8). One of the interviewees summed up the dilemma faced by the communities

trying to work in the shadow of violence: "Look, the communities are making a sacrifice to reinvent themselves, to generate ventures, to create innovation, to create products. But … the security issue is complex, because the producers cannot go to their farms to continue producing," (Int.1). As a result of repression, many business owners were forced to close down.

In spite of the heavy pressure from the non-state armed groups, the Tumaco-based civil society put up a resistance against violence. In April 2018 the local dioceses together with the chamber of commerce invited local representatives of the civil society to form a committee named Tumaco United for Life and Justice (*Tumaco Unido por la Vida y la Justicia*). The committee then organized a mass march in the name of peace (Int.4). Some 20,000 residents of Tumaco clamored for the national government to ameliorate the security crisis with measures other than more militarization. The demands turned out to be effective insofar as they led President Santos to arrange a special security council in the municipality soon thereafter (Int.7). Nevertheless, the security situation didn't improve markedly in what was left of Santos' presidency or thereafter, for that matter.

Yet, the conversations held in Tumaco reveal a picture of a community actively pursuing a better life for the municipality against all odds. In the number of grassroots initiatives mentioned were: promotion of associative entrepreneurship among the campesino population (Int.7), medicinal cannabis cultivation projects (Int.4), church-based vocational training for the youth, etc. (Int.5). However, it is important to keep in mind that, as one of the respondents put it, "making an intervention in territories where there is a conflict is not easy. It has implications and limitations," (Int.3). In fact, the community is painfully aware of the restraints the ongoing violence imposes on it. That's why, over the years of conflict they have learned to "build peace in the middle of a conflict," (Int.3), a skill that is believed to deliver some results even in the trying times of post-demobilization.

What stood out from the interviews was the perceived disconnect between the bottom-up activities of the community and the state-level strategies in post-demobilization. The grievance shared by a majority of the interlocutors had to do the exclusion of the community from the decision-making process on the part of the state. While the Accord promised "territorial peace", understood as a more democratic, inclusive, and bottom-up strategy for peace-building, the Tumaco community saw very little of this vision come to life in practice. The notion that the overly centralized, top-down planning fails to account for the specificity of the region, and, perhaps more importantly, turns a deaf ear on the needs of the community living in it, was a recurring theme throughout the conversations. "[They say] 'we will bring the state, bring a

program.' But where are the results? Because they didn't do it as they should have, with the community […] It's the same with security, they don't count us in," (Int.5) complained an interviewee.

In spite of the introduction of the PDETs, the community generally didn't feel their perspective mattered and seemed convinced that the solutions to the predicament of the coastal municipality are devised from "a desk in Bogota." According to the subjects, such high-handed perspective is not only discriminatory by nature, but it simply is oblivious to the reality of Tumaco. One fitting example of the way in which the state failed to account for the needs of the community was the construction of roads. The following quote provides more evidence:

> "There are very few tertiary roads. Very, very few. And it is one of the things that not only the companies, but the community itself has demanded the most. Because without these tertiary roads, the communities also drown economically—they have no way to bring their cocoa, or bananas, or the few things they can produce [to the market]. This issue of the lack of tertiary roads is an issue that affects the entire community, both the ordinary community, the ordinary population, as well as the productive population, congregated in companies, congregated in cooperatives, congregated in associations of growers, which makes it difficult for them to get their products out. And I think that is one of the most urgent things," (Int.8).

Thus, in the opinion of the residents of Tumaco, the failure to incorporate the social bases in the decision-making process explains why the solutions to post-demobilization challenges didn't produce the desired effect. This participant explained the paradox in question in more detail:

> "So, from the point of view of the state, there is a presence. But it is very minimal, very ineffective. Because everything is kept a watch on and analyzed from the perspective of Bogota, and the communities are not being involved, like 'we want to do this, we need your support'. [There is no] real reading of the territory. Which is how it should be [done]" (Int.9).

In short, the subjects interviewed for this study agreed that the people of Tumaco should enjoy more agency when it comes to solving their own problems. A more effective strategy would feature more locally developed plans and solutions, of which there are many (Int.2). Most importantly, however, it would be tailor-made. One interviewee summed it up: "What is

required are policies that are totally differential, with differential focus, because these regions have lived through a lot of violence that isn't habitual in the country," (Int.2).

5.4. Discussion of findings

In this final section of the first case study, a discussion of the findings follows. The section is divided into two parts, following the logic of the two research questions. In the first part, results on the impact of the demobilization of the FARC on security in Tumaco are discussed. The analysis includes references to literature on rebel governance. In the second part, the discussion focuses on stabilization efforts in Tumaco in the post-demobilization period. The findings are placed in the context of literature on stabilization.

5.4.1. Security dynamics

Given the findings, it can be concluded that following the demobilization of the FARC, Tumaco witnessed fragmentation and proliferation of non-state armed actors. The abundance of illicit economies, strong interest from transnational crime networks, and progressive criminalization of the FARC structures in the years prior to demobilization, contributed to the outbreak of what can be described as a *bellum omnium contra omnes* for the power vacuum in the coastal municipality in 2017 and 2018. Propelled by the tectonic shifts in the criminal structure organized around the booming coca industry, territorial competition by budding illegal armed groups exacerbated the violence and crime levels in the region. Tumaco was, in essence, worse off in post-demobilization than it had been before the FARC laid down weapons.

In trying to explain the eruption of violence in Tumaco post-2017, it is necessary to first discuss the nature of the FARC regime in the region. As outlined in the historical overview, the guerrilla's position in the municipality had been relatively contested in the decades prior to the 2016 peace process. While the first FARC fronts had arrived in Tumaco in the 1980s, it wasn't until the early 2000s that the rebel group took a strong interest in this stretch of the Pacific region. Having tussled with the paramilitaries over the region for the better part of recent history, the guerrilla only regained control of the municipality in mid-2010s. As confirmed by the numbers, however, fierce turf wars had carried on virtually until the signing of the accord. Only in 2015 and 2016 the figures on violence displayed a downward trend characteristic to a condition of territorial consolidation. That the FARC's grasp over the territory was tentative is suggested by the angst shared by the local commanders of the guerrilla over the imminent takeover from paramilitary groups in the aftermath of their demobilization.

In fact, the FARC's struggle to control the territory in the long-term was reflected in the modes of governance adopted by the guerrilla in Tumaco. In order to better interpret the rebel group's modus operandi, is useful to think back to Arjona's (2016) notion of time-horizons. The FARC's front the coastal municipality, the Daniel Aldana mobile column, had a highly utilitarian role to play in the organization at large. The hefty losses suffered by the rebel group from the Public Force in the Democratic Security era forced it to seek immediate material compensation. Hence, rather than playing the long political game, the Tumaco-based front had a simple, short-term task: to generate as much funds as possible in the least amount of time. For this reason, it wasn't much interested in stimulating civilian participation (Kasfir, 2008) or experimenting with power-sharing (Weinstein, 2007) in the region, all the less so since its relationship with the obstinate afro-Colombian population had been tempestuous from the start. What's more, the FARC-sanctioned social-engineering, which saw masses of mestizo colonos from southern Colombia transplanted into the Pacific to farm coca, was not comprehensive enough to alter the demographic of the region in the guerrilla's favour. Instead, the insurgents contented themselves with what Zahar (2001) categorizes as a parasitic relationship, whereby it relied heavily on civilian support network (specifically the labour and recruits), while providing only basic services in return. Among these services were "shielding" from other non-state armed groups, as well as provision of some benefits, including livelihood (via coca growing), and adjudication of disputes (Kalyvas, 2006).

However, on the spectrum from consensus to coercion, the Daniel Aldana column were ever more reliant on the latter in their interfaces with civilian population. On the whole, going back to the typologies of rebel governance, the FARC's rule in Tumaco before its demobilization oscillated somewhere between rebelocracy and disorder (Arjona, 2016), meaning that while the group intervened broadly in civilian affairs, its ability to do so was progressively deteriorating. It, thus, compensated for the loss of authority by applying a heavier dose of coercion. Albeit not unique, the above scenario was different to many other regions of Colombia, where the FARC could boast of a truly consolidated, long-standing control over a territory.

Yet, territorial competition is not the only reason why the Daniel Aldana column came to indulge in more violence in its interactions with civilians in Tumaco. Arjona (2016) writes that the other condition compelling rebels to operate under a short-time horizon is poor internal discipline. She explains that "in the absence of an internal structure that makes combatants follow rules and orders from their commanders, … Rules that limit combatant behavior are

often disobeyed, and civilians face great uncertainty about how combatants will act," (p.10). As documented in the findings, the FARC had suffered from a serious lack of discipline in the ranks in the years leading up to the peace accord. Due to unchecked recruitment and sub-contracting of smaller criminal networks, the command over the rank-and-file was loose. Worse still was the degradation of mid-level officers, who had in the past been the most prone to remobilization (as was the case after the demobilization of the AUC).

The above allows us to make sense of the security dynamics in post-demobilization Tumaco. First of all, whereas it might have been on the wane, the FARC's control of the territory remained extensive before 2017. Thus, power vacuums—in which the remainders of the protection or justice services would cease abruptly—were expected to form in Tumaco following the FARC demobilization. However, the territorial control had always been contested, so the vacuums were just as likely to be rapidly filled by other non-state armed groups that had been breathing down the guerrilla's neck by then. Additionally, considering the lack of internal cohesion, there was a high risk of emergence of dissident groups. Finally, the progressively predatory culture espoused by the FARC was likely to continue or escalate in post-demobilization, with potential grave repercussion for the civilian populations.

Therefore, for all the aforementioned reasons, the conditions in the municipality of Tumaco were ripe for the territorial competition scenario hypothesized earlier in the study. Indeed, the heightened competition for power vacuums that ensued aggravated the state of "disorder" that had been coming to light already before 2017. Hence, what is important to remember when analyzing the security situation post-demobilization Tumaco is that in a disorder, non-state armed groups create no social contracts with host population, as they don't find them advantageous to achieving short-term goals (Arjona, 2016). In such sequence of events, volatile circumstances on the ground drive non-state armed actors to use indiscriminate violence (Kalyvas, 2006; Metelits, 2010).

Another observation from the findings is that—in the first two years of post-demobilization—none of the numerous non-state groups managed to re-create the scope of governance adopted by the FARC pre-2017. This is because, none of the groups met the one pre-condition paramount to constructing more elaborate forms of governance (thus, improving its chances of survival): the exertion of power over a defined territory (Mampilly, 2011; Olson, 1993). Since the levels of territorial control exercised by these actors were comparatively low, there were less avenues to explore consensual ways to induce civilian collaboration. According to the logic used by Kalyvas (2006), newcomer non-state armed groups used violence to deter prospective

civilian defections in fear of their competitors in such closely contested contexts. Likewise, because undisputed territorial control was largely unattainable, it was more common for the groups to resemble roving bandits in the period studied. In fact, much like the roving bandit, they were predominately interested in cheaper ways to generate compliance, and more efficient extraction of funds from the civilian populations that would allow them to continue fighting (Hough, 2011; Tilly, 1985; Wood, 2010). Making matters worse was the fact that, in view of a recruitment tactic similar to the one used by the Daniel Aldana column, there persisted the issue of low internal discipline deemed conducive to violent conduct against civilians (Arjona, 2016).

However, it should be pointed out that attempts at recreating certain elements of rebel governance weren't non-existent in post-demobilization Tumaco. Differently put, the groups present in the municipality, particularly those with roots in the FARC, showed some intent to "move along" the spectrum away from strong-arm governance and towards more legitimate rule. One reason to explain this is how quickly the robust illicit economies buoyed up the emergent groups, which, in turn, allowed them to pursue a degree of consolidation at a pace difficult to imagine in other circumstances. Another factor at play could be that, in comparison with the newly arriving paramilitary or ELN units, the nascent dissident groups were familiar enough with the territory, and even had some previous ties to the population from their days in the guerrilla. While it by no means implies that the FOS or the GUP won the battle for Tumaco in the timeframe chosen, it may explain why they were the first to accumulate enough control to diversify their modus operandi vis-à-vis the population.

The dissident groups seemed to have been aware of the benefits of some social acceptance in territories they strove to control. Significantly, whereas the better part of the municipality was being disputed, there already existed in Tumaco spheres of influence, or "safe zones," in the words of Kasfir (2005). In these territories, non-state armed actors set out to consolidate their power relatively quickly. Consequently, they looked to expand their interactions with the civilians (the results section describes instances of the groups approaching the JACs, maintaining public order, offering conflict adjudication services, etc.). In tune with the theoretical discussion, however, when non-state armed groups have no previous support in a recently captured territory, they rarely forgo coercion (Mampilly & Stewart, 2021). Thus, early consolidation is usually not devoid of violent conduct. Even in relatively consolidated areas of Tumaco, non-state armed groups enforced strict social control or used selective assassination to exact revenge or obtain compliance. After all, violence, or the threat thereof, is an essential

attribute of authority and a much-needed show of force when non-state armed groups only just establish their rule (Arjona, 2016; Förster, 2015).

In way of summary, let's revisit the typologies of rebel governance to conjure up a universal profile of the illegal armed groups active in Tumaco in post-demobilization. We already mentioned that the actors' predatory inklings made them look like roving bandits, at first. The major non-state armed groups were solely interested in extraction of resources by force, provided no goods; adopted limited structure or practices in managing the population. Therefore, their authority in the eyes of population was illegitimate and their governance was non-effective. That said, as the competition phase transitioned into consolidation (with the caveat that it wasn't a linear process as temporary spheres of influence were won and lost in Tumaco), the non-state armed groups showed some interest in converting into stationary bandits, thus implementing more consensual forms of control (Mampilly, 2011; Metelits, 2009; Wickham-Crawley, 1987; Zahar, 2001). However, failure to establish more permanent territorial control in the period studied meant that violence and crime indicators kept rising through 2018.

The range of violent acts on the record in post-demobilization Tumaco is reflective of the territorial competition scenario discussed in the literature. First of all, as mentioned in the interviews, non-state armed groups employed predatory tactics, most notably extortion and kidnapping, to quickly extract funds from the civilian population (hence the victims were usually small and medium-sized business owners). What's more, direct armed confrontations between armed actors and violent targeting of populations resulted in a wave of displacement. The practice of indiscriminate recruitment and use of children and young adults for activities related to conflict, was key for the groups in the process of boosting their membership, gaining numerical advantage, and improving territorial control[63]. Sexual violence, on the other hand, was used as means of intimidation and a way to "send messages" to the immediate competitor (Mazzoldi et al., 2019). Finally, the wave of homicides in the municipality was, in part, aimed at elimination of the members of rival groups.

Directly related to territorial competition is the phenomenon of invisible borders that characterized the coastal municipality in post-demobilization, especially its urban zones.

[63] In a similar fashion to the Daniel Aldana column, the newly recruited or sub-contracted members would extend the network of informers or "lookouts" that improved the group's territorial control. The Ideas for Peace Foundation ranked Tumaco among the departments in the "highest risk of recruitment" category in post-demobilization Colombia (Gónzalez et al., 2020).

Generally speaking, the phenomenon involves separation of territories controlled by non-state armed groups and limitation or prohibition of free movement of the population. By drawing up dividing lines between their spheres of influence, these organizations can more effectively control the entry and exit of individuals into the territory (Valencia et al., 2017). However, in the event of fierce territorial rivalry between multiple actors, such as was the case in Tumaco, the borders are likely to be in constant flux. In consequence, local residents struggle to understand the ever-changing perimeters they are allowed to roam. An inadvertent crossing of invisible borders may result in severe punishment.

Finally, the purpose behind the harassment, threats and assassinations of civil society leaders was twofold. In the first place, it was devised to quell resistance, insofar as it served to intimidate the community at large. Second, its function was to deter the kind of behavior illegal armed groups regarded as threatening to the persistence of illegal rents (hence the recurrent murders of advocates of the illicit crops substitution programs and the implementation of the Peace Agreement in general).

5.4.2. Stabilization

As evidenced by the findings, the stabilization efforts by the Colombian government in the aftermath of the FARC's demobilization didn't produce any significant improvement to the security situation in Tumaco. As a matter of fact, not only did the state fail to enhance security in the municipality, but it also couldn't prevent the situation from deteriorating.

First, we shall discuss the findings on the security component of the stabilization strategy adopted by the state. In principle, the Colombian Public Force seemed more than ready to assist the post-demobilization transition of territories formerly under the control by the FARC in Tumaco. In the years prior to the signing of the peace accords, the municipality had been home to two specialized tasked forces dedicated to fighting the FARC and combatting drug-trafficking on Nariño's Pacific coast. At the beginning of 2018, an altogether new Joint Task Force for Stabilization and Consolidation, under the name "Hercules," was called up into being. The purpose of this new unit was to "conduct joint, coordinated and inter-institutional military operations to bring to justice or neutralize the members of Organized Armed Groups (GAO), exercise institutional control of the territory, protect the population, restore the Social Rule of Law, border stability and maintain sovereignty," (Fuerzas Aéra Colombianas, 2018). In short, at least in theory, the mission of the task force was very much in tune with the main prescriptions of stabilization.

The resources accumulated by the Public Force in the area seemed disproportionately large—some sources cited as many as 9,000 soldiers and police officers (Saavedra, 2017)—in comparison to the size of the territory under its jurisdiction. In fact, the ratio of the Public Force to civilian population in Tumaco was the highest out of all municipalities in Colombia ("A Tumaco lo agobian," 2018). In spite of boasting with major manpower in the region, the military and the police failed to guarantee protection to civilians in the early post-demobilization.

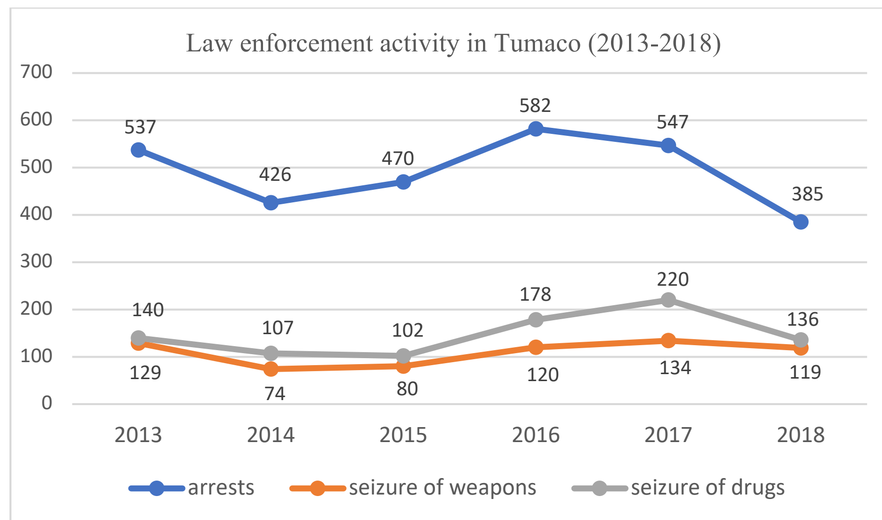
The interviews carried out in Tumaco confirm the sense of cognitive dissonance generated by the number of agents present in the municipality, on the one hand, and the worsening security situation, on the other. In the eyes of the population, it was difficult to reconcile how the apparently sophisticated military apparatus displayed such limited grasp of the local security dynamics. The Public Force, for example, demonstrated a lack of urgency in arresting major perpetrators (in spite of the whole community knowing their exact location!). Some of the interviewees attributed it to poor intelligence capabilities, other suggested more insidious hypotheses, such as infiltration of the Public Force by the criminal element. What's more, it wasn't uncommon for the participants to express doubt about the truthfulness of the official figures of the deployed military personnel.

Another discrepancy recurring in the conversations held in Tumaco was between the predictability of the vacuum filling scenario and the lackluster effort to avoid it. In spite of reassurances that there existed a strategy for securing post-demobilization territories, in hindsight, the residents of Tumaco expressed a great deal of skepticism. In their opinion, among the numerous battalions sent to the municipality, none was dedicated specifically to establishing a permanent presence in remote rural areas that would guarantee steady access to protection services. As for the soldiers from the task force, their modus operandi seemed to have revolved almost exclusively around reactive tactics such as containment of spoilers (Belloni & Moro, 2019; Piccolino & Ruette-Orihuela, 2021). To put it differently, the armed forces were generally deployed for concrete, tactical assignments, after which they would return to their bases64. In short, the Public Force continued to adopt a rudimentary, enemy-centric counterinsurgency approach in the spirit of the War on Drugs in Tumaco. What's more, while spoilers were neutralized in armed clashes or via arrests (e.g., "Guacho"), the proverbial "glass of water," discussed in the literature chapter, wasn't applied quickly or strategically

[64] An assignment that seemed to consume most resources was eradication of illicit crops (more on that below).

enough to douse the fire, as the old commanders were swiftly replaced by new ones (Connaughton, 2002). Compounding the hydra effect was the virtually non-functional criminal justice system in the region. What's more, as seen in the below figure, the neutralization of spoilers seems to have inexplicably lost its momentum just as violence was picking up steam in 2018.

Figure 5 Law enforcement activity in Tumaco, 2013-2018 (Source: Own compilation based on data from Colombia's National Police)



In spite of some attempts at bringing the Public Force closer to the community, the overall perception of the law enforcement agents wasn't one of protector. The aforementioned "here today, gone tomorrow" approach stood in the way of forming more lasting relationships. What certainly didn't help the cause were abuses by the military and the police, such as the aforementioned massacre of campesinos in Tandil. Little progress was made in terms of trust-building as residents feared that reporting to the police would put them at risk of reprisals from criminals. In consequence, the Public Force couldn't count with a vital source of intelligence, what debilitated its capacity to eliminate spoilers. Well-documented corruption and entanglement of Colombia's military apparatus in the atrocities of the conflict, led the respondents interviewed in Tumaco to raise questions over the leading role of the Public Force in the stabilization process, mirroring similar doubts summed up in the literature chapter (OECD, 2008). However, it should be emphasized that the Public Force itself expressed unease with the role it was assigned. As discussed above, military officials lamented that the state tried to "solve everything" with the use of the military in Tumaco (Int.13). In their opinion, it was the civilian government that didn't play its part.

The lack of effective rural policing proves that no transition was made towards more democratic security management. What's more, civilian oversight of law enforcement was minimal and corruption persisted. According to the respondents, the Public Force didn't engage in delivery of services or construction of infrastructure in the spirit of quick impact projects. The initiatives to secure the "hearts and minds" of the population were scarce and, mostly, one-offs entirely dependent on the profile of the commander in question.

Leaving aside the clear dearth of tangible results in the security area for a moment, the stabilization approach on display in Tumaco presents some problems at the conceptual level already. Keeping in mind the criticism of the hard security-oriented stabilization outlined earlier in the study, an argument can be made that the militarization of the region wasn't particularly conducive to more transformative reconstruction attempts. Decried in the literature as counterproductive, the heavy counterinsurgency bias is associated with preference for visibility over sustainability of stabilizing efforts, an observation that the case of Tumaco gives a lot of grounds to (Barakat et al., 2010; Belloni & Constantini, 2019). There is no doubt that the Tumaco variation of stabilization was enforcement-led, centered on treating the symptoms, rather than the causes of violence in the region. Crucially, the militarization of the region made civilians more vulnerable to getting caught in crossfire or killed for collaborating with the Public Force, among other things.

Furthermore, the civilian component of the stabilization strategy had no lasting effect on security in the first two years of post-demobilization in Tumaco. The fact that the state didn't improve its institutional presence in the municipality, despite the promises made upon the signing of the Peace Agreement, continued to nurture a sense of abandonment among the population.

There is no better place to start discussing the outcome of the development component of the stabilization approach in Tumaco than with the Program for the Substitution of Illicit Crops (PNIS). Initially, the transformative ambitions of the PNIS garnered enthusiasm about its potential to produce immediate security benefits in Tumaco. In the framework of the program, the state committed to delivering basic services and productive resources to communities in exchange for removal of coca plants. Aside from taking on the illicit economy, the PNIS promised to overcome another critical legacy of the conflict—the deficiencies of state services in Tumaco. By doing so, it was expected to boost the legitimacy of the state. Hence, it fulfilled another recommendation by the stabilization literature in raising of the community's confidence in the state and the peace process (UK Stabilization Unit, 2009). As seen by the

numbers of families enrolled, the community demonstrated its willingness to help the state fight coca cultivation.

However, there are few redeeming qualities as far as the practice of the PNIS is concerned. Three major problems stand out. Once again, the state demonstrated an ill-advised sluggishness in the early implementation phase in Tumaco. Logically, the PNIS was predicated on quick delivery of productive resources so as not to deprive the campesino of the source of sustenance. This, according to the interviewees, didn't materialize on a scale that would guarantee economic safety to the agrarian population. Secondly, a fundamental conundrum with the PNIS was the lack of appreciation of the context, a fallacy the literature on stabilization warns us about. That the state didn't have a good grasp on the particularities of the region becomes evident when looking at the logistics side of the program, i.e., the unsolved issues of access to the market, land ownership, industrialization of the crop, etc. Another point that links the analysis of the PNIS with the earlier remarks on the Public Force is that the involvement of the latter in substitution programs posed serious practical tensions in Tumaco. As the military thrusted itself into large-scale eradication, the state fell behind on delivering substitute crops. It led to the situation where, desperate no to lose their livelihood, the coca farmers actively opposed the eradication activities by the Public Force. The above generated simmering hostility that came to a head when the counternarcotic police opened fire on the campesinos in Tandil.

This series of developments neatly sums up the issues with regards to involvement of armed forces in development work raised in the literature. Likewise, it adds credence to the criticism of "competing objectives" underlying the stabilization approach, whereby the military and the civilian operators of stabilization act in an uncoordinated and often conflicting manner (Collinson, Elhawary & Muggah, 2010).

In the end, it was non-state armed groups that came out as winners as the PNIS suffered from multiple setbacks. Not only did the program failed to get going, but its shortcomings pushed the rural population of Tumaco into the hands of the armed actors. Opposing eradication and desperate to resume coca cultivation, the economic interests of non-state armed groups aligned with those of the campesino community. What's more, as mentioned in the findings, the productive projects attached to the program were key in accommodating the reintegrating FARC combatants. Together with the unresolved land titling issues, few productive opportunities limited the prospects of building a livelihood for the demobilized guerrillas. As a result, the risk that the ex-FARC combatants would abandon the DDR increased.

Taking into account the weight of the illicit economies factor in the municipality, the success of the PNIS was paramount in guaranteeing post-demobilization security in Tumaco. While budgetary and administrative challenges are a reasonable explanation for the scheme's limited success, the fact of the matter is that running into snags this early into the process did a lot of damage to the credibility of the larger post-conflict strategy. In sum, the errors in the implementation of the program made stability implausible in the municipality.

Nevertheless, the stammering illicit crops substitution program wasn't the only flaw of the development component of the stabilization strategy. Related to the aforementioned difficulties experienced by the rural population in accessing the market was the lack of adequate civilian infrastructure, predominately roads. For those living outside of the urban center of the municipality, transport remained an obstacle to fully partaking in the social, economic and political life of the country. The literature on stabilization is unequivocal in drawing a connection between strengthening of the state and investment in rural infrastructure. Unfortunately, this preposition is difficult to test based on the observations from post-demobilization Tumaco. Although plans for long-term projects abounded, in the short-term, investment in infrastructure was negligible.

Better health care services or education can similarly inspire optimism and "buy time" ahead of more comprehensive reforms. Most importantly, they can reduce the likelihood of resurgence of violence (Gordon, 2010). For the residents of Tumaco it was education that epitomized the stabilizing capacity of development. It shouldn't be surprising if we consider how young the population of the municipality is and how many minors, often inadvertently, become part of non-state armed groups. According to the respondents, should the region ever be stabilized, educational and vocational opportunities for the youth need to be made more readily available. Yet, in the first two years following the demobilization of the FARC, there was a lack of community violence reduction programs targeting the at-risk youth in Tumaco, such as the ones implemented in Haiti described by Muggah (2010). Hence, ever-younger conscripts—among them the non-demobilized "ripios"—fueled the new phase of conflict in the municipality.

Parallel to the PNIS, an initiative devised to aid the development of the region in post-accord was the Development Plan with Territorial Focus (PDET). Still, the program was in the process of consultations in the period studied, hence it can be deduced that the plans drafted as part of the PDET were not meant for early post-demobilization. If we add to this significant delays in

the implementation of the PDET projects, we get a picture of a stabilization strategy severely lacking in the provision of basic services to the tormented population.

Finally, let's briefly discuss the results pertaining to the governance component of the stabilization strategy in post-demobilization Tumaco. Even in spite of the PDET, together with its inclusive and participatory design, the general opinion of the participants in the study was that the state didn't afford the community enough space to provide its input in the elaboration of stabilization and peacebuilding strategies. In other words, the state didn't tap into the ethos of community mobilization that—in defiance of the continuing victimization—existed in the region. Thus, it failed to empower the local social and political actors to actively shape the agenda of stabilization. The interviewees complained that all decisions regarding the future of Tumaco were being taken in Bogota without proper insight into the specificity of the local context. The notion that the state can be simply be "introduced" in a top-down manner was largely rejected by the population of the municipality. Hence, an argument could be made that the state centric approach to stabilization, that has become the subject of criticism in recent years, was on show in Tumaco.

Chapter 6 Case study 2: South Tolima

The second case study sheds light on the security dynamics and stabilization efforts in the region of South Tolima in the first two years after the FARC demobilization (2017-18). The case study is divided into four sections. In the first section, the region is introduced via a brief overview of the most important background information. Subsequently, the chapter offers a historical account of the Colombian armed conflict from the perspective of South Tolima. The purpose of this section is to highlight trends in security in the territory in the years leading up to the 2016 peace process. Next, findings from the post-demobilization period are presented. These are divided into data on the security dynamics on the ground between 2017 and 2018, and data on stabilization endeavors in the same period. Finally, a discussion of the findings is presented.

6.1. Background

South Tolima (Sur del Tolima) is a sub-region in the department of Tolima in central-western Colombia. Technically speaking, the province of South Tolima encompasses nine municipalities, i.e., Coyaima, Natagaima, Ortega, Roncesvalles, and San Antonio, to the north, and Ataco, Chaparral, Planadas, and Rioblanco to the south (Aponte, 2019). However, this research employs a designation adopted by the Colombian government for the PDET program, that includes only the four southernmost municipalities (Ataco, Chaparral, Planadas and Rioblanco), which happen to be the more heavily affected by the Colombian Armed Conflict. What's more, it was in these four municipalities in the very south of Tolima that the FARC had been comparatively more influential over the fifty years of its activity in the department (Barros & Uribe, 2019).

Situated in the Andean natural region, along the central cordillera, South Tolima borders with the departments of Cauca, Huila and Valle del Cauca. Its central location means that the region has traditionally been a natural transport corridor that links the center of the country and the western Llanos, with south-eastern Colombia, the Pacific region, and the Buenaventura harbor (Fundación Ideas para la Paz, 2013).

South Tolima covers an area of approximately 6,008 km. The population of the region is an estimated 118,274 (ART, n.d.). The majority of the population in South Tolima is Mestizo. However, within its limits there are also indigenous reservations, most notably the Nasa Wesh tribe in the townish of Gaitan, Planadas. South Tolima is a region of great biodiversity, that features mountains, plains and abundance of rivers. Its economy is based primarily on

agriculture (rice, banana, and cotton growing, as well as cattle farming). In addition, some industrial activity is being developed in the region in recent times, in the form of major mining and hydroelectric projects (Vélez et al., 2015). Above all, South Tolima forms part of the so-called "coffee belt," and is one of the up-and-coming coffee growing regions of Colombia. It should also be noted that South Tolima is not a prime illicit goods producer. While it went through a period of intense opium poppy cultivation starting in the 1980s, since the 2000s-decade, South Tolima has seen the local drug production dwindle to the point of irrelevance.

There are some pronounced differences between the four municipalities that add to the heterogeneity of South Tolima. The largest of the four, Chaparral, constitutes the region's economic and political center. In addition to being the most populous, it also boasts a comparatively wide array of public institutions. The municipality of Planadas, is the farthest removed from the core of the Tolima department. Mostly mountainous, there is no coincidence in the fact that it became the bulwark of the FARC's power in the region. Ataco, on the other hand, is mostly plain and well communicated via rivers. For strategic reasons it was here where paramilitaries set up their strongholds. Finally, Rioblanco is a municipality that opens onto the neighboring Cauca and Valle del Cauca (Aponte, 2019). These differences came to play an important role in shaping certain historical patterns within the region.

In spite of the emergent coffee industry, South Tolima remains underdeveloped, as evidenced by a high value in the Multidimensional Poverty Index, low BNI (Bare Necessities Index) score, high informal employment rates, low educational attainment, lack of access to good quality water, etc. (DANE, 2005; Reyes, 2013; Tafur et al., 2020). Owing in part to the above historical trajectories, the region fits the bill of a territory with symptoms of state absenteeism or weakness. Particularly outside of the municipal capitals, there persists a stark lack of institutional capacity. The most glaring example is the inadequacy of justice mechanisms; a deficit the non-stated armed groups learned to compensate. Based on their interviews with local population, Veléz et al., (2015) concluded that for the residents of South Tolima, formal justice was "inefficient, discriminatory, … lacking in transparency, … slow, cumbersome and leading to impunity due to the lack of investigation and reporting," (p.308). What's more, access to other services, such as education and health, is also limited. South Tolima suffers from poor infrastructure as illustrated by a dire road system, which comprises of just a handful of paved routes.

All in all, the armed conflict and the relentless pressures from multiple armed actors have impeded "the consolidation of regional development processes, of institutional capacities for a

participatory, efficient and results-oriented management of territorial development, and have also affected community organization and, ultimately, human development and democracy" in South Tolima (Reyes, 2013, p.105).

6.2. South Tolima pre-FARC demobilization

In the following section, a historical account of the Colombian armed conflict in South Tolima in presented. The section is divided into five parts with each corresponding to a period or historical trend. The account is chronological and starts at what is considered the beginning of the conflict in South Tolima. In the sub-sections that follow discussed are: principal non-state armed groups present in the region throughout history, characteristics of the FARC governance, and significant stabilization attempts by the state. Finally, the last years of the FARC's presence in the region are recounted.

6.2.1. Origins of conflict in South Tolima (1964-1980)

Before portraying the region in the years leading up to the signing of the 2016 Peace Agreement, it is important to emphasize that the story of the FARC in South of Tolima is, in fact, the story of the origins of the rebel group as a whole. It was here that the founding myth of the rebel group was forged when the most emblematic of the independent republics, Marquetalia (Planadas municipality), was assaulted by the Colombian military in 1964. Ever since then, owing to its high symbolic and strategic value (situated a fairly short distance away from Bogota), the FARC pointed to South Tolima as "part of their fundamental base in the revolutionary march," (Aponte, 2019, p.127).

Yet, South Tolima had been one of the leading theatres of conflict in Colombia long before the FARC came about. A large share of the violence associated with the Violencia period occurred in the region. It was in the southern corner of Tolima that the campesino resistance against the abuses of the forces sympathizing with the Conservative government found its strongest expression. At the height of the repressions by the Chulativos, the Liberal and communist guerrillas banded together. Taking into account the vast ideological discrepancies it is perhaps not much of a surprise that the alliance didn't stand the test of time. Skeptical of the true intentions of General Rojas Pinilla, the self-defense groups in South Tolima refused to demobilize once the bipartisan violence came to a close. Hence, from then on, the government referred to these former guerrilla fighters as bandoleros, whilst the region entered the period sometimes referred to as belated violence (*Violencia Tardia*) (Sanchez & Meertens, 2001).

The abovementioned rupture determined the balance of power in South Tolima for decades to come: the descendants of the Liberal guerrillas, christened from now on the *Limpios*, on one hand, and communist self-defense groups known as *Comunes*, on the other (CNMH, 2017). The former, led at first by alias *Mariachi*, then by alias *Canario*, counted with unofficial support from the government in their quest against communism. Among the latter group of communist campesinos was the long-serving chief commander of the FARC, Manuel "Tirofijo" Marulanda. Still relatively dispersed, the Comunes organized in a collection of independent republics, of which Marquetalia was one. After years of medium-intensity clashes, the guerrilla-run enclaves became the target of the early counterinsurgent operations inspired by the U.S.-sanctioned Plan Lasso.

Contrary to popular belief, Aponte (2019) documents that the communist combatants, now officially under the FARC banner, never abandoned the territory in the aftermath of the campaign against the independent republics. Instead, taking advantage of the gaps in state presence and their regional family ties, the guerrilla simply concentrated in remote high-altitude terrains, where it had time to regroup. Thus, in this period, the region was ostensibly sub-divided into central areas controlled by the Liberal guerrillas, sometimes claimed to be the first genuine paramilitary group in Colombia, and the fringes, where the communist rebels dwelled. In both these zones, in the absence of the state, it was non-state armed actors who regulated all facets of life. Until a certain point, however, these two hadn't engaged in any serious confrontations. In the historiography of the region this period was known as "the moment of peace" (*Momento de Paz*).

In the early days of its presence in the southern municipalities of Tolima, the FARC's activity focused on laying of political groundwork and forming first social bases. Since it was determined to show the benefits of its presence to the community, it served as a mostly benevolent authority. During that era, the relationship between the guerrilla and the civilian population was generally harmonious in South Tolima. Nonetheless, until that point, the guerrilla lacked the kind of territorial dominion that would allow it to implement more elaborate rebel governance schemes.

6.2.2. Non-state armed actors in South Tolima (1970s-2016)

As the FARC entered the phase of military expansion towards the end of the 1970s, the relative peace between the guerrilla and the self-defense groups drew to a close in South Tolima. It was then that well-trained and capable guerrilla units began descending from their hideouts towards

more central areas of the region, gradually edging out the successors of the Liberal guerrillas. In the next decades, these paramilitary actors, initially referred to as *Rojo Atá*, then *Convivir*, and finally *Bloque Tolima*, would align themselves closer with the umbrella organization, the AUC, severing the strong linkage with social bases of the past in favor of counterinsurgency operations and drug-trafficking (CNMH, 2017). Between 1980s and 2006, Bloque Tolima was responsible for massacres, displacement, and selective assassinations carried out on the behest of drug barons (Veléz et al., 2015).

Another focal point of violence in South Tolima was the conflict between the FARC and the Nasa Wesh indigenous community. The members of the community native to Planadas objected the guerrilla's use of their land as transition corridor. Their resistance to the rebel expansion was later subsidized by the state. This strand of conflict lasted from the early 1980s until 1996 when a pioneering peace treaty was signed ("Experiencia de paz," 2017).

A prime example of how the FARC made itself useful to the local community can be observed with the arrival of the opium poppy to South Tolima in the mid-1980s. For the increasingly impoverished local farmers (the late 1980s and early 1990s were a period of crisis of the coffee market), the meteoric rise of the lucrative poppy industry may have seemed like a blessing at the time (González & Briceño, 2002). While there was a brief spell of what can be described as prosperity in the region (new bars and restaurants, expensive clothes or cars, etc.), in reality the money neither permeated the local economy nor did it make the common campesino wealthier (Barros & Uribe, 2019). On the contrary, very soon, the poppy became kind of a poisoned chalice for South Tolima, precipitating major social tensions (predominately due to the influx of the *colonos* from other parts of Colombia, along with marauding bandits interested in a quick profit), as well as environmental degradation. What followed was a period of substance abuse, insecurity and lawlessness to which the police had no answers (Aponte, 2019). The paramilitaries, on the payroll of drug-traffickers, proved incapable of reigning in the sweeping sense of anarchy. Despite some attempts at taking a page from the FARC handbook, the self-defense groups failed to maintain discipline within their own ranks, let alone to control the population at large. The progressive degeneration of Rojo Atá made its relationship with the community more violent, while at the same time triggering internal divisions. This would prove the grist to the mill to the FARC, as the two non-state armed groups clashed in the future (Aponte, 2019).

In consequence of the pandemonium, many local residents turned to the FARC—who until then had stood by—in hope that the guerrilla put an end to the sense of anarchy spreading

through the region (Barros & Uribe, 2019). Having maintained steady control over the coca industry in southern Colombia, the FARC were, indeed, up to the task (Molano, 1987). In fact, the guerrilla saw regulation of the poppy industry as a means to a more effective control over the local populations. By introducing a system of fines for law breaking, the rebel group helped suppress the surge of violence in South Tolima halfway through the 1990s decade (Echandia, 2006). In addition, the FARC prohibited deforestation for new farming land (Aponte, 2019). This way, it gained a competitive advantage over its rivals in the consideration of the local population concerned with the deterioration of the social fabric in the area. In the following years—wary of the rising cost of the industry, particularly the security threat posed by the incursions of paramilitary groups—the guerrilla opted to abandon poppy growing altogether. As a result of that decision, and the state's eradication efforts, Tolima went from one of the top poppy producers in Colombia in 2003 to the department with the smallest area dedicated to the cultivation of the plant in the country a decade later (Fundación Ideas para la Paz, 2013).

While the FARC successfully converted sectors of South Tolima into its rearguard, it didn't mean the guerrilla's grip on the territory was undisputed. Although the paramilitaries lost a good deal of its old bastions, and were now concentrated chiefly in northern and central Tolima, they didn't give up on recouping the southern stretches of the department, especially ever since it had become the stage for the booming poppy industry[65]. Consequently, from the mid-1980s onwards the region witnessed ever more frequent tit-for-tat assassinations of the purported sympathizers of either one of the warring non-state armed groups. The FARC would preferably target influential Liberal families, whereas the Rojo Atá, supported by the Public Force, went after the Patriotic Union leaders and other activists deemed as communists (CNMH, 2017).

Nevertheless, the territorial disputes in South Tolima reached their climax at the turn of the 21st century, with the municipality of Rioblanco at the heart of this first peak of violence in the modern history of the region (Barros & Uribe, 2019). Some of the worst atrocities of the Colombian armed conflict were committed in South Tolima as a result of what, by now, was a wholesale persecution of local residents allegedly collaborating with the adversary (Fundación Ideas para la Paz, 2013). Key to understanding the level of brutality on display was the transformation of the paramilitaries from a locally-entrenched self-defense force to a professionalized, yet mostly extraneous death squads under a direct supervision by the AUC.

[65] Aponte makes a claim that, compared to the paramilitary hotbeds such as Cordoba or Boyaca, the self-defense groups in Tolima were much less influential.

Possessing no ties to the population—ergo no reliable intelligence—it relied on terror against civilians to gain foothold in the region. However, the attempts at recovering its influence over Tolima were as vicious as they were futile (Aponte, 2019). By 2002, having put into action a carefully drawn-up strategic plan[66], the FARC largely succeeded in expelling the *Bloque Tolima* paramilitary detachment from the region.

6.2.3. FARC governance in South Tolima (1990s-2016)

The defeat of the paramilitaries in South Tolima came when the FARC was arguably at the peak of its powers. Formed nearly ten years prior, the Central Bloc (*Bloque Central*), spearheaded the nationwide expansion process. Consisting of four fronts, the unit held sway over territories situated in central Colombia and, so, it posed the greatest threat to Bogota. Within the Central Bloc, the front instrumental in the subjugation of South Tolima was the Front 21. In the period roughly between 1993 and 2003, the order mounted by the guerrilla in South Tolima was so comprehensive that it became known as "the empire of *Juzgado 21*," (Aponte, 2019). During that time, the FARC extended its influence on the territory way beyond mere organization of the campesino in its agricultural work. As explained by González (2019), the element of the rebel governance that won over the communities was justice services, which they saw as "quick, effective and exemplary," (p.25). Veléz et al. (2015) emphasize that, albeit harsh, the parallel justice offered by, as the locals put it, "those from above," was capable of solving intra-community conflict by keeping up with the constant flow of "lawsuits." As a matter of fact, the guerrilla justice became so internalized by the civilian population that there occurred "an inescapable acquisition of a commitment to [the FARC]," (p.306). As a result of the often-draconian laws and their strict execution, there was comparatively less crime in the region.

At the same time, rather than just punishing wrongful deeds, the rebels endeavored to model new collective behaviors. Developing rigorous oversight mechanisms "allowed it to systematize and regulate the behavior of the inhabitants in a more or less homogenous manner, by means of the manual of co-habitation," (*manual de convivencia*) (Aponte, 2019, p.137). Some of the norms in the manual, such as strict prohibition of theft, rape or domestic violence, were universally accepted as conducive to better community life. Others had to do with the

---

[66] Devised by the future Commander-in-chief of the FARC, Alfonso Cano, the plan had as its main objective to thrust out the paramilitary groups from Puerto Saldaña, in the Rioblanco municipality. The converged FARC units captured the village in 2000 following a brutal assault that caused major civilian casualties, including 29 deaths (Veléz et al., 2015).

FARC's very security in the region, including rules regarding curfews, interactions with the Public Force, a close watch on those who enter and leave the territory, etc. In addition, the guerrilla imposed highly particular standards of conduct, many of which restricted the freedoms of the residents of South Tolima. Among these were rules of sexual behavior of women, consumption of drugs or alcohol, etc. (Veléz et al., 2015). The penalties for not following the norms ranged from fines, community service and public humiliations to banishment and death. Suffering the oppressive effects of omnipresent policing, communities had no choice but to learn to live with their basic rights violated. What's more, the alternative to the FARC regime, such as the mayhem of the poppy years, was much worse (Aponte, 2019).

To be sure, such scale of governance had to be renumerated by an all-encompassing system of taxes. Considering the dearth of illicit drugs in the region, extortion was the cornerstone of the FARC's rule in South Tolima (Veléz et al., 2015). As summed up by Duncan & Velasco (2013), the Front 21 was "poor, economically speaking, since it [had] neither coca cultivation, nor strategic corridors, nor mineral resources." While earlier on, the unit was maintained afloat by other fronts of the guerrilla with higher turnovers from drug-trafficking, this source of assistance tailed off after a military offensive isolated the guerrilla's South Tolima rearguard. Therefore, when push came to shove, the burden of responsibility for the economic viability of the FARC was placed, in great measure, on the shoulders of the impoverished campesinos (Duncan & Velasco, 2013). But the monthly tariffs (*vacunas*) weren't the only way in which the community sacrificed itself for the good of the rebel group. South Tolima was historically one of the regions most affected by forced recruitment. Although in the beginning it was laced with ideological underpinnings, and even perceived as a means to socio-economic mobility—the combatants received education, steady income and healthcare—in the later years, recruitment became little more than an act of control. The Front 21 recruited ever younger children to run its errands, such as collecting extortion payments, dealing drugs in the urban zones, planting land mines or monitoring (Veléz et al., 2015).

Yet, the guerrilla was cognizant of the symbolic importance of South Tolima. It was aware that its relationship with the civilian population in what was the birthplace of the FARC as an organic self-defense peasant guerrilla, could not be merely exploitative. Hence, it insisted on sustaining its legitimacy via the kind of governance mechanisms that benefited the community beyond the realm of coercion. The Front 21 would organize collective maintenance and construction of infrastructural project, it obliged the campesino to plant crops that satisfy the

food needs, and took care of the environment by cracking down on deforestation. The guerrilla even built houses for peasants (Arjona, 2017).

6.2.4. State interventions in South Tolima (2000s-2010s)

As it will become evident in the following section, the FARC's control of South Tolima diminished significantly in the decade leading up to the Havana peace negotiations, both as a result of state efforts and the guerrilla's internal upheaval. With the Caguán negotiations collapsed, the administration of President Uribe escalated military efforts in South Tolima. Implemented within the framework of the Patriot Plan, operations Liberty I and II, in 2003 and 2005 respectively, sought to finish with the hegemony of the FARC over the critical territory (Fundación Ideas para la Paz, 2013). Thus, whereas the first peak of violence in South Tolima corresponded with the conflict between the FARC and the paramilitaries, the second cycle, from 2006 to 2008, was largely due to the hostilities between the guerrilla and the armed forces (Barros & Uribe, 2019).

High-mountain battalions backed by heavy aerial bombardments continued to target the guerrilla throughout the better part of the 2000s decade. President Santos made no drastic change to this approach. Under his leadership, the Colombian armed forces encircled South Tolima with the aim to cut off the corridors that fed the Front 21. Although Cano managed to break loose from his refuge in Planadas, he was nevertheless assassinated while on the run in the neighboring Cauca. Around the same time, several members of the inner circle of the commander, who at that moment stood at the helm of the guerrilla in the region, were also killed ("Los golpes más fuertes," 2010).

The elimination of high-profile military objectives was only the most apparent result of the thoroughly revamped stabilization approach implemented by the Colombian government in the beginning of the 21st century. In contrast to the strategies from the past, the new tactics promoted an increased and permanent state presence on the ground. The first course of action was to shore up the coercive dimension, as new police posts and military bases were re-established in areas previously purged by the FARC, especially the urban centers of South Tolima (Aponte, 2019). Furthermore, a program under the name Soldiers from my Town (*Soldados de mi Pueblo*) signaled a novel formula of recruitment by the armed forces, whereby new conscripts were plucked directly from the communities they were meant to safeguard. At the same time, the state devised unprecedented means of gathering intelligence. Codenamed the Network of Informers (*Red de Cooperantes*), this practice was premised on offering of

economic incentives to civilians in exchange for information about the movements of the guerrilla in the region.

The above schemes demonstrate that, more than at any earlier point in the history of the armed conflict in Colombia, the authorities seemed to have understood that in order to gain the edge over the rebel group, it had to weaken its ties with local communities, while simultaneously improving its own legitimacy in territories where it had been absent (Aponte, 2019). Therefore, within the framework of the Democratic Security policy, the state looked to endear itself to the locals by supplanting strictly military operations with highly visible development schemes. Most notably, the Public Force completed various high-impact infrastructural projects, such as roads, schools, sports centers, etc.[67]. The flagship development policy, *Programa Familias Guardabosques*, offered financial inducement for the substitution of illicit crops. Simultaneously, assistance from international cooperation agencies (particularly the USAID), spurred on the growth of the coffee industry in South Tolima. Lastly, the state introduced health brigades in the region, offering free medications to the needy (Aponte, 2019).

All in all, the state offensive proved successful insofar as the FARC fronts in Tolima lost a great deal of manpower in the early years of the 21st century, not only as a consequence of direct clashes with the Public Force, but on account of desertion (Barros & Uribe, 2019). With regards to membership, the rebel group went from approximately 1000 members in 2002 to 350 in 2012 in the region (Fundación Ideas para la Paz, 2013). Furthermore, the FARC saw their territorial dominion considerably rolled back. The guerrilla was forced to retreat from more urbanized centers of the region back to the rural mountainous peripheries, with the military even pushing it out of its historical sanctuaries of Gaitania, in the Planadas municipality and the Las Hermosas canyon in Chaparral (Aponte, 2019).

The FARC's crumbling empire helps to explain why the markers of violence against civilians remained high in the municipalities of South Tolima. Importantly, it wasn't the result of simply being caught in a crossfire, although upon reverting back to guerrilla tactics the rebel group began to plant more land mines and other explosives. Exposed to an intensifying pressure from the Public Force, the rebels would switch to more predatory tactics in order to prevent civilian population from co-operating with the authorities or to exact revenge for important personnel

[67] According to the interviews compiled by Aponte (2019), it was the paving of the road from Ataco to Planadas that really propelled the process of territorial integration of South Tolima.

losses[68]. One example of violence against civilians as a form of defensive tactic was indiscriminate child recruitment, predicated on an assumption that families of combatants wouldn't reveal the position of the guerrilla to the authorities in fear of having their child killed in a bombing (Duncan & Velasco, 2013). The above reflects a ubiquitous sense of distrust about potential civilian collaboration with state representatives during this period. Any suspicion of fraternization with the Public Force was severely punished by the beleaguered FARC.

6.2.5. Last years of FARC hegemony (2008-2016)

Now, it is important to remember that even in spite of the decline, the guerrilla maintained a reasonably steady hold over South Tolima in the years leading up to the peace process (Rocha, 2013). As put by Aponte (2019) the FARC "continued to be an important actor regulating and controlling territories, inasmuch as it is difficult to wipe out fifty years of political work in just one try," (p.247). One factor that certainly contributed to the rebel organization's perennial dominance over the territory is the relative weakness of the so-called BACRIMs in the wake of the 2006 AUC demobilization. As suggested by Echandia (2013) this phenomenon is perhaps best explained by the plummeting poppy production recorded in the region in the prior years. Whenever the post-paramilitary groups did intend on advancing into the southern reaches of Tolima, they were met with a vigorous response from the rebel group (Barros & Uribe, 2019).

Additionally, in territories where the guerrilla constituted authority, the civilian population for the most part still saw Public Force as an illegitimate occupying power. Some encouraging transformative initiatives weren't enough to change the deep-seated reluctance overnight. Especially since, following its mass deployment throughout the municipalities of South Tolima, complaints about rape, assassinations, and displacement caused by the State security apparatus multiplied (Barros & Uribe, 2019). If the above wasn't enough, the false positives scandal, campaigns of arbitrary arrests (for alleged collaboration with the FARC), rampant consumption of drugs by soldiers and police officers, and their close co-operation with the paramilitaries further tainted the community's perception of the authorities (Veléz et al., 2015). Such level of suspicion towards the state aided the FARC maintain territorial control in South

[68] Duncan & Velasco (2013) illustrate this mechanism with the case of alias *Mayerly*. A mid-level officer of the FARC was alleged to have ordered selective assassination of up to sixteen presidents of the community council (JAC) in addition to various civilians whom she believed were implicated in the death of her husband following a bombardment by the Public Force.

Tolima. Above all, it was the scarcity of the institutional offer from the state outside of the Public Force that played it into the hands of the guerrilla.

Having a role in this was the so-called "red zone" status ascribed to the region by the Colombian government (what in essence classified South Tolima as a permanent warzone). According to Aponte (2019) such designation condemned the area to continual military operations and, simultaneously, limited provision of development and socio-economic assistance "under the argument that benefitting the population, you benefit the insurgency," (p.135). Yet, such framing of the problem cost the state much legitimacy in the eyes of the residents of South Tolima (González & Briceño, 2002).

However, over the years, the cemented dominion by the FARC led to an ever more pronounced economic marginalization of South Tolima. It was evident that the red zone status cost South Tolima the ability to keep up the pace with the neighboring territories. The structural limits to the FARC's rule were more easily perceivable for the local population. It took just a few infrastructure projects sanctioned by the government for it to become clear that the rebels are simply incapable of emulating the state to an extent that would guarantee steady development and economic well-being in the region (Aponte, 2019). Meanwhile, losing its ground in Tolima and nationwide, the guerrilla became more despotic. Together with exploitation of the community via increasingly mafia-like tactics, it generated a sense of fatigue among the civilians who were now less willing to protect the guerrilla (Duncan & Velasco, 2013). Stubborn as it was, the future of the FARC hegemony in Tolima looked increasingly like a losing game. In that sense, the negotiations in Havana came at the right time for the guerrilla. Following 2012, the rebels prepared the ground for the transition by cutting down on military activity. Likewise, the Colombian armed forces put the brakes on its pursuit of the guerrilla.

In the years leading up to the signing of the peace accords, the ombudsman office warned of a gradual encroachment of the region by post-demobilization armed groups, undoubtedly in relation to the FARC's imminent demobilization. In a report issued in October 2015, the agency signaled that "over the course of the last year, there have been various incidents that indicate the intention of the post-AUC demobilization illegal armed groups to dispute the historical territorial control of the FARC in the municipalities of South Tolima, which could generate new scenarios of confrontation with grave consequences for the civilian population," (Defensoria del Pueblo, 2015, p.5). In view of the growing number of cases of threatening pamphlets, intimidation, displacement, and selective assassinations in the region, the ombudsman called on increased prevention and protection of civilian population, especially

that of social leaders. Furthermore, it recommended enhanced and concerted action to dismantle the groups responsible, among which it named such entities as *Héroes del Valle* and *Renacer*. The following year, the ombudsman suggested that the violent acts reflected a pattern of intimidating behavior designed to "establish territorial dominion and control of populations," (Defensoria del Pueblo, 2015, p.3). For all these reasons, while hopeful ahead of the demobilization of the FARC, there was a growing sense of anxiety among civilians in South Tolima with regards to what comes after rebel governance and, in particular, who will be in charge of security and justice provision (Barros & Uribe, 2019).

6.3. South Tolima post-FARC demobilization

The section that follows presents the results from South Tolima in the period defined in this study as post-demobilization (2017-2018). It is divided into two main sub-sections pertaining to the two areas of interest of the research: security dynamics on the ground in South Tolima and stabilization strategies used by the Colombian government and the community in the aftermath of the FARC demobilization.

6.3.1. Security dynamics

In the opening segment of the section, the study presents data on the most important security dynamics in South Tolima. The aim here is to capture the most relevant trends in security together with the factors that shaped them. The section is arranged in accordance with the major themes found in the interviews, i.e., the FARC demobilization, benefits of peace, non-state armed groups present in the region, statistics on violence and crime.

6.3.1.1. FARC Demobilization

The South Tolima-based Front 21 of the FARC, commanded by "Wilson Saavedra," entered the DDR process shortly after the signing of the peace accords. Some 150 guerrillas and accompanying family members relocated to the Transitional Rural Normalization Zones (ZVTN), later renamed Territorial Space for Training and Reincorporation (ETCR) *Marquetalia Cuna de la Resistencia*, in the village of el Oso, situated in the township of Gaitania, near the border with the department of Huila (the other transition camp in Tolima was installed in the municipality of Icononzo in the east of the department) ("Excombatientes de las Farc," 2017). Although the combatants had moved into the transition spaces as early the beginning of 2017, the official act of disarmament was delayed until June of that year (Farfán, 2017).

Firmly implanted in the minds of the local communities, the long tradition of violent reprisals inflicted by the warring parties on civilians in South Tolima inspired a sense of unease in the region in anticipation of the FARC's dissolution. With the demobilization imminent, both the population and the combatants initially believed themselves vulnerable to violence, especially after the contested plebiscite—the two municipalities that hosted the transition had voted "no"—added to the suspense (Uribe, 2016). One of the respondents talked about the security concerns of the demobilizing guerrillas: "[the demobilization] generates social pressure, the issue of risks. Because one does not know, for example, whether people were going to receive well [a guerrilla] that was in these territories and caused harm. These were the fears that they had," (Int.9). Amidst concerns about new illegal armed groups advancing on the township of Gaitania, various complaints were made on the part of the FARC regarding the security situation in the ETCR throughout 2017. Furthermore, the demobilized insurgents openly questioned the Public Force's commitment to protecting the space, alluding to its potential collusion with non-state armed groups (Garzón, 2017).

Contributing to the rocky start of the DDR process in South Tolima were the living conditions in the transition camp in El Oso. In view of the lack of adequate accommodation, electricity, potable water or health services, the demobilizing guerrillas didn't hide their dissatisfaction with the government's unfulfilled promises (Peralta & Sanchez, 2022). The conversations held in the region confirmed the view that, as a result of major delays on the part of the government, the ETCR was "improvised" and not ready to receive the ex-FARC soldiers (Int.9,13,17). In spite of some state-sanctioned socio-economic programs (e.g., secondary schooling for 25 former guerrillas, pisciculture project, etc.) aimed at capacitation of the demobilized, the combatants expressed uncertainty about the reincorporation component of the DDR (Comisión de la Verdad, 2019). In the interviews conducted in el Oso by Peralta and Sanchez (2022), the ex-guerrilleros complained that while the presence of the state seemed to have improved in quantitative terms[69], few tangible effects were seen on the ground when it came to "the implementation, economic resources, financing," (p.233). While manifold, the most burning

[69] In reference to the clothes worn by representatives of state and non-state agencies, the interviewer described the institutional presence in post-demobilization South Tolima as a "parade of vests" ("desfile de chalecos") (Peralta & Sanchez, 2022, p.233).

concern for the sustainability of reincorporation, in El Oso as much as elsewhere in the country, was that of land ownership (on which more later)[70] (Iniciativa Barómetro, 2020).

The above flaws of the DDR process notwithstanding, the ETCR located in South Tolima didn't experience any major security incidents in the period studied. Likewise, the population of the camp remained steady, meaning no significant desertions were reported. A majority of the interviewees were of the opinion that the process of demobilization was largely successful at first (Int.9). As time passed by, more and more ex-FARC fighters exited the camps and moved to their regions, many of which were in the vicinity of their old bases (Int.17). In spite of the toll of transition, most combatants did their best to get back to civilian life (Int.1,19). A participant shared his observations of the process: "I think … that many studied, finished their primary ... There are others who are still studying. Some undertook a crafts project, there in the camp, in the rural area. Others are working with pigs, others with fish. There are people working," (Int.14).

6.3.1.2. Security benefits of FARC demobilization

For virtually all of the interviewees in South Tolima, there was no doubt that the demobilization of the FARC meant the long-awaited arrival of peace. For a majority of them, the first two years of post-demobilization were, in fact, the first truly peaceful years in their lifetime. Thus, generally speaking, the zeitgeist of the period studied was one of transformation, tranquility, reconstruction, and moderate optimism about the future of the region.

It is important to bear in mind that for at least two generations of residents of South Tolima, post-demobilization meant the first experience of life free from the yoke of the rebel order. Hence, at first, the prospect of the guerrilla's departure may have been a source of some angst for the community. The uncertainty that came along with the disappearance of the hitherto authority was rooted in the perception of vulnerability to violence from outside forces. The most dreaded scenario, experienced time and again throughout the Colombian conflict, was the prospect of paramilitary retaliations. But question marks also hovered over the military's attitude towards local communities, whom they had historically treated as accomplices of the insurgents (Int.1). Such was the level of mistrust of some social leaders from Planadas that they

[70] The guerrillas were not granted permanent ownership to the land on which the ETCR stood in the period studied. Questions marks were raised over the feasibility of the constructed houses and infrastructure with the issue of land rights still unresolved.

reportedly opted to vote “no” in the peace plebiscite on October 2, 2016, fearful of what the lack of protection services from the FARC may entail for them (Int.2).

However, doubt gave way to hope. One of the interviewees emphasized just how much of a sea change the departure of the FARC meant for the community: “Those two years was when the legal state ‘made its debut’ [in South Tolima]. I’m 49 years old. I was born in the FARC state . . . We were ushering in the state and we were content. Our expectations were at 1000%, and it was a positive expectation. The spirits were really good in this period,” (Int.3).

The first expression of peace in South Tolima was the silencing of guns. The respondents indicated that fighting, until recently the day-to-day reality of the region, stopped altogether, almost overnight. One of the interviewees painted a vivid picture: “We felt happy not to hear the bombing, not to hear the conflict, not to hear bullets. Happy not having to hide under the bed every time they were shooting at each other,” (Int.10). With the termination of military confrontations, there came a major decline in human rights abuses—assassinations, kidnapping, and displacement were all down in the first two years of post-demobilization according to local residents (Int.1,3,4,19). Moreover, the interviewees indicated that no other groups came to replace the FARC in the period in question; certainly not anywhere near to the degree the guerrilla had exercised control before 2017 (Int.8,13,14).

With time, peace was made manifest in a number of different ways. For example, the fact that there no longer were groups of armed men roaming around meant the inhabitants didn’t put themselves at risk by merely interacting with the authorities (Int.10). What’s more, residents of South Tolima were finally able to move around unrestricted, even venturing into the most rural zones of the region that had previously been off limits to most (Int.9,11). Improved mobility fueled the momentum of the social and economic life in South Tolima.

No less significant was the return of the displaced and the exiled. An interviewee described his own return home: “I was a councilman of the municipality of Chaparral. I was declared military objective. They persecuted me, all for my positions. I couldn’t come to Chaparral. When the topic of the Peace Accord consolidated, and there were certain compromises made by the FARC and the Colombian state, one begins to approach the town …. When it becomes reality, and one knows that the Peace Accord is going to be signed, one returns to rural areas,” (Int.5).

Young people, especially those from the dispersed rural zones of South Tolima, who under the FARC rule had two choices—work as a campesino or join in the ranks of the guerrilla—could now “come out,” and enjoy the new opportunities peace brought to the territories (Int.12,7).

Furthermore, the residents highlighted that peace brought with it a return of commerce to South Tolima. Both the locals and outsiders felt encouraged to invest in the area. People had the peace of mind to concentrate on work (Int.1). Products from avocado to trout were farmed and sold. However, nowhere else was this reactivation as palpable as in the coffee industry. For the first time, South Tolima welcomed visitors from abroad: "Before no foreigner could be spotted here. None. After the Accord, you would go to Planadas over the weekend and run into people from China, people from Japan, you would encounter international people doing business. And the campesino learning to do business," (Int.6). The sense of opening onto the world was also seen as conducive tourism (until recently prohibited due to the conflict). Having been effectively isolated from the rest of the country for decades, the region now had an opportunity to showcase itself to Colombia, and shake off the stigma of a guerrilla zone (Int.7). Aside from striking natural landscapes, the region embraced its tragic past by inviting tourists to Marquetalia, the birthplace of the FARC.

As a consequence of the rapidly improving economic dynamic, a small-scale real estate market developed. The residents began to build, renovate, and paint their houses. Whereas in the years prior the heavy FARC taxes deterred most people from enhancing their living conditions, now they were no longer scared of "constructing a good house," (Int.5).

Finally, the interviewees argued that the above conditions helped restore the social fabric in the community. It was now easier for people to come together, associate and organize both as a whole community and as smaller social groups (Int.11). Perhaps the single most accurate representation of the atmosphere of optimism about the future was that the municipalities of South Tolima filled with children. "In the war, they couldn't have children, so they began to have [them]," said one of the residents (Int.8). In a symbolic act profoundly imbedded in the collective memory of the residents, a military circus arrived to the area. While just a few years back it may have seemed unthinkable, children were now allowed to attend without fear (Int.3).

In sum, all the while the Santos administration was in charge, there was a sense of what some of the people interviewed referred to as "expectations of fulfillment" of the peace process (Int.4). There were reasons to believe what was agreed in Havana would be implemented, changing the trajectory of the region once and for all. The following quote best captures the high spirit of the times: "We said 'this will get done. We will change. We will reform these territories. We will put right all the damage done by the state and the guerrilla in all the conflict that we lived. We will totally transform these zones,'" (Int.3).

6.3.1.3. Power vacuums

Despite the enthusiasm pervading South Tolima in the early post-demobilization, the interviewees agreed that the departure of the FARC left a considerable power vacuum in the region. While the benefits of peace seemed to have outweighed the inconveniences of the faltering authority, the gaps in security, protection and justice were nevertheless a source of rising concern for the population. For the most part, the above gaps were left unremedied in the period studied.

First of all, there seemed to be a consensus among the people interviewed in South Tolima that the dismantling of the rebel rule led to a comparative escalation of criminality in the area, albeit predominately of the petty kind. The most frequently recurring security complaints had to do with a surge in robbery and theft post-2017. The residents spoken to for this study related instances of robbed houses and business; mugging in the streets; carjacking; stolen agricultural tools, livestock, motorcycles, coffee crops, etc. When speaking of the contrast in the community's perception of security between pre- and post-demobilization, one of the residents of South Tolima commented that the days when he would "leave their farms open and nothing [got] lost," (Int.8) came to an end.

The above tendencies led the experts to classify the situation on the ground as "criminal anarchy." In short, the concept denotes an increase in the perception of insecurity at the community level, even in spite of simultaneous reduction in violence (Valencia et al., 2017b). Understood primarily as an upsurge in unabated, yet, by and large, spontaneous common crime, the rise of criminal anarchy was, nevertheless, partly driven by a myriad of unidentified gangs, sometimes linked to larger post-paramilitary organizations (Barros & Uribe, 2019). Yet, the interviewees found it hard to pinpoint the actors behind this new security dynamic, although small-time youth gangs were the likeliest of suspects (some residents in Chaparral alluded to gangs which purportedly used touristic areas as their hunting grounds) (Int.16). With that being so, no one notorious non-state armed group was mentioned as responsible for the upward trend in crime. One of the participants even hypothesized: "What happens is that some of those who made a living of blackmail or robbery organize to engage in common delinquency. I don't believe that there are attempts at formalizing the FARC. I don' believe it. What it is are freeloaders blackmailing communities," (Int.6).

Another notable negative change was the increase in the consumption of psychoactive substances and alcohol, especially among the youth (Int.8,9). The higher demand for narcotics

led to more drug flow in the area (Int.16). At the same time, the excessive alcohol use contributed to a greater number of fights, interpersonal violence, and vandalism (Int.3,7,15). Likewise, in several of the conversations, the community members signaled a growing prostitution problem in the municipalities of South Tolima (Int.8,9). Finally, the post-demobilization was a period characterized by a sharp increase in illegal logging and timber trafficking. Here, again, before the laying of arms, the FARC had maintained a strict control of environmental practices, such as logging, fishing and hunting (Int.6,16). With the guerrilla gone, "people went back to destroying the nature," (Int.6). Aside from criminal activity per se, the interviewees pointed to a general perception of disorder. This even affected the levels of cleanliness of public spaces (which the FARC had kept clean by means of weekly community works) (Int.16).

Under the FARC control, the prospect of harsh punishment kept pervasive criminal activity at bay (Int.9). The control carried out "with a rifle on the shoulder" was "effective," (Int.6). In addition, their manuals of co-habitation constituted a simple and compelling behavioral guidance. Many of the residents believed that without these rules imposed from above—without the "phantom watchmen"—the community found itself left to its own devices (Int.8). As explained by one of the interviewees: "the community is accustomed to living under pressure, to having an authority, someone who's there to tell them what is good and what is not. When they [the FARC] leaves, it becomes a bit more complex," (Int.9).

Certainly, the effects of crime recounted above were exacerbated by ineffective justice mechanisms in post-demobilization South Tolima. Following the exit of the FARC, "[the security situation] got even worse. You can already see stealing. You can already see car-jacking. You can already see robbery. And we turn to the legal justice of the country and it doesn't offer any result," (Int.3). The feeling of powerlessness explains why it wasn't uncommon to hear that justice had functioned better—certainly in a faster and more unrelenting fashion—in the days of the guerrilla order (Int.14,17). One anecdote in particular speaks to the exasperation of the local residents with the judicial process:

> "Personally, we were in a situation of displacement towards the end of the peace process. That was very hard for us. They stole our livestock. The army arrived and burned a house and a farm, deducing that all of this belonged to the guerrillas. So we went and filed the complaints with the prosecutor's office. And to this day, they have done absolutely nothing. One day I went and told them: 'what happened with the cattle theft process?' 'Ah, it's under investigation.' Knowing that it is not being investigated.

It is at a standstill. They did nothing. While . . . if the guerrilla had been there, this would not have happened," (Int.3).

Similar examples of the perceived negligence of justice institutions were abundant. In the eyes of the community, since 2017, those members afflicted with crime were less likely to attain even a modicum of redress via the legal channels. Reporting to the prosecutor's office was, on the whole, considered a futile exercise (Int.5,8). Moreover, justice was hard to come by even when there remained little doubt regarding the perpetrator: "We were victims of a robbery, coffee was stolen from us, and we caught the thief. We filed a complaint with the prosecutor's office and nothing happened," (Int.8). Thus, there existed a proclivity to pursue justice on one's own account. This inevitably had a negative effect on the mood in the communities (Int.12).

All in all, a majority of the respondents insisted that, peace notwithstanding, certain elements of daily life of the four municipalities of South Tolima deteriorated in the immediate aftermath of the FARC's withdrawal. The sense of insecurity and frustration with precarious justice services persisted throughout the period studied. For the above reasons, the people of South Tolima felt left in a limbo (Int.11). The state of lawlessness, or criminal anarchy, as it were, led some to speculate if life hadn't, in fact, been better under the watchful eye of the guerrilla (Int.1,15). However, it should be noted that such opinions were in minority, as liberty was preferred to control (Int.11).

6.3.1.4. Illegal armed groups in post-demobilization South Tolima

In the first two years since the Front 21 left its garrisons and arrived to the ETCRs in Tolima, no major activity of non-state armed groups was recorded in the department's southern municipalities. Yet, just because they were relatively subdued didn't mean that illegal organizations were altogether absent from South Tolima. In fact, while it was difficult to discern the exact chronology of their emergence, an opinion that new groups did eventually manifest themselves in South Tolima was not uncommon. By the time the interviews were conducted—predominately in 2021—many of the respondents expressed serious concerns with what seemed like an imminent arrival of new illegal armed groups in the region. Hence, we could look back at the period studied as a form of forewarning of a process that was to unfold with more vigor after 2018.

Various groups used diverse means to announce their arrival, or the probability thereof, and direct threats at the population of South Tolima between 2017 and 2018. The non-state armed groups that surfaced in the region can be broadly divided into: the FARC dissident groups,

most evidently the *Dagoberto Ramos* mobile column, and non-state armed groups unrelated to the FARC, including unidentified post-paramilitary criminal organizations and gangs. As far as their activity is concerned, voices from South Tolima indicate that the non-state armed groups engaged in extortion, or protection taxes, threats and displacement (Int.14). Nevertheless, mostly due to insufficient manpower, none of the above non-state armed groups managed to establish permanent territorial control over the zones vacated by the FARC in early post-demobilization (González et al., 2020).

In short, the prevalent narrative coming out of South Tolima was that the arrival of new non-state armed groups in the region was a direct consequence of President Duque's refusal to honor the peace accords (Int.3). This would explain why, according to most interviews, the first conclusive evidence of their increased activity came into view here in the first months of 2019 (Int.8). Asked when the new groups emerged in the region, one of the interviewees confirmed the timeline: "Well, in 2017-2018 I think not. At this time, let's say, new conflicts arose. Well, because there was an absence of power. But it wasn't that bad. I feel," (Int.9).

Nevertheless, others believe that while they became more visible with the change of government, this isn't to say they hadn't been there under the Santos' administration already, albeit in a more discreet way (Int.4). Keeping a low profile was deemed a deliberate strategy of these comparatively small groups (Int.14). The mere persistence of power vacuums was to be enough of an incentive to swoop on South Tolima: "I believe it has been, more or less, two years since they began to retake the zone. Since there was a zone that was left vacant, they said 'well, let's go for it!'" (Int.14). Thus, there was a growing sensation that the emergence of new actors was becoming imminent with every passing month of the timeframe studied. Already towards the end of 2017 and, especially, in 2018, civil society organizations and the ombudsman office began ringing the alarm that the power vacuums left in the wake of the demobilization of the FARC were attracting new groups to South Tolima (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2019).

6.3.1.4.1. FARC dissident groups

The residents looked at the events unfolding in Cauca with unease, aware that the groups active in the neighboring region may use South Tolima as a transit corridor (Int.8,12). It was mentioned on various occasions that the armed actors with designs on South Tolima were not native to the region. Rather, they would cross over from the territories where conflict was rife (Int.15). One of these groups was the Dagoberto Ramos mobile column. The strongest of the

non-state armed groups vying for control over the department of Cauca, the Dagoberto Ramos mobile column (together with its front the *Ismael Ruiz*) comprised of former members of the 6th Front of the demobilized guerrilla. While the group's stronghold was located in northern Cauca, it was also active in Huila, Putumayo, and Caquetá ("Cómo opera," 2022). In these territories, the group was involved in extortion, drug-trafficking, trafficking of arms, and selective homicides, among other things. In addition, the Dagoberto Ramos proved capable of carrying out major military attacks on police stations reminiscent of the old FARC practices in the region (Loaiza, 2019). The Nasa indigenous tribe from Cauca became the target for violent persecution for protecting their ancestral lands from illicit cultivation. In an official communique, the dissidents explained the harassment of the indigenous guard in the following words: "We are calling upon the farmers of Valle, Cauca, Huila and Tolima to reflect because some indigenous leaders are doing the work of the police, the judicial police (SIJIN), the military, and other Colombian government agencies," (¿Por qué están matando…," 2019). The fact that the statement mentions Tolima indicates that the territory was, in fact, a sphere of interest for the Dagoberto Ramos.

Hence, whereas it may not have been a priority in the period studied, as per several sources, the organization nevertheless made its presence known in Tolima—specifically in the townships of Planadas, Bilbao and Gaitania—via pamphlets and graffiti (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2019). Graffities were one of the early signs of the potential return of illegal armed groups to South Tolima. Several instances of drawings containing indirect political messaging were reported, including some drawn in the vicinity of the ETCR "Marquetalia" in El Oso. In one of the conversations, a local journalist recalled: "As I came in a car with my camera, recording, . . . suddenly I saw a sign on the corner—a graffiti that said 'Frente Ismael Ruiz.' It was recorded on my camera and I put [it] away immediately. They [sic] gave me chills, and the first thing I thought was if I will be able to continue working," (Int.16). After the first signs with names of new armed groups appeared in the area, rumors began to spread, giving rise to collective apprehension (Int.16). People speculated about: four hundred armed men (Int.16), groups exercising control higher up in the mountains (Int.9), territorial competition over micro-trafficking routes (Int.12), etc. Yet, there was never any official confirmation of the above scenarios in the period reviewed here (Int.17).

Whereas some groups seemed to have made incursions into South Tolima, whether or not the groups actually settled in the power vacuums was an altogether different matter. The ombudsman office and researchers, for example, warned about permanent manifestation of the

two leading nationwide dissident groups[71] in the region. Indeed, as reported by the Prosecutor's Office, a presumed former FARC combatant and a commander of the *Frente Ismael Ruiz*, José Germán López, known as *Renco*, was sent into South Tolima on the orders of one of the leaders of the FARC dissidence Iván Mordisco, with a mission to organize the disjointed units in the region (Fiscalía, 2020). The slow-but-sure growth of the FARC dissident groups in the territory was corroborated by a number of interviews, with the caveat that it was likely after the period studied (Int.10,14,12).

In a pamphlet from early August 2018, issued allegedly by the Dagoberto Ramos mobile column, the signatories announced their imminent arrival in the old corridor of the Front 21 in Tolima. Expressing intention to establish an order, the document hinted at soon-to-be administered mandatory economic contributions from the community together with social cleansing campaigns against lawbreakers and consumers of substances ("Supuesto panfleto," 2018). The pamphlet generated some disquiet among the residents of the area. Nevertheless, the local authorities, both the Public Force and the then-governor, denied any activity of new non-state armed organizations in the municipalities studied (Int.4,19). Representatives of the law enforcement maintained that the groups behind the intimidation tactics were, in reality, common delinquents and small-scale criminal gangs who would pass themselves off as the dissident groups with the view to extort civilians (Tafur & Mejía, 2020).

Yet, the Dagoberto Ramos escalated its presence in the municipality of Planadas in the second semester of 2018 (Fiscalía, 2019). Any doubts were removed in May, 2019, following the arrest of six members of the group in Planadas ("Capturan a disidentes," 2019). While it is outside of the timeframe selected for this study, this information should be included inasmuch as it raises doubt on the earlier claims by the Public Force and, simultaneously, gives credence to the concerns of the Ombudsman and the community itself.

Although it was the only group to explicitly announce its intentions towards South Tolima in a public statement, the Dagoberto Ramos may not have been the sole dissident group of the FARC making an appearance in the region in the months following the dismantling of the guerrilla. Two other non-state armed actors consolidated in the Cauca department, the *Jaime Martinez* mobile column and the *Carlos Patiño* Front, may have also replicated the strategy of the former 6th Front by "crossing over to Huila and Tolima as a strategic retreat to avoid direct

[71] The dissidence of Front 1 Armando Rios under the leadership of Gentil Duarte and the Second Marquetalia led by Ivan Marquez. The Dagoberto Ramos column and the Ismael Ruiz front active in South Tolima are believed to be integrated into the structure of the above organizations.

confrontations with the Public Force in Cauca, rest and recover, as well as to forcibly recruit," (Tafur & Mejia, 2020, p.82). In a report published in September, 2018, the Ombudsman put forward a claim that it had "the knowledge of attacks on electric infrastructure, assaults on the Public Force, an increase in extortions, burning of vehicles and assassination of an ex-combatant and two sympathizers of the FARC" in the rural zones of Planadas, all presumably on account of the slow-but-steady proliferation of dissident groups in post-demobilization (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2019). What seems to corroborate the chargers was the fact that at the time, the area went through an upsurge of extortion. By the end of the period studied, the Ombudsman relayed information about a supposed FARC dissident group calling on local business owners from Gaitán and Rioblanco to proceed to the rural zones of the municipality in order to pay an illegal tax (Defensoria del Pueblo, 2019).

What's more, in the rural zone of the municipality of Chaparral, the local residents reported presence of armed men, who identified themselves as members of the FARC dissident groups, passing through the area. Finally, while the municipality of Ataco seemed largely unaffected by the presence of the dissident groups in the period studied, threatening pamphlets signed by the FARC nevertheless appeared in the area in early 2019 (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2019). The above fact may suggest a gradual trickling of these groups from the neighboring departments into Planadas and, next, to the other municipalities of South Tolima.

6.3.1.4.2. Other non-state armed groups

However, it wasn't just the FARC dissident groups that had their eyes on South Tolima in the early post-demobilization. Several of the interviewees suggested that some of the groups were of post-paramilitary strain (Int.4,5,10,19). In fact, a study carried out a year after the signing of the peace deal suggested the municipality of Planadas witnessed an expansion of the so-called GAOs (Grupos Armads Organizados), formerly known as BACRIMs (Valencia et al., 2017b). Yet, there existed little reliable intelligence with regard to the precise identity of these actors. One example of such a group, the *Águilas Negras*, typifies the conundrum. The notorious organization is believed to have been behind the threats against social leaders and human rights defenders involved in the implementation of the accords in South Tolima, yet neither the "structure, command nor special tendencies," of the group were clear[72] (González & Espitia, 2017). No major arrests of the members of the Águilas Negras were made in the period studied.

[72] This holds true for Aguilas Negras nationwide. González and Espitia (2017) suggest the name itself is used by diverse, unconnected actors across Colombia.

Thus, instead of concrete names or networks, we are left with bits and pieces of information on illegal and violent activity in the region.

Águilas Negras wasn't the only non-dissident illegal armed group to issue threats against members of the community. As South Tolima was preparing for the plebiscite, for example, first pamphlets containing threats signed by the AUC appeared in Planadas. In the same municipality, in the township of Gaitania, various leaflets signed by the Autodefensas Gaitanistas announced social cleansing campaigns to be directed at drug addicts, thieves, and former FARC collaborators in May, 2017. Later that month an assassination attempt took place against a medic who had previously been accused of having ties with the guerrilla (Garzón, 2017). Furthermore, the Tolima campesino association complained to the authorities on various occasions about the presence of an armed group in rural Planadas. According to the Ombudsman (2019), the group engaged in selective assassinations, threats and displacement. It was also allegedly "promoting the planting of illicit crops by offering money to the peasants in the region," (p.8). Also, in Planadas, the residents of the villages of La Estrella and La Primavera were purportedly subject to extortions and "territorial control activities," by a group of 8 to 10 armed men (Defensoria del Pueblo, 2019, p.18). Warnings came out of rural Chaparral, too, regarding unknown armed groups using threats against small local entrepreneurs to establish a source of financing and manpower (Defensoria del Pueblo, 2019).

In spite of the above reports, however, the respondents remained fairly grounded about the prospect of illegal armed groups settling in South Tolima. They speculated that the interest of the armed groups in the region would be limited due to comparatively scarce economic opportunities. Some of them suggested that the only armed groups with interest in controlling the territory would be those looking to confront the state militarily, since prospects for enrichment were scanty. Not only did South Tolima lacked in drugs, but there were also no major multinational companies or rich landowners to be extorted (Int.16,1).

Various of the community members insisted that, personally, they hadn't come into contact with the supposed non-state armed groups (Int.1,10). What constituted the only testament of their presence in South Tolima were the messages sent to the civilian population from a distance. The following quote throws more light on the situation: "They have wanted to instill fear or anger, let's say, in the communities, by sending these pamphlets and delivering this publicity. Because it cannot be said that they have been seen, it cannot be said that they are there, that they are in such and such region, well, not that. I would be a liar," (Int.1). Yet, other informants interviewed for this study attested to the presence of dissident groups in the area,

claiming to have seen them in person, to have been subjected to intimidation tactics (Int.7), or, at the very least, to have spoken to the victims of these groups (Int.19). The prospect of proliferation of new non-state armed groups led some of the respondents to comment: “Unfortunately, if it continues like this we will return to the previous [situation] or perhaps worse. Because previously we only had one group here, in the south of Tolima, which was the FARC. There was no ELN or anything. But now we have three,” (Int.3).

Regardless of the exact timeline, the prospect of becoming subjugated by new armed groups implanted a sense of dread in the community in South Tolima. Security issues notwithstanding, what was at stake was all the progress made in the region since the demobilization of the FARC. One of the interviewees argued that a potential strengthening of an illegal armed group would mean going back in time by 20 years. A resurgence of armed groups would “cut people's dreams short. Those who had in their imaginary, their ideology, to be able to improve their living conditions and access other better things, will no longer be able to do so. That vicious circle that was seen before is going to start,” he concluded (Int.5).

6.3.1.5. Statistics on violence and crime in South Tolima

In the following section statistical data with relevance to violence and crime in South Tolima is presented. As it will become apparent, the numbers are consistent with the experiences related in the interviews.

Figure 6 Homicides in South Tolima, 2013-2018 (Source: Colombia's National Police)

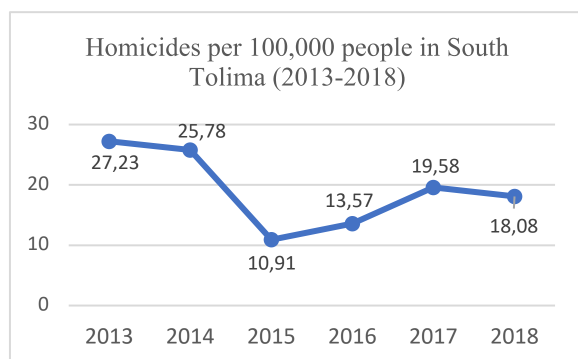


Figure 7 Displacement in South Tolima, 2013-2018 (Source: Colombian Victims Unit)

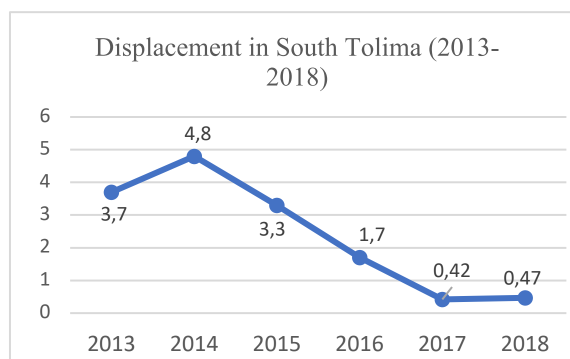
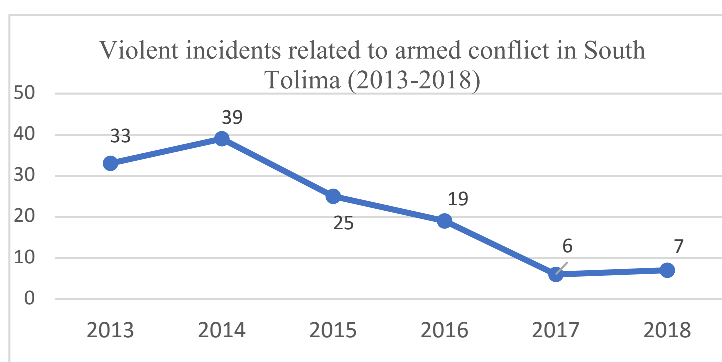


Figure 8 Violence related to armed conflict in South Tolima, 2013-2018 (Source: Own compilation based on data from Colombia's National Police and the Colombian Victims Unit)



As can be observed in the above graphics, violence generally decreased in the post-demobilization period in South Tolima. We can distinguish three phases across the six-year period under consideration. The first phase, between the years 2013-2014, coincides with the armed conflict. The on-going military operations resulted in more homicides, displacements, and violent acts related to armed conflict. Yet, even at this point of the conflict, the homicide rate was, in fact, below the national average. It was due to the progressive weakening of the FARC over the previous decade caused by heavy pressure from the military. As a consequence, the conflict largely shifted to other regions of Colombia. While depleted, the rebel group's position in certain areas (e.g., rural Planadas) was strong enough to stave off competition. What's more, it was still capable of applying guerrilla tactics, hence terrorism, the use of antipersonnel mines, and child recruitment cases remained relatively high in that period.

The second phase falls on the years 2015-2016, and reflects a transition period underscored by a ceasefire. Although the FARC declared a unilateral ceasefire as early as December 2014, the arrangement was suspended for several months in 2015 as a result of persistent hostilities. This might explain why the violence rates remained high that year. Nevertheless, some key

indicators, most notably the homicide rate, began a downward trend in 2015, and stayed on course, or at least were kept low, throughout 2016, when the bilateral ceasefire came into force.

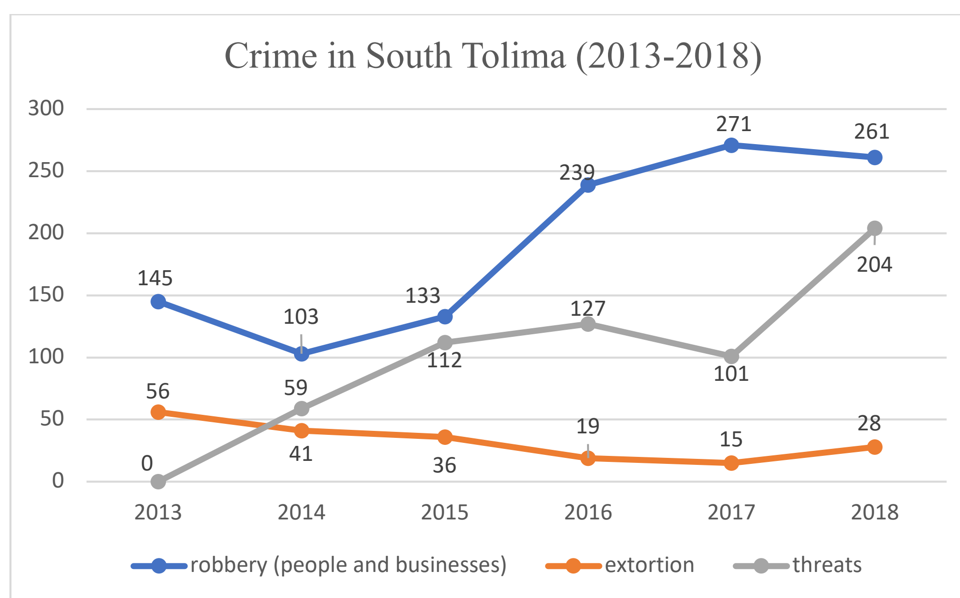
Finally, the third phase—the early post-accord—ran from 2017 to 2018. Since the Front 21 abandoned its posts and moved to the ETCRs in the beginning of 2017, the last two years of the period under scrutiny faithfully represent what is referred to in the study as post-demobilization. For the most part, the downward tendency of the transition phase continued. The end to such practices as terrorism, child recruitment and mines, in addition to a major drop in the displacement rates was interpreted as the dawn of peace in the region. Having said that, it should be noted that there was an uptick in homicides following the demobilization of the FARC in South Tolima. Whereas the rate remained much smaller than during the last two years of the open military confrontations, homicide cases were nonetheless on the rise, what could suggest something more pervasive than simply a rise in crime was unfolding in South Tolima. The above development led the Ombudsman Office to declare that "since the second half of 2018, [it] is documenting a progressive and accelerated deterioration of the humanitarian conditions of the civilian population living in the rural zones of the municipalities of Ataco, Chaparral, Planadas and Rioblanco," (p.16).

Let us now briefly breakdown the homicides in the post-demobilization period in South Tolima. When it comes to assassination of social leaders and human rights defenders, the phenomenon was extremely rare in the region in the period studied. While commonplace during the worst spells of fighting between the FARC and the paramilitary or post-paramilitary groups, in the last years of the guerrilla's hegemony in the region, between 2013 and 2016, not a single such case was registered. The first assassination of a leader in South Tolima took place in 2017 in Chaparral, when an LGBTQ activist was murdered. Another victim identified as an activist was shot the same year in the nearby Coyaima municipality ("Matan a la profesora," 2017). In 2018, a presumed human rights defender was assassinated by unknown suspects in the rural zone of Chaparral. The leader belonged to an organization of victims of the conflict involved in land restitution programs (Somos Defensores, 2019). However, the authorities dismissed the claim that the victim was a social leader and classified the killing as a byproduct of robbery, citing a missing motorcycle as evidence (Rodriguez, 2018).

No former FARC member was assassinated in South Tolima between 2017 and 2018. In May, 2017, the commanders of the now-demobilized FARC denounced the assassination of a father of one of the combatants. The victim had previously been persecuted by the paramilitaries and the military for having his children in the ranks of the rebel group. In accordance with the

statement by the former guerrilla group, the assassination was carried out by post-paramilitary groups (Unidad de Paz, 2017). In August 2018, the house belonging to two former FARC members in El Oso, nearby the ETCR, was attacked using explosives (Defensoria del Pueblo, 2019). However, the first assassination of a former guerrilla in South Tolima occurred just outside of the period elected for this study, in the beginning of 2019 (Acosta, 2019). Three other ex-FARC members were then killed in Planadas alone in the space of just a month (Tafur & Mejía, 2020, p.75). Finally, no massacre occurred in South Tolima in the period studied.

Figure 9 Crime in South Tolima, 2013-2018



While it is true that violence was by and large decreasing in the period studied, crime statistics don't seem to mirror this trend. As a matter of fact, most of the rates seem to have risen following the FARC demobilization, giving some credence to the notion of criminal anarchy explained earlier. When it comes to robbery of people and businesses, the upswing came already in 2016, and persisted at a comparatively high level in post-demobilization. As mentioned in the case of Tumaco, some of the negative trends in terms of violence and crime began increasing in 2016, and not after the demobilization. This is likely because already that year the guerrilla withdrew from the region somewhat in anticipation of the signing of the Peace Accord. The number of extortions reported was also on the rise in 2018 in comparison with the years 2016-2017, albeit the levels were not larger than in the first two years included in the statistical overview. Perhaps the most worrisome was the behavior of the criminal threat indicator. After three steady years (2015-2017), the number of cases of intimidation reported more than doubled in 2018. Indeed, as discussed in the previous section, the Ombudsman Office's account seems to confirm this trend, pointing out various cases of threats being made

either towards an individual social leader or the community as a whole. The threats took on a form of graffiti, pamphlets or direct confrontation. Aside from the already discussed cases, two more examples attract attention. One of the victims of a direct intimidation tactics was the leader of the Community Action Council from the village of Alfonso Carrillo in the Rioblanco municipality, accosted by unknown armed suspects who identified themselves as a FARC dissident group. As a result, he had to flee from his family house, but was later pursued in another location (Defensoria del Pueblo, 2019). In July, 2018, a social leader and member of the FARC political party, Oscar Tafur, was kidnapped and threatened with death by unidentified armed actors ("Integrante del Partido," 2018). He, too, was displaced as a result.

What must be pointed out, however, is that the upward trends in crime statistics in South Tolima may, at least partly, be the effect of a rise in reported cases. As explained earlier on, until its demobilization, it was commonplace for the local population to report cases of criminal conduct directly to the FARC, rather than to legitimate law-enforcement agencies. The higher numbers of robberies or threats presented by the National Police, for example, may result from the fact that the population simply had no other choice when seeking legal redress. Alternatively, it could be because the circumstances were made easier for the population to report to the police (e.g., no fear of punishment, proximity of a police station, etc.). Regardless of the reason, certain degree of caution is needed when interpreting the crime rates in South Tolima. This being said, the above figures merely confirm the narrative dominating the interviews and, as such, should be accepted as valid.

6.3.2. Stabilization

In the section below findings from the post-demobilization period regarding stabilization efforts in South Tolima are presented. It is split into three sub-sections, each corresponding to a different "stabilizing actor" i.e., the Public Force, the civilian government, and the community.

6.3.2.1. Public Force response to security challenges

In general, the interviews carried out in South Tolima reveal a cautiously positive assessment of the performance of the Public Force in the early post-demobilization period. It can be concluded that the armed forces and the police boosted their presence, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, throughout the territory. However, in spite of the favorable change, the interviewees expressed some criticism with regards to the effectiveness of the strategy employed by the Public Force to fill in the security gaps left by the defunct FARC.

First of all, the general impression of the residents of South Tolima was that there were more members of the Public Force—or they were simply more visible—in the region in post-demobilization. While the area had seen a comparatively robust Public Force presence since the days of the Uribe's presidency (most notably via the task force "Zeus"), the departure of the FARC allowed the state to penetrate into those territories that, until then, had not counted with a steady presence of the armed forces or the police (Int.13,16,17,14,18). The following passage offers more detail on the readjustments in the aftermath of the demobilization:

> "There began to be more military presence. For example [in] Santiago Perez. There were no police there, because it was taken over by the guerrilla. Bilbao, which is a small town, had no police either. Since there are police, banking entities begin to enter and the situation improves. Now you can find police on the road, not before. . . before it was impossible because the guerrillas kept an eye out to catch them, to kill them, to rob them. . . now yes, you can find them anywhere, patrolling. . . So yes, the state began to assign more people," (Int.8).

The mere sight of police motorcycles on night patrols provoked enthusiasm among the local residents as something "unthinkable," just a few years back (Int.3). What's more, the territories now hosted officers of other security agencies, such as UNIPEP[73], GAULA[74] or SIJIN[75]. Importantly, a perceived increase in such activities as arrests, monitoring, raids, etc. in the period studied, produced a notion of an enhanced functionality of the law enforcement among some of the respondents (Int.8,11,14). It was also mentioned that authorities would now regularly check in and update the community on the on-going operations. One of the respondents had learned from military officials that—due to its symbolic value—the directive from above urged the units stationed in South Tolima not to let it fall into disarray (Int.8).

The other important observation from South Tolima is that there seemed to have been a significant shift in the approach of the Public Force towards the civilian population. The military was said to have made an active effort to regain the trust of the people (Int.13,3,10). In order to achieve this, soldiers and police officers had to first shed their own prejudice not

[73] UNIPEP (La Unidad Policial Para la Edificación de la Paz), the Police Unit for the Building of Peace, is a special unit created within the framework of the peace accords "in order to assume some of the challenges that arise from the agreement," (Macias & Bayona, 2019, p.1).

[74] GAULA (Grupos de Acción Unificada por la Libertad Personal) is an elite unit of the National Police dedicated to combatting kidnapping and extortion.

[75] Directorate of Criminal Investigation and INTERPOL.

only towards the demobilized FARC combatants, but the community traditionally seen as guerrilla-friendly (Int.1,12). This novel attitude towards the residents of rural South Tolima was epitomized by the appointment of a “very kind, very charismatic and very chatty” personnel (Int.8), who “liked to go to the countryside, hold meetings with communities, demonstrate that the military isn’t only about force,” (Int.7). What’s more, with the termination of armed confrontations in the region, the military felt more inclined to serve the local populations by assisting in community work, such as fixing roads, picking coffee beans, building playgrounds, etc. Additionally, it organized activities for children and the youth, e.g., games, movie screenings, as well as the aforementioned circus shows (Int.16). Another interviewee mentioned the Public Force-sponsored health campaigns, psychological assistance, and hairdressing workshops (Int.3). The above initiatives were considered a welcome change of pace by the community (Int.13).

It should be noted that the process often referred to in the interviews as “rapprochement” (*acercamiento*) went both ways, insofar as the community could now interact with the members of the Public Force without fear of repercussions from a hegemonic non-state armed group. In parallel, the civilians spared no effort to learn to trust what had often been their oppressors in the past (Int.7). In sum, the reconciliation process was deemed fairly successful in South Tolima. Based on the conversations it can be surmised that this aspect of state strategy continued even after President Santos had stepped down.

While there might have been an improvement in the Public Force coverage across the territory of South Tolima, many of the interviewees insisted that it remained largely inadequate. This was particularly true in the vast rural zones of South Tolima (Int.12). In these isolated spaces, police patrols were rare: “The only thing they did in this part was to increase the Public Force, a group of *carabineros*, who do part of the control. But they do not leave the town, they leave a few kilometers from the towns and they are already returning,” commented a resident of rural Planadas (Int.14). Another interviewer agreed: “There was talk of a return of carabineros. But there are no rural police. This was not accomplished,” (Int.6). What’s more, even when the police maintained a degree of presence, they were simply too few and far between to exercise genuine territorial control and effectively cope with security threats (Int.16,7,9). As a result, people in deeper rural area felt unprotected (Int.6,19).

At the same time, some of the people interviewed lamented the limited scope of non-coercive activities of the Public Force, such as engineering projects, that “would bring a good image of the army,” (Int.16). As for the attitude, the transformation wasn’t as comprehensive as it was

hoped for. Especially with the rising threat level, the region became more militarized again, what, in turn, had a negative impact on the relationship between civilians and the Public Force (Int.16). An interviewer from Rioblanco, e.g., bemoaned the replacing of the peacemaking commander described above with one displaying a more “bellicose” attitude (Int.7).

The attempts of the Public Force to sweep the negative security dynamics in South Tolima under the rug gave some of the residents a pause with regards to the real motivations of the military and the police. Hints were made to potential collusion between the groups and the armed forces (Int.4,5).

6.3.2.2. Civilian government response to security challenges

The interviewees from South Tolima were largely ambivalent about the scope of the civilian component of the stabilization strategy in the power vacuums left behind by the FARC. On one hand, a majority of the informants admitted that, with the guerrilla gone, the state entered the region with more resolve and inclusiveness than ever before in the first two years of post-demobilization. On the other hand, however, the community mobilization and swelling expectations didn’t translate into palpable results. At the same time, some services (most notably, in the area of justice) that required immediate strengthening were glaringly absent from the strategy.

Since illicit crops cultivation is virtually non-existent in today’s South Tolima, the PNIS didn’t apply here as a form of stabilization policy (Int.4). Therefore, the centerpiece of the institutional response in the region were the PDETs. In many of the conversations held in the region, the subjects spoke of the program with fondness. For the areas of South Tolima historically denoted as “red zones” to attract this level of attention on the part of the government was unprecedented. That the PDETs relied on broad involvement of the communities in the decision-making processes was a source of great satisfaction (Int.3,6,7,17). Throughout 2017 and 2018, the PDETs were at the consultation stage. The output of the negotiations with representatives of the local populace was a flurry of proposals of action plans and recommendations (Int.1).

The above was symptomatic of the implementation period under President Santos in South Tolima. To put it briefly, in the first two years of post-accord, the Colombian government seemed to have prioritized the following two tasks: to identify the necessities of the zones most heavily affected by the conflict; and to make the Peace Accord intelligible to the participating communities (Int.10). Hence, rather than implementing concrete development projects, this stage of post-demobilization was more of an induction process, whereby the authorities would

capacitate civil society representatives from the region and mold them into stakeholders of peace. Likewise, by speaking to the communities, the authorities would arrive at a diagnosis as to what is really needed in the territory (Int.17). South Tolima was chosen for a pilot project, meaning the methodology was implemented here early relative to the other PDET regions (Int.11). One of the interviewees summed up this process:

> "They'd come and say: 'Look, we're going to do this. Come on, we are conforming the PDETs.' . . . The state or institutionalism was seen to be present in this way. Because in itself, the state could not [say]: 'Well, we are going to implement, we are going to build the highway from Herrera to Rioblanco.' No. They came to do inductions, to promulgate [Peace Accord][76], to see what the communities wanted, what their priorities were, what was less of a priority, etc." (Int.3).

The peace education projects and training of leaders within the context of the PDETs during the Santos administration became interpreted by some of the South Tolima residents as a praiseworthy social investment (Int.9). What's more, diverse social groups mobilized around the PDET activities, fostering a broader dialogue within the community (Int.1). All in all, at least at first, the territorial approach helped build confidence in the state and the peace process (Int.6,17).

However, with the content of the PDET under negotiation throughout the period studied, few tangible effects were observed on the ground in the meantime. For this reason, the procedure was viewed as slow (Int.6,17,19). The high expectations stimulated by the peace process early on ran into a slew of constraints, from intricate bureaucracy (Int.10), to the lack of funding (Int.14), to corruption (Int.1,11,16,19), albeit the true disappointment hadn't set in until the election of Duque (Int.4,10,14). The result was a sense among the interviewees that the exercise was almost entirely rhetorical—the institutions came to South Tolima to stage "talks" and "meetings" that were never followed up by any meaningful action (Int.1,6,19). An example of a concrete investment the population of the region really wished to see was the improvement of the road system. Nevertheless, not enough short-term investment in road-building was realized in the first two years, and the campesino remained as isolated as ever (Int.9). Yet, the shortage of roads wasn't the only hindrance stifling the region. What left much to be desired were themes of commercialization of agricultural products (most importantly, getting produce

[76] In the context of the PDETs, the Spanish verb "socializar" could be roughly translated into "promulgate" or "promote" as in: promote/make familiar the program among wide segments of the society.

onto the market via construction of regional distribution centers) (Int.5,15), education (initiatives for the youth) (Int.7), environmental protection (Int.17), etc. One of the informants expressed his disillusionment:

> "You talk to a mayor from there, from the PDET, and he says "they fooled us." And the people are worse off . . . There is talk that it will arrive, that it will arrive, but it does not arrive. Solutions do not arrive. For example, people hoped that there was a chance that tertiary roads would be fixed for them. It has not been possible. [They hoped] That there would be more possibilities in productive projects. It has not been possible . . .. [They hoped] That health processes and health services be improved. Education. It has not been possible," (Int.17).

Another keystone of the peace accord that many in South Tolima pinned their hopes on was the comprehensive rural reform (Int.1). The first point of the agreement, designed to transform Colombia's agrarian landscape by making access to land more equitable, was one of the pivotal features of the Peace Accord from the perspective of the demobilizing guerrillas. The languishing implementation of the first article of the Accord complicated the reintegration process from the get-go, as many ex-combatants saw agriculture as their best bet to make a living after laying down arms (Int.6,12,14). While the land reform was always going to a lengthy process, the government struggled to deliver on even the more straightforward promises given to the guerrilla in Havana. A few of the subjects corroborated the complaints made by combatants regarding the poor living conditions in the ETCR in El Oso (Int.9,11).

Having said that, the most frequently recurring criticism throughout the interviews had to do with the state response in the area of justice. The residents of South Tolima shared the opinion that not nearly enough had been done with respect to access to justice in the territory in post-demobilization. "We still have a lot to do, because behind security there should be a justice process, and it is something that is falling short. We don't have prosecutors, nor judges . . .. We don't have the totality of the judicial scheme, which the state should have in . . . South Tolima," an interviewer explained (Int.17).

According to the interviews, concrete solutions had been proposed. Several of the subjects mentioned that the municipalities of South Tolima petitioned for a House of Justice (*Casa de Justicia*[77]) to be established in the region in hope that it would make justice services more

[77] The Houses of Justice are „multiagency venues that provide information on rights, legal advice, and conflict resolution services," (Varela et al., 2014, p.175).

readily available to the rural populations (Int.3,7). The following quote explains what occurred next:

> "We had asked in the PDET to . . . install justice, install courts in the populated centers, such as townships . . . so that it would be closer to the population. So that one doesn't have to get in a car, and drive three hours to get to justice, for example. So that's what we wanted. That the Houses of Justice be established in the townships, to settle problems, to carry out, as they say, these mediations, to reconcile among the inhabitants, and immediately. And near. But no, none of that has been seen. Nothing, nothing," (Int.3).

One of the interviewees was under the impression that the only justice mechanism to accompany the peace process was the Truth Commission, which had little to do with the day-to-day functioning of the justice system in the conflict-affected territories (Int.9). Meanwhile, the backlog of work for the local prosecutor's office meant that many cases took long to be processed or had to be dropped altogether due to the pre-trial detention period running out, lack of evidence or simply because the victim lost faith in the procedures along the way (Int.7). In short, the sensation among the locals was that "justice doesn't work," in South Tolima (Int.3). As a result, several of the respondents maintained that the community no longer believed in the justice system (Int.10). Others rang the alarm that poor justice services engendered perfect conditions for prospective non-state armed groups to "act and commit crimes," (Int.10).

In way of conclusion, based on the interviews, it can be argued that in the two years following the FARC demobilization, the Colombian state failed to effectively introduce civilian institutions in the power vacuums in South Tolima (Int.9,10,14). What's more, the assessment of the PDET, the leading tool to "bring the state to the territory," was a disputed one. There was no shortage of voices throwing doubt on the methodology employed. Even the supposed incisiveness of the initiative was questioned as a mirage, as seen in the following quote: "So the intelligent and the wise in Bogotá built the entire PDET and left the people isolated. . . they are strategies that are assembled from an office . . . any strategy that they want to implement is not going to work because they don't know the territories, they don't know the communities," (Int.10). The above shortcomings cost state institutions some of the credibility acquired earlier on among the communities of South Tolima (Int.9).

6.3.2.3. Community response to security challenges

The concluding section touches upon the last major theme present throughout the interviews: the role of the local community in stabilizing the post-demobilization South Tolima. A majority of the subjects ascribed much of the positive transformation of the territory to the resilience of the community. According to the testimonies, the civil society of came together to defend peace in line with their own interpretation of the word.

When asked to what South Tolima owed the relatively peaceful trajectory in post-demobilization, many of the interviewees pointed to the sense of fatigue with the fifty years of war shared by the population (Int.17,6). The sheer length and intensity of the conflict in the region strengthened the resolve of the inhabitants to never get dragged down the path of violence again (Int.1). It wasn't the first time the community of South Tolima showed its adroitness to construct peace from the bottom up. To illustrate the desire for peace and capacity for reconciliation, the informants brought up the example of the 1996 peace process between the Nasa indigenous community and the FARC, orchestrated almost independently of the state (Int.10). Thus, there had existed a tradition of grassroots peace-building in the midst of an armed conflict in South Tolima.

On the occasion of the 2016 peace process, the community took advantage of the newly opened space for mobilization by affiliating, co-operating and communicating on a larger scale (Int.6). Additionally, it made good use of the different fora to demand that the state institutions protect and champion the region (Int.1). However, rather than waiting for the state to boost its capacities on the ground, the community took it upon itself to organize (Int.5,16). As a result, the diverse population of South Tolima became invigorated to take action in the areas of business, culture, or the media (Int.11). As one local journalist put it: "We didn't… organize the way the state ordered us to. We did it by means of small groups of friends, the collectivization and the 'let's do it!' [attitude]," (Int.16).

The interviewees suggested that, in the absence of the guerrilla, the community learned how to solve the issues that arise in post-demobilization without an external interference (Int.1,11). An important example was the way in which the residents handled the reconciliation process with the former FARC combatants. By virtue of the community's amenable attitude, the reincorporated guerrillas stayed in the territory and actively participated in the life of the society (Int.1,8).

Much of the self-organizing came via associations, predominately agricultural ones. The burgeoning coffee industry proved instrumental for the heightened social mobilization in South Tolima. As highlighted by the former governor of Tolima: “coffee is the glue, because it keeps people occupied. [Thanks to coffee] They learned to self-organize and speak about the market,” (Int.6). As a case in point, another subject recounted the coming together of coffee producers, the indigenous community and the ex-FARC guerrillas to create an original coffee brand. The name, “The Third Agreement,” (*El Tercer Acuerdo*) pays homage to the two historical peace agreements: the aforementioned 1996 accord between the FARC and the Nasa tribe, and the 2016 Peace Accords, while at the same time elevating the ongoing civil society consolidation to a status of an altogether separate, “third” peace agreement in South Tolima (Int.8). Nevertheless, coffee wasn’t the only economic activity that propelled bottom-up peacebuilding. Other interviewees mentioned community-based tourism, cultivation of green products, and fishery, as examples of locally founded economic ventures that generate employment in the region (Int.5,16).

Finally, the South Tolima community lent a helping hand to state institutions in managing post-demobilization security. Following the dismantling of the rebel order, the community felt encouraged to report illegal activity to the authority, often using new technologies to this purpose (Int.5). In the quote below, one of the interviewees described how the citizens participated in the stabilization process from below:

> “Risk prevention. It’s what we do. That contributes a lot. Because we say: ‘Well, we know that the guerrillas have moved this way. That this so-and-so was displaced. Why did they displace him?’ So, if this mapping is done, and this management is done, it does not stay here, it goes to the department, where they investigate it.… Here they have already arrested several [suspects] thanks to these guerrilla monitoring reports. So that helps. Why? Because the very people who love our municipality, who love peace, contribute to that,” (Int.14).

Yet, one of the subjects warned that while it was a bastion of peacebuilding in the early post-demobilization, the community may eventually be left with no choice but to yield to a non-state armed group if the circumstances force them to, just as was the case with the FARC in the past. Should there be no perceivable progress or should the state find no answer to criminal anarchy escalating in the region, the sense of desperation may lead the South Tolima population, especially the rural youth, into the hand of armed actors (Int.3). Alternatively, it

could prompt the communities to opt for more perverse forms of self-organization in the tradition of paramilitarism (Int.11).

6.4. Discussion of findings

In the last section of the second case study, a discussion of the above results is presented. The section has two parts corresponding to each of the two research questions. In the first part, the findings pertaining to the security dynamics in South Tolima in post-demobilization are discussed with references to literature on rebel governance. In the second part, results on stabilization in South Tolima in the first two years after the FARC's demobilization are discussed and placed against the background of the literature on stabilization reviewed earlier in the study.

6.4.1. Security dynamics

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that, upon the FARC's relocation to the transition camps in early 2017, South Tolima experienced a considerable reduction of violence related to the armed conflict. On the surface level, the mere absence of protracted combat between the state and the rebel group made peace palpable here. What's more, in contrast to the majority of post-FARC territories in Colombia, no significant activity by other illegal armed groups was recorded in the region during the period in question (Crisis Group, 2017). Be that as it may, the story of South Tolima in post-demobilization isn't unequivocally positive.

An argument can be made that the early implementation of the peace accord didn't ameliorate the security situation as much as the above factors would suggest. What characterized the early post-demobilization period in South Tolima was a sense of disorder; a phenomenon referred to in Colombia as criminal anarchy (Trejos, 2020). Such state of events was a direct consequence of the dissolution of the social and political order maintained by the FARC in the region. To make matters worse, as time progressed, more and more signs pointed towards the eventual arrival of illegal armed groups interested in filling in the vast power vacuum left by the demobilized guerrilla.

First, let's shed more light on the phenomenon of "criminal anarchy," used to label the security dynamics in South Tolima between 2017-2018. Following the departure of the FARC, the authority that had previously overseen the social, economic, and political realms was effectively dismantled from one day to the next. While it had fluctuated over time, the variation of governance installed by the Front 21 in South Tolima was generally highly institutionalized (Weinstein, 2007), effective—in Mampilly's (2011) understanding of the word—and

symbiotic (Zahar, 2001). Thus, it was closer to what Arjona (2017) refers to "rebelocracy" or an order whereby a non-state armed group intervenes in matters beyond public order and taxation.

Since the FARC had mostly operated in the region on what the rebel governance scholars label "a long time horizon", it made an active effort to manage its relationship with the civilian population beyond the use of violence. As a result, it could count with some cooperation from the locals. Even in spite of the acts of predation and violence—which were not uncommon, especially towards the end of its rule in South Tolima—the group didn't experience episodes of strong resistance from the civilians. As such, it maintained a relatively steady access to a support system in territories it controlled (Wood, 2010). Without a doubt, the above networks of support contributed positively to its longevity in the area, especially in times of heavy pressure from the military during the Álvaro Uribe presidency.

The main reason why the guerrilla preserved a degree of legitimacy among the population was that it provided an array of benefits that the scholars list as conducive to a more effective rebel governance. By upholding the monopoly on violence and enforcing certain rules of conduct, the FARC was capable of keeping high levels of instability at bay, offering relative security and protection to the populations. Adding to this was the formidable system of justice, known simply as Juzgado 21, which the local residents perceived as efficacious, particularly in comparison to the formal judicial process on offer. Finally, the FARC was capable of providing other benefits, including healthcare, environmental protection, infrastructure projects, community work, etc. It could be argued that it also allowed space for some civilian governance via its relationship with the local community councils (JACs) (Weinstein, 2007)

All the above meant that in the absence of the FARC, a power vacuum was inevitable. What's more, the power vacuum was proportional to the extent of the order the guerrilla had mounted in South Tolima over the prior fifty years. The gaps in security, public order and justice—until 2017, for better or worse, tentatively filled by the rebel group—were on full display in post-demobilization South Tolima. The upward trend in crime evidenced by the numbers in the above charts and the accounts collected in this study, are a testament to the persistent lawlessness in the region. While it is difficult to establish a direct correlation, let's not forget that the number of homicides in 2017 and 2018 was also slightly up from the period before the demobilization.

On the whole, as alluded to before, the emergence of a power vacuum as a result of the FARC's demobilization had been forecasted in South Tolima. As much as it generated high expectations, from the beginning, the removal of the hitherto authority induced a sense of unease in the community, best reflected by the plea coming out of the region: "Who will protect us now?" (Int.11). As seen in the interviews, the population of the region received no definitive answer to the question over the course of the first two years of post-demobilization. Whereas residents of the more urban sectors seemed to have more confidence in the state's protective services (which for the most part had come before the post-demobilization), in the peripheral areas of South Tolima there lingered a strong sense that the local community went largely unprotected. While they may have no longer been subjected to the kind of violence associated with the armed conflict, the population of South Tolima was not altogether free from fear. The upsurge in what can be described as disorderly conduct, such as excessive intoxication, fights or prostitution, previously kept at bay by the Front 21, contributed to the perception of anarchy, as did deforestation and littering in public spaces. In this regard, it can be suggested that the vacuum left by the FARC also applied to the normative, or even the moral, sphere of the community life in South Tolima.

Nevertheless, nowhere was the vacuum in South Tolima as clear-cut as in the realm of justice. Whereas with the FARC still there, the prospect of a harsh punishment via quick and arbitrary trial under the auspices of the guerrilla, prevented bouts of criminal conduct, in post-demobilization the prevailing atmosphere of impunity drove more people to crime. Conflict adjudication, another pillar of the FARC governance, was also discontinued with a negative net effect on security in the region. Hence, members of the community embroiled in conflict could no longer refer the case to an authority capable of enforcing the law. Although to speak of vigilante violence would be an overstatement, the conditions were certainly ripe for extrajudicial reprisals. It wasn't unusual for the interviewees to look back wistfully at the days of the FARC and its justice system, even if they were otherwise content with the guerrilla's exit from the territory.

However, not all criminality in post-demobilization South Tolima was necessarily "anarchic." By shrugging off the numbers and testaments documenting the rise in crime as a sparse and uncoordinated phenomenon, regional authorities may have overlooked the latent relationship between crime statistics and the increasing infiltration of South Tolima by non-state armed groups originating from the neighboring departments (Tafur & Mejia, 2020).

While the presence of factors of violence was scant and the presumed lack of civilian protection was not put to a serious test in South Tolima, some reorganization of non-state armed groups nevertheless did occur, particularly in deep rural territories closer to the border with the neighboring departments.

Thinking in conventional terms, the relative dearth of illicit economies in the region crossed South Tolima off the priority list for the remaining non-state armed groups. There is no doubt that reduced coca cultivation and average illegal mining potential to a large extent explain why the activity of the non-state armed groups was comparatively low in the region. However, considering the ever-so-steady penetration into the old FARC-controlled zones in South Tolima, especially that of the Cauca-native dissident groups, we see that the four municipalities remained liable to being recaptured further down the line in post-demobilization. Three factors explain why South Tolima wasn't "out of the woods" just yet once the FARC laid down their arms.

First of all, the characteristic that eventually brought South Tolima into the sphere of interests of illegal armed groups was its geostrategic location. This was especially the case for the amalgamating FARC dissident groups, *Comando Coordinado de Occidente* and the Second Marquetalia, who saw South Tolima as a bridge connecting their spheres of influence in the Orinoquía natural region in the east of the country on the border with Brazil and Venezuela, and the westernmost Pacific coast (Defensoría del Pueblo, 2022). By securing the corridor in Tolima, the two principal branches could advance their ultimate goal: reunification of the scattered splinter groups into a nationwide dissident project mirroring the FARC itself. It should be noted that, for the dissident groups, the significance of the territory extended beyond the strategic. Being the historical "cradle of the FARC," seizing South Tolima would be highly symbolic.

Furthermore, the region's strategic placement on the map was likely to attract interest from other non-state armed groups, especially those involved in drug trafficking. As pointed out by one of the subjects, South Tolima, and Rioblanco in particular, constituted a natural passage from one of Colombia's foremost drug-producing regions, the Cauca department, to the key port on the Pacific coast in Buenaventura (Int.19). This brings us to the second factor helping to account for the eventual arrival of illegal armed groups. To put it short, the criminal activity in neighboring departments—most notably northern Cauca, but also western Huila and south-eastern Valle del Cauca—had a kind of "spillover effect" in South Tolima. Organizations operating in these departments used the southern edge of Tolima as rearguards offering shelter

and resources. They trickled into the adjacent region to hide from the law enforcement agencies and regroup.

The third pull factor is admittedly more speculative. It has to do with a kind of cost-effectiveness analysis carried out by non-state armed actors before venturing into new territories. Let's imagine a territory that is not effectively controlled by neither the state nor any other powerful actor. A non-state armed group may consider the taking over of such a territory simply because the benefits (of which there are many regardless if there are illicit economies or not) outweigh the costs. Differently put, persistent power vacuums may offer non-state armed actors a relatively cost-effective way of establishing a new sphere of influence, refuge or transport corridor, even if the territory is otherwise not a priority. What's more, since, as narrated by the interviewees, the vacuums generated by the FARC demobilization persisted, whereby certain functions were left unaccommodated, a group could have made itself useful by appropriating these functions in South Tolima. The best example of that is crime. In curbing criminal anarchy and offering protection to the population, these groups may have easily found their raison d'être in the region.

Based on the data on the activity of non-state armed groups, we can speculate that in South Tolima the process of resurgence of governance was at an embryonic stage. This phase precedes either territorial competition or consolidation in the sense usually understood by scholars. We can tentatively refer to it as "reconnaissance stage." During this stage, a group possesses little information with regards to the circumstances on the ground in a given region. It doesn't have enough data to carry out the cost-effectiveness analysis. Thus, it ventures into a given territory to ascertain its strategic features, locate sources of financing or announce its arrival in the future. It can also use the territory to temporarily retreat from another region. At this point in its evolution, a non-state armed group generally opts not to engage with civilians in a meaningful way and not to employ indiscriminate violence.

According to the interviews, the groups making their appearance in South Tolima preferred to keep a low profile in order to avoid interest from the Public Forces for the time being. This said, in their messaging, the groups alluded to a notion of reconstruction of a rebel order by pronouncing their intention of social cleansing and taxation. What's more, they used extortion and intimidation as an early mechanism of control. However, since the time horizon of the groups present in South Tolima was short, implementing any complex mechanisms of governance was beyond the scope of these actors. Clearly, groups such as the Daboberto Ramos column didn't exercise proper territorial control, and didn't convert into, in the words of Olson

(1993), stationary bandits in the region. As such, their access to civilian population was limited. That's why, some degree of violence was reportedly applied in fringe zones, where the groups looked to establish outposts in the South Tolima. In this sense, Mampilly's (2011) assumption that all "non-state armed groups begin as violent entities" applies at what is called here the reconnaissance stage (p.238).

As suggested by the numbers, the most commonly used instrument of intimidation were criminal threats. This was done principally from the distance. The function of threats was to implant a sense of fear in the community and weaken its capacity for resistance. In short, the aim of the violent behavior at this early evolutionary stage in a given territory was to pave way for the potential arrival of the group in the future. As evidenced by the interviews, this tactic wasn't entirely out of whack inasmuch as the collective trauma in the community persisted and threats somewhat undermined the confidence of the population.

6.4.2. Stabilization

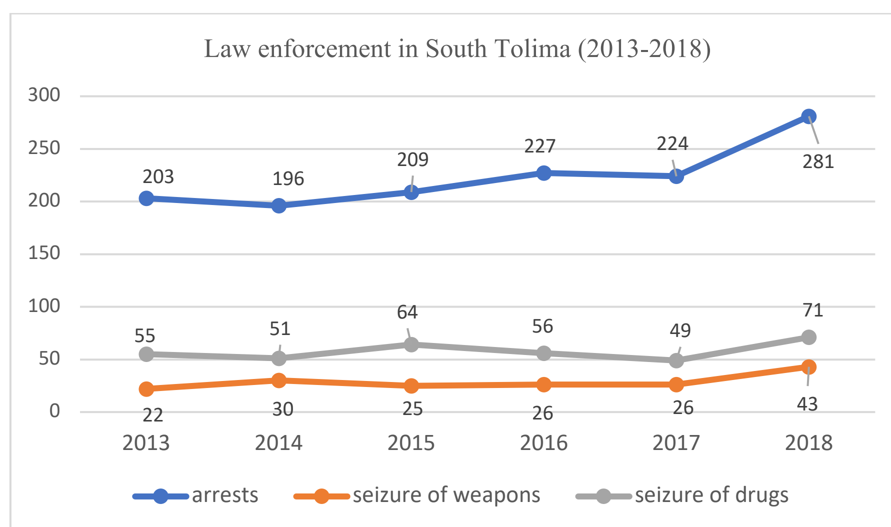
It is not beyond question that the relative lack of prominence of non-state armed groups in South Tolima in post-demobilization was down, at least in part, to the stabilization efforts by the Colombian government.

Let's start by looking at the hard security component of the strategy. According to the interviewees, there was a clear sense that more Public Force was deployed in the area in the aftermath of the FARC's exit. Aside from the task force "Zeus" —now repurposed to promote stabilization—there arrived new agents from various security agencies. Additionally, new police stations in townships that had previously been deprived of any presence of the law enforcement were established. Police officers were also spotted carrying out activities that before 2017 would have been unfeasible due to the risk related to guerrilla presence, such as patrolling the roads at night. Furthermore, a special strategic unit dedicated specifically to assisting in the implementation of the peace accords, the UNIPEP, was deployed. The above proliferation of the forces of law and order should be considered advantageous since, as discussed in the literature chapter, the stabilization paradigm posits physical territorial control as a mean to containing the so-called spoiling actors. Furthermore, granting more prominence to the police espoused what stabilization refers to as a transition towards a more civilian-led management of security.

The hypothesis that the Public Force improved its coverage and its effectiveness in the period studied finds some support in the number of arrests, seizures of weapons, as well as seizures

of narcotics from the four municipalities analyzed. Particularly in 2018, the number increased considerably, likely in response to the upswing in crime in the same year. Additionally, the Public Force boasted of some high-profile captures in Tolima[78], which may have prevented the settlement of new illegal armed groups in the more neuralgic areas. In other words, the arrests would have been responsible for what is referred to in stabilization literature as the "elimination of spoilers" arriving to South Tolima.

Figure 10 Law enforcement in South Tolima, 2013-2018 (Source: Own compilation based on data from Colombia's National Police)



On a final note, regarding the positive aspect of the security component, the interviews conducted in South Tolima suggest that not only did the Public Force become more visible, but it showed some willingness to revamp its public image the two first years of post-demobilization. The respondents described a rapprochement between the officers of the law and the civilian population via diverse initiatives, such as participation in communal work, organization of cultural events, activities for children, etc. According to the respondents, this novel approach aided reconciliation and allowed both sides to build confidence, familiarity and trust. In other words, the police and the military revisited the old hearts and minds toolkit that constitutes an integral part of the stabilization strategy.

It should be emphasized that rather than a complete overhaul of strategy, the Public Force continued along the path drawn up in the counterinsurgency blueprint by President Uribe's Democratic Security in South Tolima over the past 10-15 years. Nevertheless, the approach

[78] The Public Force's most resounding success in terms of arrests were those of alias *Guadalupe*, long affiliated with the ELN ("Quinta brigada," 2016), as well as two supposed leaders of the FARC dissident groups, alias Zarco and alias Renco (Fiscalia, 2020).

from the Uribe era underwent a positive evolution, and, as far as this study is concerned, there were no cases of human rights abuses by members of the Public Force in post-demobilization.

Yet, in spite of some promising adjustments, to many of the interviewees the security component of the strategy felt rather underwhelming. This is all the more worrying considering that—in the absence of an immediate filling of power vacuums by other non-state armed groups—the task of stabilizing South Tolima may have seemed comparatively straightforward. As recounted above, the violent actors present in the region were few and far between, and non among them posed a serious threat or engaged in open hostilities with the military in the early post-demobilization. Even in spite of these favorable circumstances, the Public Force was not capable of securing a truly effective territorial control as recommended by stabilization advocates. The piecemeal establishment of new police stations, for example, was deemed nowhere near the response needed in a territory suffering from such long historical absence of law enforcement. Overall, the much-needed bona fide rural police never materialized. As a consequence, the residents of the far-flung corners of South Tolima continued to feel unprotected.

Still, perhaps the greatest flaw of Colombia's approach to stabilization of the post-demobilization zones was a weak short-term response to the age-long crisis of the criminal justice system. South Tolima provides a perfect illustration of the state's lack of commitment to the issue. As discussed in detail above, the inadequacy of the formal judicial system and the competitive edge of the FARC's justice services meant that the population of the region was likely to experience an important deficit of redress and conflict resolution mechanisms once the guerrilla demobilized. Indeed, the deficit proved so significant that it facilitated the surge of "criminal anarchy" in the region. The most common complaint among the respondent in this regard had to do with the access of the judicial services. Located almost exclusively in the urban center of Chaparral, the few available resources were hardly accessible to many community members from the more remote areas. In spite of having repeatedly requested for Houses of Justice to be installed in a greater number of municipalities, the community's pleas fell on deaf ears. What's more, the state seemed to have no answer to the chronic understaffing in judicial institutions in post-demobilization zones, particularly as concerns the prosecutors and judges. The backlog of cases that came as a result created a growing sense of impunity in South Tolima. In sum, contrary to the recommendations of Chesterman (2004), the Colombian government failed to prioritize justice issues in South Tolima. The stabilization strategy in the region made no effort to emulate the UN's aforementioned solutions in the area of justice in

the DRC, such as the mobile courts (Zerrougi, 2018). Thus, it missed an opportunity to improve security on the ground and regain legitimacy in the eyes of the population of South Tolima.

When it comes to development, the state response in South Tolima was not nearly as rapid or as comprehensive as required by the circumstances on the ground. In a territory that had seen very little investment from the central government over the years due to its perpetual "red zone" status, it was expedient that the state demonstrated some peace dividends (i.e., a good-will gesture of breaking with the past) to the population of the region (Zyck & Muggah, 2015). Short-term delivery of basic services or investments in highly visible infrastructure could have helped kick-start a long-term transformation of South Tolima. Unfortunately, such initiatives were rare in the period studied. Aside from odd military-led public works mentioned by the interviewees (e.g., building a playground or fixing roads), there were no significant transformative short-term projects to speak of in South Tolima[79]. The delivery of basic services was also left wanting, with the only notable exception in the form of the health brigades organized by the military.

The most frequently manifested grievance in the region had to do with construction of roads. Having been isolated for so long, both in the figurative and literal sense of the word, investment in better road infrastructure seemed like the right place to start the transformation of the region. Nevertheless, the interviewees complained that the government didn't appreciate the necessity to reconnect the South Tolima with the rest of the country. Another investment that would have allowed the people of South Tolima "to resume their livelihoods," as recommended by the stabilization guidelines, would have been a municipal distribution center for the goods harvested in the vicinity, as the campesino population complained about not having means to bring their produce to the market (UK Stabilisation Unit, 2018). Likewise, the government didn't put enough emphasis on improving the quality of the education sector. Based on the interviews carried out in South Tolima, nothing in the vein of the quick-impact projects, described in the literature chapter, came to be observed in post-demobilization, neither from the Public Force nor the civilian government. In sum, the socio-economic realities remained adverse, chipping away at the high expectations that arose with the end of conflict.

[79] What should be noted is that the PDETs were full of developmental projects to be implemented over the next years in South Tolima. Nevertheless, they were still in the process of deliberation and approval in the first two years after the FARC demobilized.

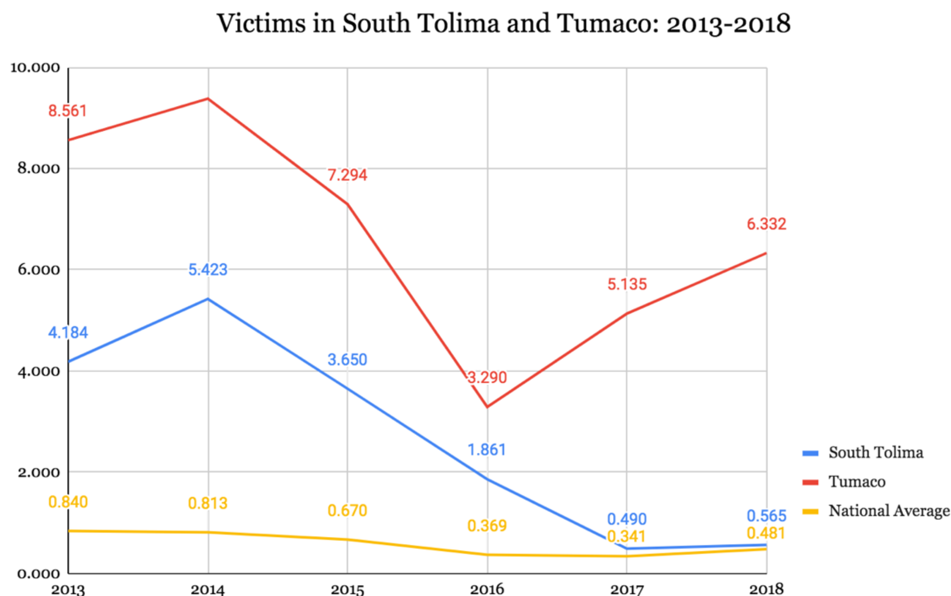
Finally, the PDETs represented a worthwhile endeavor as far as the governance element of the stabilization package is concerned. There is no denying that the formula adopted by the project allowed the community of South Tolima to feel that their voice was being listened to for the first time in decades (if not ever). As evidenced throughout this case study, the perception of the PDETs was largely positive over the course of the first two years of post-demobilization, as the local population found a channel to deliberate its vision for the future of the region. Certainly, the one aspect of the PDETs applied on a large-scale was the capacitation and training of civil society leaders who were expected to lead the renewal of the institutional makeup of the region (Lederach, 1995; Zyck & Muggah, 2015). Thus, nationwide consultation engendered a step towards more inclusive, more accountable and more transparent governance. The peace education projects on the other hand—in full-swing in the period studied—stimulated one of the desired effects of stabilization: the sense of ownership at community level (Prendergast & Plumb, 2002). It could even be argued that the introduction of the PDET program helped bolster the community's response to the security challenges in post-demobilization.

Nevertheless, some major ills of the local governance, symptomatic to post-conflict scenarios, persisted. Corruption, slow procedures and the lack of funding were all named by the interviewees as a hindrance to the development of the region. With that said, it should be stressed that the central government dedicated thought and resources to building up social capital. In South Tolima it encountered the right circumstances and a willing target population. Regrettably, due to worsening security, change of administration, and continuous scarcity of funding, the exercise in more bottom-up stabilization didn't translate into much palpable change of the kind envisioned by the community. As a result, as warned in the literature on stabilization, the unfulfilled promises produced new grievances and political disaffection (UK Stabilisation Unit, 2018).

Chapter 7 Conclusions

In outline, based on the two case studies analyzed in this thesis, it can be concluded that the demobilization of the governing non-state armed actor, the FARC, had a significant and heterogenous short-term impact on security in Tumaco and South Tolima. In fact, Tumaco and South Tolima were confirmed to be extreme cases occupying the two farthest ends of the post-demobilization security spectrum in Colombia. Whereas in Tumaco the conflict sharpened after 2017, in South Tolima the demobilization of the FARC ushered in peace. In other words, whilst the first two years of post-demobilization in South Tolima were largely equivalent to post-conflict, in Tumaco the conflict didn't end, but rather entered a new phase and transformed. Yet, even between the two polar opposites some rough parallels can be drawn.

Figure 11 Victims in South Tolima and Tumaco, 2013-2018 (Source: Own compilation based on data from the Colombian Victims Unit)



In short, an argument can be made that South Tolima represented the "best-case scenario" among all post-demobilization zones in the country. In the two years following the demobilization of the FARC, the security situation in the region generally improved in comparison to the pre-demobilization period. The results provide evidence that post-demobilization brought about a period of tangible peace in the four municipalities that make up South Tolima. The arrival of peace manifested itself in a number of ways. First of all, the clashes between the FARC and the Public Force, which had conditioned the life in the region for nearly fifty years, terminated indefinitely. With the end to hostilities, there came a reduction

in the instances of violence related to armed conflict. As confirmed by of the above graphic, the number of victims declined on the whole. Just as important to the perception of peace was the resumption of normal life in the region. According to the interviews, peace in South Tolima entailed the following developments: the return of the displaced population, improvement of mobility, restarting of commercial activity, investment from abroad, tourism, etc. Overall, there was a positive perception of change in the community in South Tolima in early post-demobilization.

What the results also demonstrate is that there was no immediate large-scale filling of the power vacuums created by the departure of the FARC in South Tolima. Contrary to what some residents feared, no major post-paramilitary group settled in the region in the timeframe analyzed. Likewise, there were no dissident groups emerging out of the South Tolima-native Front 21 of the guerrilla. Therefore, the case study proves that, under certain circumstances (discussed in more detail below), post-demobilization power vacuums aren't always subject to immediate territorial competition or consolidation by other non-state armed groups. In consequence, post-demobilization may simply result in peace.

Yet, in spite of the undeniable positive short-term implications of the FARC demobilization, the results raise a few questions about the seeming success story of South Tolima. The case study documents some early attempts by non-state armed group at moving into spaces left by the demobilized guerrilla. Admittedly, these efforts were relatively timid, and have been described here as a "reconnaissance," rather than full-blown takeover. Yet, the preliminary attempts at establishing control in South Tolima by non-state armed groups were reflected by the rising number of threats. While they might have been largely incidental and had no major bearing on security at large in the period studied, the recurrent incursions by outsider non-state armed groups nonetheless indicated a possibility that the region could be liable to a more forceful takeover in the future. Another salient observation from South Tolima is that, despite the fact that the conflict came to a close, the security situation in post-demobilization was not without blemishes. Instead, the results suggest that post-demobilization was a period of "criminal anarchy." In fact, in the two years after the demobilization, crime statistics went up. The testimonies gathered in South Tolima echoed a sense of lawlessness that came into view in the absence of the FARC, exemplified by multiplying instances of theft, fights, consumption of substances, prostitution, etc. According to the residents of the area, such waves of crime were uncommon under the guerrilla rule.

In Tumaco, on the other hand, the opposite scenario came into being. With violence and crime indicators on the rise, the municipality was a paradigm of post-demobilization security crisis in Colombia. Although Tumaco enjoyed a brief spell of respite from violence, the paradox is that it had come shortly before the guerrilla demobilized. It was likely due to a rare period of hegemony established by the FARC in the region, along with the ceasefire signed between the rebel group and the government in 2015. Once the guerrilla transferred into the transition camps, a new phase of conflict broke out. These historical trends are clearly visible in the above graph. The new iteration of conflict was characterized by a fragmentation and proliferation of new and old non-state armed groups in Tumaco. Adding to the dispersion of actors was the rebel group's increasingly tenuous grip on the territory pre-2017, poor internal discipline, as well as a mishandled demobilization process resulting in a wide array of the FARC dissident groups in the municipality. As a consequence, the period was filled with uncertainty with regards to the identity, structure, and the intentions of the non-state armed actors. Clearly, the scope of illicit economies available in post-demobilization vacuums was key in explaining the pace with which illegal armed groups took to exploiting the territories abandoned by the FARC.

The results from the Tumaco case study confirm the tentative hypothesis whereby, in the short-term, demobilization of a hegemonic actor leads to territorial competition and, thus, worsening security conditions for civilians. A breakdown of governance and fierce competition over the power vacuums were revealed not only by rising violence and crime indicators, but also in the very repertoire of the violent acts committed. The wide-range of non-state armed groups present in Tumaco committed homicides (either against rival group members or against civilians as part of social cleansing campaigns), generated displacement, imposed restrictions on movement, engaged in extortion, and issued threats in an attempt to exploit and control the civilian population. Violence was also directed against civil society members engaged in peacebuilding activities. Thus, the findings reveal that there existed no social contract and the groups relied on predatory, coercive tactics in their interactions with the residents of Tumaco.

Furthermore, attempts at early consolidation were also evidenced. At this stage, however, violence remained an indispensable tool in establishing control, albeit used in a more selective way. Nevertheless, none of the groups battling it out for the territories vacated by the FARC managed to tip the balance in its favor in the timeframe analyzed. Hence, none recreated the kind of hegemony upheld by the rebel group towards the end of its activity in Tumaco, whereby more consensual forms of governance are exploited. A possible explanation for the deadlock

in the coastal municipality in early post-demobilization are the spoils of drug-trafficking that boosted the groups' military capacity in a more or less equal measure.

Above recounted were the security dynamics demonstrated by the findings. Before we move on to discuss the factors determining the dissimilar outcomes of post-demobilization in Tumaco and South Tolima, lets fist summarize some of the analogies between the two cases.

First of all, in both regions examined in this study, the demobilization of the FARC brought about what has been referred to throughout the text as power vacuums. In broad terms, what the condition of power vacuum entailed in the case of Tumaco and South Tolima was that in neither of the two regions was the FARC replaced with a like-for-like hegemonic actor in the period studied. Hence, in both cases there no longer existed an identifiable central authority in the early post-demobilization. As a consequence, the many social, political and economic functions historically adopted by the FARC via the phenomenon known as rebel governance, ceased.

In the absence or weakness of the state, the interruption of rebel governance produced visible gaps in security, justice, administration, and service provision. In practice, the above meant that the civilian population living in Tumaco and South Tolima, could no longer rely on an established authority to protect it from violence and crime, set clear norms of behavior, solve legal issues or social conflicts, manage the affairs of the community, or assist its socio-economic needs. The social order that had been, more or less efficiently, maintained until then by the FARC was now effectively replaced by disorder. Even if the implications of the state of disorder on security were very different in Tumaco and South Tolima, there nonetheless persisted a shared sense of frustration with further erosion of governance among the residents of both territories. What can be inferred from the above observation is that people, above all, appreciate the clarity and consistency of rules governing their everyday life. The source of this predictability of life is less important.

Secondly, in both cases the power vacuums attracted interest from other non-state armed groups at some point during the two-year period. While the power vacuum in South Tolima was, on the whole, not filled in either the physical or symbolic way in the timeframe chosen for this study, the above conclusion follows from the fact that already during this initial phase, several non-state armed groups stated their intention of moving into the region via direct threats, pamphlets, and graffities. The South Tolima power vacuum started to be filled more vigorously in the following years, so hindsight bias might be interfering with the assessment.

However, the case study provides some evidence that the mere persistence of a power vacuum attracted growing attention from outsider non-state armed groups originating in the neighboring departments shortly after the FARC entered the DDR process.

In Tumaco the situation is a lot more cut-and-dried, since the filling of power vacuums occurred almost immediately after the departure of the FARC. Filling of power vacuums offers plenty of benefits and should be considered an objective for most non-state armed groups. Control of territories provides a non-state armed actor with resources (both material and human), refuge or, at the very least, strategic passage between other key territories. Vacuums may also be worth filling due to their symbolic value as the case of South Tolima seems to suggest. Based on the findings, it would appear that even in non-prioritized territories, when costs of establishing control are not excessively high, the potential benefits could incentivize a non-state armed group to "make a move." In sum, filling of persistent vacuums by non-state armed groups is to be expected, even if the pace and the intensity of the process are discreet.

Thirdly, the findings suggest that in post-demobilization power vacuums some degree of insecurity is inevitable. The source of this insecurity isn't always alike, however. Insecurity in post-demobilization isn't attributed solely to territorial competition between non-state armed actors, but—more broadly speaking—to the aforementioned security gaps. In these gaps, there typically occurs a collapse of protection systems (whether from other non-state armed groups or common criminals), in addition to other facilitating circumstances, such as unobserved codes of conduct, shortage of conflict adjudication mechanism, difficult socio-economic conditions, etc. South Tolima is a perfect illustration. Even in spite of a decrease of violence related to armed conflict, the perception of insecurity in the region remained high. This is because the FARC had successfully suppressed the type of crime that escalated in post-demobilization.

Although Tumaco had already had to deal with high levels of insecurity with the FARC still there (the guerrilla significantly contributing to such a state of affairs), until the rebel group demobilized there had been, nevertheless, an actor in whose best interest—as dictates literature—was to suppress indiscriminate violence or crime. The violence employed by the rebel group had, for the most part, a clear strategic value and was used selectively. Once the FARC laid down arms, no other group reached the level of consolidation that would allow it to trade predatory tactics and indiscriminate violence for more legitimizing forms of governance. All in all, post-demobilization power vacuums, much like many post-conflict zones, are inherently instable environments with conditions ripe for resurgence of violence and crime.

Even despite the common denominators, it needs restating that the short-term security impact of post-demobilization in the cases of Tumaco and South Tolima was distinct. Now, it is crucial to ask ourselves: What factors increase the likelihood that demobilization of a hegemonic armed actor will trigger territorial competition and worsening of security, such as was the case in Tumaco? Reversely, we may ask: What factors improve the chances that territorial competition doesn't occur and security improves the way it did in South Tolima? It should be noted that, for now, we shall not add into the equation the impact of state stabilization efforts in post-demobilization. Rather, we take a look at some pre-existing factors explaining why South Tolima enjoyed peace, while Tumaco was sucked right back into conflict.

Without a doubt the most salient factor explaining the two dissimilar post-demobilization trajectories in Tumaco and South Tolima are the illicit economies. Perhaps the primary driving force behind the Colombian Armed Conflict since the 1980s, drug-trafficking, and, to a lesser extent, illegal mining, have, time and again, sustained violence and crime in the country. Historically speaking, South Tolima was no exception. Yet, a remarkable confluence of events that led to the eradication of the opium poppy in the early 2000s drastically changed the prospects of the region. The decision to end poppy growing positively influenced security in the short-term, as it weakened the eagerness of paramilitary groups to challenge the guerrilla positions in the region. As a consequence, the FARC solidified its hegemonic position in South Tolima.

By the same token, the community reaped the benefits of eradication once again years later, as the fact of having no robust drug industry reduced the incentives for other groups to exploit power vacuums in the aftermath of the FARC demobilization. At a risk of oversimplification, it can be argued that the case of South Tolima offers us a unique glimpse into how a post-conflict transition might look like in Colombia should illicit economies be stamped out or, at the very least, contained more effectively.

Tumaco, in contrast, is yet another case in point of just how daunting a transition away from conflict is in territories abounding in illicit economies. The ever-expanding coca crops in the lead-up to the demobilization proved to be an insurmountable challenge for the government in the Colombian Pacific. As revealed in this study, illicit economies acted as a magnet for both diverse domestic non-state armed groups and transnational crime. While the hypothesized territorial competition that characterized Tumaco doesn't have to be triggered by illicit

economies, the comparison with South Tolima shows that lucrative illicit assets play a crucial enabling role. Hence while a power vacuum in of itself may not lead to more violence, a power vacuum featuring illicit economies is a recipe for violence.

It should be borne in mind that the incompatibility of peace and drug-trafficking interests meant that the likelihood that violent actors would target peace were very high. By sabotaging the PNIS initiative and murdering its advocates, non-state armed groups successfully compromised the peace-building efforts in Tumaco.

Another factor that may account for the distinct security situation in the two post-demobilization zones pertains directly to the demobilizing non-state armed group. A single non-state armed group can be comprised of units, or fronts, as was the case with the FARC, that demonstrate variations in attitude or behavior due to contrasting historical patterns. Such fundamental discrepancies reverberate in the environment these groups operate in. What this study demonstrates is that the legacies of these units are likely to manifest themselves long after the group demobilizes. The long-lived territorial control over a large part of South Tolima meant that, in its stronghold, the Front 21 operated in a more symbiotic way with the civilian population. In Tumaco, on the other hand, the Daniel Aldana column had its work cut out in establishing territorial control in the region. The volatile balance of power meant that the group operated on a shorter timeline. This entails, as suggested in the literature, less social contract and more predatory relationship with civilians. In short, the two could be considered polar opposites as far as the FARC organization was concerned. The above had two effects on security dynamics in post-demobilization.

The most obvious way this manifested itself was in the true scale of demobilization. While in South Tolima the demobilization was mostly complete, in Tumaco the outcome of the process was shrouded in ambiguity. In South Tolima, the Front 21 had maintained high levels of internal discipline. The more ideological profile and less predatory attitude of the unit resulted in increased commitment to the peace process and, consequently, less likelihood of emergence of dissident groups. In contrast, in the later years of its activity, the Tumaco-based front engaged in indiscriminate recruitment that undermined the group's cohesion. Low levels of internal discipline led to a split at the moment of entering the DDR process, with a fair share of mid-level officers refusing to demobilize. Furthermore, many of the part-time members, sub-contracted by the guerrilla, were refused the opportunity to demobilize. It shouldn't be ruled out that the FARC's increasingly predatory attitude in Tumaco might also have played a role in fostering a culture of violence in the region. The lack of political vocation or ideological

training could have had an added effect on the propensity for coercion displayed by the dissident groups emerging in post-demobilization.

Additionally, there is an argument to be made that what contributed to the comparatively positive outcome of the FARC demobilization in South Tolima were the earlier investments of the state in the region. We saw that under the Uribe administration, the government made Tolima one of its priority areas due to its central location and proximity to major urban centers of the country. A fairly wide range of stabilization measures, both military and non-military, was implemented throughout the 2000s debilitating the FARC, strengthening the state in certain strategic zones, especially the more urbanized areas, and ameliorating the perception of the state among the local population. To be sure, some stabilization efforts were also observed in Tumaco in the later phase. However, as shown in this study, having downplayed the development aspect of stabilization in the region, the strategies implemented didn't improve the state's territorial control in any meaningful way.

The last determinant is the positive impact the community had on security dynamics, and, more specifically, the relationship between the community and the robust coffee industry. In South Tolima, the coffee industry played an important role in galvanizing the community by stimulating associative processes and co-operation. Thanks to coffee-growing, the region was at the receiving end of large-scale investments from the state and via international cooperation in the decades prior to the demobilization of the FARC. It is also worth mentioning that the rebel group showed a rather cautious attitude in dealing with the coffee sector and didn't infringe much on its internal affairs (what suggests that the profile of the guerrilla front might have had an indirect effect on broader socio-economic dynamics of the region). This isn't to suggest that the community spirit in Tumaco is less potent. But rather that it didn't have enough sources of resilience in the economic, social, and political sense as the region plunged in conflict. We also saw that, whereas in South Tolima the coffee industry took flight in the aftermath of the FARC demobilization, Tumaco had no equivalent economic "flywheel" to aid the development of the region.

Considering the findings on stabilization approaches adopted by the government in Tumaco and South Tolima, it can be concluded that the Colombian government found no effective responses to the challenges generated by the demobilization of the FARC. While the impact of the FARC demobilization in the two regions was distinctive, nothing suggests that the

difference was due to systematic interventions by the government in the period studied, but rather the structural factors discussed above. That said, with violent conflict effectively over in South Tolima, the stabilization strategy in the region underwent some positive change, especially regarding the hard security component. Certain tactics may have had some bearing on the comparatively better security situation. On the other hand, even in such favorable circumstances from the security point of view, the government didn't prevent crime and instability from plaguing South Tolima. In addition, it didn't stop new illegal armed groups from arriving in the later period.

Identifying a clear short-term stabilization strategy in the two regions in question is not an easy task. It is tempting, of course, to look towards the Peace Accord for clues. Nevertheless, the implementation of the agreement relevant to the recovery of post-FARC territories during that period was virtually non-existent. By the end of President Santos' second term, the Article 3.4. of the Accord on Guarantees of Security showed the status of "complete implementation" at just 14%. By the same token, 70% of the policies were either not touched or implemented at a minimal level (Iniciativa Barómetro, 2019). However, the plans for implementation of the Peace Accord clearly show that majority of these measures were not expected to be completed until much later in post-conflict. In other words, the Peace Accord was a long-term strategy.

Certainly, it appears that in the eyes of the Colombian government, the responsibility for short-term stabilization following the FARC's demobilization was chiefly within the competences of the Public Force. The results provide ground to conclude that both the police and the military were, in fact, deployed in greater numbers than before in Tumaco and South Tolima. In addition, in both cases, there operated task forces dedicated specifically to stabilization. In South Tolima, new police stations were installed in townships that, until then, had had no permanent law enforcement presence. Several high-profile arrests, on the other hand, suggest that the Public Force actively pursued the so-called violent spoilers in both regions. What's more, in both cases the Public Force engaged in a fair share of rapprochement and outreach activities with the communities. In South Tolima, where the military had traditionally upheld a hostile attitude towards the civilian population due to its alleged collaboration with the FARC, such a changeover had a positive impact on the relationship between the Public Force and the community. Similar practices were tested in Tumaco, although the on-going hostilities made such paradigm shift less feasible.

While on the surface, the visibility of the Public Force improved, there remained some important questions marks with regards to its performance. After all, while in the case of

Tumaco human security deteriorated, South Tolima experienced major issues with the rule of law and public safety once the FARC governance terminated.

Perhaps the most important criticism leveled at the security strategy in both regions had to do with the lack of permanent presence in deep rural areas of Tumaco and South Tolima that had once been the strongholds of the FARC. In Tumaco, the military carried out sporadic and short-lived forays into the more isolated territories, usually to assist forced eradication. In South Tolima, on the other hand, the police rarely ventured out of the urban centers. Neither of the two case studies suggests that the much-needed rural police materialized in the timeframe analyzed. As a consequence, the population living in remote areas continued to be exposed to instability.

However, as evidenced by the case of Tumaco, more Public Force is not necessarily the solution. Heavy militarization of the region couldn't prevent the deterioration of security, didn't translate into heightened law enforcement activity, didn't secure environments for peacebuilding or offer protection to peacebuilders, and had negligible impact on illicit economies. For all the above reasons, it also failed to ameliorate the historically strained relationship with civilians. Worse yet, there is evidence that militarization made civilian population more vulnerable. At the same time, the Public Force operating in Tumaco showed little interest in development or reconstruction activities. When it did, as in the case of the PNIS, its involvement was ill-conceived. In this regard, the findings are consistent with the criticism of the military-led stabilization approach.

In South Tolima, the hard security component fared better, but the task was also disproportionately easier. Nevertheless, in the absence of open confrontations, a steady transition towards police-centered security management could be observed. Some military-led development activities were also carried out.

Yet, it must be pointed out that the Public Force received little support from other institutions in stabilizing post-demobilization zones. Most notably, in the first two years of post-accord, the government did next-to-nothing to enhance the capacity of the criminal justice sector in the former FARC territories. Limited access to formal justice mechanisms, coupled with slow judicial processes, continued to beset both South Tolima and Tumaco, particularly in the rural areas. In South Tolima, the FARC had established comprehensive justice practices that solved criminal cases and adjudicated disputes in a timely and efficient manner. In the aftermath of the guerrilla's demobilization, these services were no longer provided as crime became

rampant. Unfortunately, the government offered no short-term alternative that could accommodate victims in the region, thus restoring confidence in the justice system. Likewise, in Tumaco, the shortage of justice workers contributed to a backlog of cases that rendered the system inoperative. As a result, impunity was widespread as arrested criminals walked free once their maximum pretrial detention period expired. In sum, the government's underwhelming response to the justice conundrum made reinstating the rule of law a daunting task in both post-demobilization zones.

Owing to decades of violent exclusion, the populations of the two studied regions suffered from shortages of basic goods and socio-economic opportunities. The expectation was that the state would capitalize on the demobilization of the FARC to reach the marginalized population of Tumaco and South Tolima with delivery of what the literature refers to as "quick wins". According to the results, it can be concluded that development projects didn't play a prominent role in short-term stabilization of the post-demobilization zones. Rather than delivering concrete results, the state dedicated the first two years of the post-accord to in-depth assessment of the needs and wants of the communities living in post-FARC zones.

In Tumaco, the state's approach in the area of development pivoted on the substitution of illicit crops program. While the theoretical design of the program was considered correct, in practice, the delays in implementation and the lack of more profound understanding of the context prevented it from having a significant impact on illicit crops cultivation or from kick-starting the reconstruction process. What's more, the misjudged implementation of the PNIS put the local coca farmers at risk, while strengthening the non-state armed groups in Tumaco. In South Tolima, on the other hand, the end to conflict stimulated economic reactivation. However, the role of the state in that process shouldn't be overstated. On the contrary, an argument can be made that the community-driven process occurred in spite of the obstacles the state couldn't fix. According to both case studies, the one area of investment with the biggest potential to help stabilize post-demobilization zones was the construction of roads. Indeed, investing in rural infrastructure is said to have both symbolic and practical benefits to stabilization. The lack of noticeable change in this regard meant that the regions continued to suffer isolation from the larger social and economic processes in the country. In short, the dearth of social programs, service delivery and short-term investment in infrastructure in Tumaco and South Tolima, represented a missed opportunity for the state to boost its legitimacy and promote the Peace Accord among the population.

Finally, let’s briefly touch on the governance component of the stabilization strategy. The results show that the Colombian government relied on the PDET as a tool in promoting more decentralized, inclusive and plural political processes in post-demobilization zones. Even in spite of the delays, the PDET had some positive effect on governance practices in South Tolima. The newly opened spaces for political deliberation strengthened community ties and fostered reconciliation. By encouraging civil society organizations to formulate plans for the future of the region, the PDET instilled greater sense of ownership over the peacebuilding process. By the same token, by capacitating new leaders, the initiative made an important step towards improvement of political standards at the local level. In contrast, in Tumaco, there endured a view that the decision-making processes remained overly centralized and top-down, while the input of local communities was largely ignored. It would be interesting to examine more closely the source of this discrepancy between the two regions. Was there anything different about the methodology behind the development of the PDETs in Tumaco and South Tolima? Or was the scale of participation smaller due to the unfavorable security conditions on the ground?

In sum, the strategy adopted by the Colombian government to stabilize the territories formerly controlled by the FARC was limited, fraught with setbacks, and mostly ineffective in the first two years of post-demobilization. While it would be tempting to blame the lack of positive results on the on-going hostilities (since more transformative peacebuilding requires permissive security circumstances), the lack of convincing stabilization efforts in South Tolima suggests the problem didn’t lie simply in the implausibility of stabilizing conflict-ridden territories.

By breaking it down into its constituent parts and examining each in more detail, it can be concluded that the approach implemented in the two regions chosen for the analysis pivoted on the pragmatic, hard security-centered stabilization, while more transformative civilian response lagged behind or was altogether missing from the agenda. Thus, the three foremost criteria of what the literature considers effective stabilization—rapid implementation, multidimensionality, and civilian-military synergy—were not met in the Colombian case.

Instead, we arrive at a picture of a stabilization strategy rooted in the old paradigms of counterinsurgency. While there is no denying that adequate deployment of troops and the police in power vacuums left behind by the FARC, and the elimination of spoilers, were key in guaranteeing stability, merely improving security in quantitative terms proved insufficient. This is particularly true since the distribution of the Public Force presence remained uneven.

However, while not without fault, the military component of stabilization was, at the very least, fairly identifiable in the timeframe chosen. Indeed, in South Tolima the narrow goal of violence reduction was achieved. Left wanting, however, was what we referred to here as the "civilian" segment of the strategy, i.e., short-term interventions conceptually rooted in development and state-building policy spheres. The data from Tumaco and South Tolima shows that, for the most part, the Colombian government didn't prioritize systematic short-term delivery of basic services or investment in rural infrastructure in territories vacated by the FARC. In equal measure, there is no evidence for the short-term development of institutions or boosting the capacities of the existing ones. The overburdened, inaccessible local justice systems represented a case in point. On a positive note, the PDETs may have contributed to stabilization by bolstering the fledgling civil society in South Tolima. However, the program fared worse in Tumaco, where security situation likely stifled bottom-up peacebuilding.

One possible explanation for such limited scale of non-military stabilization efforts is that the Colombian government understood the civilian component as a function of the Peace Accord. This is to say, it was content to complement the long-term implementation of the agreement merely with minimalist, short-term counterinsurgency measures. According to this logic, any "soft" security programs—that is development or state-building interventions—had to wait until the relevant chapter of the Accord was implemented, two, five or ten years after the signing of the treaty.

Based on the above observations, a conclusion can be drawn that Colombia's approach to post-demobilization was missing a medium-term strategy; an all-important bridging of military operations and structural reforms mapped out in the Agreement. As discussed throughout this study, when expanded to include a pronounced civilian component, stabilization is an approach that provides such a medium-term strategy by marrying the conservative "security first" approach with the transformative peacebuilding agenda. More comprehensive (yet bound by moderate goals), civilian-led stabilization is well-suited to help the state fill in power vacuums by facilitating legitimate territorial control, delivering early peace dividends to the population, and reinforcing key institutions, in anticipation of more transformative reforms included in the peace agreement. However, by opting for an abridged version of the "clear, hold, build" approach—even the delivery of basic services by the Public Force was rather intermittent—the Colombian government committed many of the errors from the mostly unsuccessful past experiences with stabilization in the country retold earlier in this study.

First of all, the Colombian authorities didn't seem to recognize the "critical juncture" that the demobilization of the FARC implicated. With the departure of the guerrilla, a window of opportunity opened up for the state to strengthen its territorial control over large portions of the national territory without having to compete with a consolidated enemy. This study demonstrates that the window is likely to shut sooner or later (it has to be noted that, seeing that most power vacuums became filled within the two-year mark, South Tolima was an outlier on national scale). Hence, the response had to be rapid. But in order to consolidate its control over the national territory, the Colombian government needed to do more than just demobilize the FARC and deploy more Public Force. It had to "replace" some of the governance functions adopted by the FARC with more urgency, so as to avoid the emergence of gaps in security, justice provision or basic service delivery. Only by effectively replacing the demobilized non-state armed group can the ground be prepared for long-term peacebuilding in post demobilization zones. Likewise, reclaiming basic state function would have played the role of a peace dividend for the population living in these areas. By its own admittance, the Public Force was not competent to do all the above by itself.

As evidenced by this study, if the state fails to develop a "medium-term" stabilization strategy, it leaves the door open for non-state armed groups to exploit the continuous power vacuum to their own advantage. We can extrapolate from past cases in Colombian history that where these gaps persist, non-state armed groups eventually make themselves "useful" to communities by appropriating some of the state functions. This is because, as seen in the literature, by governing, these groups end up fortifying their own positions in the long run, much like the FARC did it over decades of its activity. In the short-term, however, they will likely compete over a post-demobilization territory, as was the case in Tumaco, causing security situation to deteriorate and peacebuilding to become spoiled. In a best-case scenario (South Tolima), vacuums of power will not be filled immediately, but the disintegration of the alternative form of governance may bring about a decline of the rule of law. Even worse, if the vacuums persist long enough, they will eventually become filled as a result of non-state armed actors "spilling over" from a neighboring region where territorial competition occurs.

In order to verify just how universal the above sequence of events is, research on post-demobilization zones in other countries affected by conflict should be considered. While this study assumes that the concept of post-demobilization is fairly universal, the specific spatial and temporal category may, in fact, be nothing alike in other armed conflicts across the world. It is necessary to compare and contrast the case of Colombian post-demobilization with similar

situations in other geographical and historical contexts in order to confirm the validity of the observations made here, as well as to expand them by new security dynamics and their determinants. Related to this point is the admittedly reductionist label of non-state armed groups used throughout the text. This study took the liberty to equate “rebels” with other non-state armed groups, assuming that engaging in some forms of governance isn’t limited to guerrillas. However, even in the Colombian context, there are plenty of differences between the FARC or the ELN, and the strictly criminal organizations, such as the AGC. While it is fair to presuppose that all non-state armed groups develop interfaces with civilians, future research on post-demobilization has to account for their diverse nature and, consequently, the discrepancies of their governance patterns. Similarly, in future research, more focus could be placed on the process of construction or re-construction of rebel governance in post-demobilization zones. Unfortunately, the timeframe chosen for this research didn’t allow for a more profound observation of this aspect of post-demobilization. Therefore, future work could have a go at answering the following questions: What kind of governance did non-state armed actors opt for in establishing control over post-demobilization power vacuums? Was this new generation of non-state armed groups even concerned with governance in the first place? In what ways did they replicate the old system of governance and in what ways they did not? How does the reconstruction of rebel governance look like at early stages?

Likewise, future research should certainly further reflect on the medium-term stabilization concept advocated in this study. Are there any real-life examples of a medium-term strategy at work? Much like with stabilization itself, it is necessary to test the applicability of such an approach in discrete circumstances. Particularly puzzling is the notion of a civilian-led security management that bridges the “hot” stabilization with more transformative approaches. Because its plausibility has been questioned, further research on whether such integrated approach is feasible in the short-term is warranted. One way to theorize the medium-term stabilization idea is by interpreting it as a form of state-making competition that governments use to prevent new non-state armed groups from taking advantage of post-demobilization (Felbab-Brown, 2010). In order to gain authority in post-demobilization zones, the state has to improve its functions in such areas as security, justice, delivery of socio-economic services or governance, hitherto inexistent or inefficient. In other words, since non-state armed actors rely on rebel governance to strengthen their position in a given territory, the state should be mindful of the sources of their competitive advantage in post-demobilization power vacuums.

Finally, future research could investigate in more depth the association between community strength and the probability of filling of post-demobilization vacuums by non-state armed groups posited by this study. The hypothesis based on the example of South Tolima, according to which the strength of the community is conducive to the lack of filling of power vacuums, may seem attractive at face value, but it needs further verification.

Summing up, this case study explored the security situation in the so-called post-demobilization zones in Colombia in the immediate aftermath of the signing of the 2016 Peace Accord. The research had two interrelated goals. In the first place, it endeavored to evaluate the short-term impact of the FARC's demobilization on human security. Considering the scale and complexity of the rebel governance practices adopted by the FARC, there were reasons to believe that its departure would trigger significant changes in regards to security in the guerrilla's former strongholds. Hence, the study looked to capture the changes in security dynamics together with their impact on violence and crime in post-FARC zones. To put it in a nutshell, while in South Tolima security generally improved in post-demobilization, in Tumaco it got worse. In the case of the latter, demobilization resulted in violent territorial competition. As for South Tolima, power vacuums left by the FARC remained unfilled in the first two years of post-demobilization. Although Tumaco and Sur del Tolima present two very distinct trajectories in terms of security dynamics in post-demobilization, neither one of the two scenarios is particularly desirable from a peacebuilding perspective. While in South Tolima we can at least talk about a form of negative peace in the first two years after the FARC demobilization, i.e., the absence of large-scale violence, the situation in Tumaco is one of a continuous armed conflict. Indeed, these two regions encapsulate larger national security trends in post-demobilization zones. In Tumaco, as well as in Catatumbo, Chocó, Cauca and Córdoba, violence has not diminished, but rather transformed. In South Tolima, but also Putumayo, Caquetá or South Meta the security situation hasn't gotten substantially better.

By interpreting the discrete patterns of security dynamics across the two case studies, the study arrived at a set of factors determining the different post-demobilization trajectories (i.e., illicit economies, internal discipline of the demobilizing actor, previous state interventions, and the strength of the community/robust industry). Nevertheless, in spite of the contrasting trajectories, the research provides evidence that some negative security dynamics likely to unfold in post-demobilization zones are universal (i.e., emergence of power vacuums, gaps in vital services, interest from non-state armed groups, some degree of insecurity). By doing so,

this study proves that demobilizing a non-state armed group doesn't solve all security issues. On the contrary, it has the potential to exacerbate certain existing negative security trends or usher in new ones. It should be remembered that cases such as the FARC in Colombia aren't all that rare. Rebel governance is a widespread phenomenon in a world in which states struggle to ascertain territorial dominion within their borders. Demobilizing non-state armed actors is a vital first step to expanding the state presence in marginalized regions, thus boosting security therein. However, in order to be successful at the above task, state actors need to first fully grasp the latent negative impact such demobilization could have on security in the short-term. A deeper understanding of security dynamics in post-demobilization territories is essential not only to put an end to violence and contain the spread of new non-state armed actors in conflict-affected states, but also to protect the accomplishments of peace. For the above reasons, this study theorizes "post-demobilization" as a distinctive stage that may or may not be part of a larger post-conflict. Thus, it calls attention to the idiosyncrasies of this period and the processes it entails.

In parallel, this research sought to examine the role of the state in shaping the post-demobilization security dynamics. To accomplish the above, it analyzed the approach adopted by the Colombian government with the aim to stabilize post-FARC zones between 2017 and 2018. The conclusion of the assessment was that the Colombian government failed to produce an effective response to the security challenges that presented themselves in post-demobilization zones. The strategies used in Tumaco and South Tolima didn't meet the criteria of what the literature considers a successful stabilization approach, i.e., rapid implementation, multidimensional character, integration of civilian and military interventions. Instead, the approach was based on the familiar short-term counterinsurgency tactics on the one hand, and the implementation of the Peace Accord in the long-term, on the other. Based on the findings, a conclusion was reached that in order to prevent the emergence and persistence of gaps in security, justice or basic service delivery in post-demobilization, a medium-term stabilization strategy is necessary. The study further posits that such medium-term strategy should have among its objectives to "replace" the demobilizing governing non-state armed groups in their state functions. In doing so, the state acknowledges that the phenomenon of rebel governance is a consequence of more profound failings than solely its inability to monopolize the use of violence. Thus, observations from Colombia give substance to the debate found in literature regarding the necessity to expand stabilization to include civilian-led security strategies, development, institutional strengthening, and promotion of good governance.

Chapter 8 Bibliography

- 5.749 militares son investigados por la Fiscalia. (November 12, 2014). *Semana*. Retrieved from: https://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/5749-militares-son-investigados-por-la-fiscalia/408854-3/
- A Tumaco lo agobian las disidencias de las Farc y el crimen transnacional. (August 12, 2018). *Verdad Abierta*. Retrieved from: https://verdadabierta.com/tumaco-lo-agobian-las-disidencias-las-farc-crimen-trasnacional/
- Acero, C. & Machuca, D. (2021). The substitution program on trial: progress and setbacks of the peace agreement in the policy against illicit crops in Colombia. *International Journal of Drug Policy*. Vol. 89, pp. 1-11.
- Agencia de Renovación del Territorio. (2021). *En Ruta: Sur del Tolima*. Retrieved from: https://www.renovacionterritorio.gov.co/especiales/hoja-ruta-pdet/sur-tolima.html
- Aguilera Peña, M. (2000). Justicia guerrillera y población civil, 1964-1999. *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'études andines*, Vol. 29, No. 3.
- Aguilera Peña, M. (2013). Las FARC: auge y quiebra de su modelo de Guerra. *Análisis politico*, Vol. 26, No. 77, pp. 85-111.
- Agudelo Molina, J. D. (2016). La debilidad estatal como causa de origen del conflicto armado colombiano. Un estudio conceptual e historiográfico a partir del informe de la Comisión histórica del conflicto armado y sus víctimas. *Versiones*, No. 10, pp. 37-59.
- Ahmad, E. (1982). 'Revolutionary Warfare and Counterinsurgency'. In Chaliand, G. (ed.), *Guerrilla Strategies: An Historical Anthology from the Long March to Afghanistan*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, pp. 241-262.
- Alape, A. (1996). La reinserción del EPL: ¿esperanza o frustración? *Colombia Internacional*, No. 36, pp. 16-27.
- Andersen, L. R. (2019). *Stabilization-development nexus: Literature review*. Copenhagen: Tana.
- Albarracín, J. et al. (2020). Violencia y ordenes políticos locales en el posacuerdo: Las dinámicas territoriales en el Norte del Cauca, el Bajo Cauca Antioqueño y Tumaco. Bogotá: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. Retrieved from: https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/la-seguridad/16471.pdf
- Álvarez Vanegas, E., & Restrepo E., J. D. (June 4, 2017). "No nos dejen morir": exmiliciano de Tumaco. *Verdad Abierta*. Retrieved from: https://verdadabierta.com/no-nos-dejen-morir-exmiliciano-de-tumaco/
- Álvarez Vanegas, E., Llorente, M.V., Cajiao, A. & Garzón Vergara, J.C. (2017). *Crimen organizado y saboteadores armados en tiempos de transición. (Serie Informes No. 27)*. Bogotá: Fundación Ideas para la Paz.
- Álvarez Vanegas, E., Calderón, D. & Cajiao, A. (2018). *Trayectorias y dinámicas territoriales de las disidencias de las FARC (Serie Informes No. 30)*. Bogotá: Fundacion Ideas para la Paz.
- Aponte González, A. F. (2019). Grupos armados y construcción de orden social en la esquina sur del Tolima, 1948-2016. Bogotá: Fundación Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular -Programa por la paz CINEP-PPP.

- Aponte, A., & Benavides, J. (2016). Las Farc y las organizaciones comunitarias en San Andrés de Tumaco: desafíos territoriales ante una eventual implementación de los Acuerdos de La Habana. *Revista Controversia*, Vol. 206.
- Araujo Araujo, R (2019*). Dinámica Social, Económica y Empresarial 2019*. Retrieved from: https://www.cctumaco.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/DINAMICA-2019-Version-Final.pdf
- Arenas, N. (March 29, 2017). Rendidos en Tumaco: La cara mas oscura de las Farc. *La Silla Vacía*. Retrieved from: https://www.lasillavacia.com/historias/silla-nacional/rendidos-en-tumaco-la-cara-mas-oscura-de-las-farc/
- Arévalo, J. B. (2014). Construcción de paz y un nuevo modelo de construcción de estado. *Revista de Economia Institucional*, Vol. 16, No. 30, pp. 131-169.
- Arévalo, J. B. (2018). Capacidad del estado y apoyo a la democracia: Retos y oportunidades. *Revista de Economia Institucional*, Vol. 20, No. 39, pp. 159-186.
- Arias, E. D. (2006). The dynamics of criminal governance: networks and social order in Rio de Janeiro. Journal of Latin American Studies, Vol. 38, No. 2, pp. 293-325.
- Arjona, A. (2009). Armed Groups Governance in Civil War: A Short Literature Review. Unpublished Manuscript.
- Arjona, A. (2016). *Rebelocracy: Social Order in the Colombian Civil War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Arjona, A., & Kalyvas, S. (2012). “Recruitment into Armed Groups in Colombia: A Survey of Demobilized Fighters,” In: Guichaoua, Y, (ed.), *Understanding Collective Political Violence. Conflict, Inequality and Ethnicity*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Arjona, A., Mampilly, Z. & Kasfir, N. (2015). *Rebel Governance*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
- Ávila, A. & Valencia, L. (2016). Los retos del postconflicto: Justicia, seguridad y mercados ilegales. Bogota: Ediciones B.
- Bagley, B. M. (1988). US Foreign Policy and the War on Drugs: Analysis of a Policy Failure. Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs, Vol. 30, No. 2-3, pp. 189-212.
- Balance de la Operación Agamenón II, segun el director de la Dijin. (October 8, 2017). *El Espectador*. Retrieved from: https://www.elespectador.com/judicial/balance-de-la-operacion-agamenon-ii-segun-el-director-de-la-dijin-article-717062/
- Ball, N. et al. (2004). Evaluation of the Conflict Prevention Pools. The Security Sector Reform Strategy. Department for International Development Reports, https://www.oecd.org/derec/unitedkingdom/35096612.pdf
- Ball, N., & Fayemi, K. (eds). (2005). Security Sector Governance: A Handbook, Lagos/Washington DC. Retrieved from: http://www.gsdrc.org/docs/open/ GFN-SSR-SecuritySectorGovernanceInAfricaAHandbook.pdf
- Ball, N., & van der Goor, L. (2006). DDR: Mapping Issues, Dilemmas and Guiding Principles. Clingendael. Retrieved from: at http://www.clingendael.nl/sites/default/files/20060800_cru_paper_ddr.pdf.
- Barakat, S. (2016). *Stabilisation*. GSDRC Professional Development Reading Pack. No. 47. Birmingham, UK: University of Birmingham.
- Barros Navarro, N. I. & Uribe Sarmiento, J. J. (2019). *La retaguardia en disputa: Monográfico del conflict en la Provincia Sur del Tolima*. Ibagué: Universidad de Ibagué.
- Bejarano, A. M. (2001). The Constitution of 1991: An Institutional Evaluation Seven Years Later. In Berquist, C., Peñaranda, R. & Sánchez, G. (Eds.), *Violence in*

Colombia, 1990-2000: Waging War and Negotiating Peace. Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources Books.

- Bejarano, A. M. & Segura-Bonnet, R. (1996). El fortalecimiento selectivo del Estado durante el Frente Nacional. *Controversia*, Vol. 2, No. 169, pp. 9-37.
- Bejarano, A. M. & Pizarro, E. L. (2002). From 'Restricted to 'besieged': The changing nature of the limits to democracy in Colombia. *Kellogg Institute Working Paper #296*.
- Bejarano, A. M. & Pizarro, E. L. (2004). Colombia: The Partial Collapse of the State and the Emergence of Aspiring State-Makers. In: Kingston, P. & Spears, I. (Eds.). *States-Within-States: Incipient Political Entities in the Post-Cold War Era*, pp. 99-118.
- Belloni, R. & Constantini, I. (2019). From Liberal Statebuilding to Counterinsurgency and Stabilization: The International Intervention in Iraq. *Ethnopolitics*, Vol. 18, No. 5, pp. 509-525.
- Belloni, R. & Moro, F. N. (2019). Stability and Stability Operations: Definitions, Drivers, Approaches. Ethnopolitics, Vol, 18, No. 5, pp. 445-461.
- Beltrán Villegas, B. M. (2013). Colombia: de la "Seguridad Democrática" a la "Política integral de Seguridad y Defensa para la Prosperidad". *Conflicto Social*, Vol. 6, No. 9, pp. 12-36.
- Bensahel, N. (2009). Dangerous but no Omnipotent. Exploring the Reach and Limitations of Iranian Power in the Middle East. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation.
- Beswick, D. & Jackson, P. (2011). Conflict, Security and Development: An Introduction. London: Routledge.
- Berg, L. & Carranza, M. (2018). Organized criminal violence and territorial control: Evidence from northern Honduras. *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 55, No. 5.
- Bergen, P. & Tiedemann, K. (2012). *Talibanistan: Negotiating the Borders Between Terror, Politics, and Religion*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Ammitzboell, K. & Blair, H. (2011). First steps in Post-Conflict State-Building: Establishing Critical Functions and Setting Priorities. In: W. E. Feichtinger, E. M. Felberbauer and E. A. Schmidl (Eds.). International Crisis Management: Squaring the Circle. Vienna: National Defence Academy and Austrian Ministey of Defence and Sports.
- Barakat, S., Deely, S., & Zyck, S. A. (2010). A tradition of forgetting: Stabilization and humanitarian action in historical perspective. Stability: International Journal of Security & Development, Vol. 4, No. 1.
- Boege, V., Brown, A., & Clements, K. (2009). Hybrid Political Orders, Not Fragile State. Peace Review, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 13-21.
- Botero, F. & Méndez, M.L. (2008). ¿Reír o llorar? El drama del conflicto y la resiliencia de la economía en Colombia, 2007. *Revista de Ciencia Política*, Vol. 28, No 1. Pp. 121-145.
- Bottia, M. C. (2003). La presencia y expansión municipal de las FARC: es avaricia y contagio, más que ausencia estatal. *Docmentos CEDE03*, Universidad de Los Andes.
- Boutros-Ghaly, B. (1992). An agenda for peace: preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peace-keeping : report of the Secretary-General pursuant to the statement adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council, p.53.
- Brancati, D. (2006). Decentralization: Fueling the fire or dampening the flames of ethnic conflict and secessionism? *International Organization*, Vol. 60, pp. 651-685.

- Bulla, P. & Guarin, S. (2015). Rural Security in Colombia: An Opportunity for State Consolidation. *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, 4(1), p. 37.
- Bushnell, D. (1993). *The Making of Modern Colombia: A Nation in Spite of Itself*. Berkley, CA: University of California Press.
- Cairo, H. et al. (2018). "Territorial Peace": The Emergence of a Concept in Colombia's Peace Negotiations. *Geopolitics*, Vol. 23, No. 2, pp. 464-488.
- Call, C. T. (2008). The Fallacy of the 'Failed State'. Third World Quarterly, Vol. 29, No. 8, pp. 14910-1507.
- Call, C. T. (2011). Beyond the 'failed state': Toward conceptual alternatives. *European Journal of International Relations*, Vol. 17 (2), pp. 303-326.
- Capturan a disidentes de las Farc en el sur del Tolima. (May 28, 2019). *El Nuevo Dia*. Retrieved from: https://www.elnuevodia.com.co/nuevodia/actualidad/judicial/433736-capturan-a-disidentes-de-las-farc-en-el-sur-del-tolima
- Caris, C. C. & Reynolds, S. (2014). ISIS Governance in Syria. Institute for the Study of War. Retrieved from: https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/wps/isw/0032512/index.html
- Carlin. R., McCoy, J., & Subotic, J. (2016) Legitimacy deficits in Colombia's peace talks: elites, trust, and support for transitional justice. USAID/DCHA/DRG Research and Innovation Grants Working Papers Series. USAID's Center of Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance and Institute for International Education.
- Carothers, T. (2002). The End of the Transition Paradigm. *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 5-21.
- Carter, W. (2013). War, Peace and Stabilisation: Critically Reconceptualising Stability in Southern Afghanistan. *Stability: International Journal of Security & Development*, Vol. 2, No. 1, p.15.
- Castrillón, G. (April 19, 2018). Nuevos puntos de reagrupamiento de las Farc. *La Paz en el Terreno*. Retrieved from: https://www.lapazenelterreno.com/nuevos-puntos-reagrupamiento-farc-20180419
- CEPAL (2016). Las Matriz de la Desigualdad en America Latina. Retrieved from: https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/matriz_de_la_desigualdad.pdf
- Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular/Programa por la Paz (Cinep/PPP). (2018). *¿Cuáles son los patrones? Asesinatos de Líderes Sociales en el Post Acuerdo*. Bogotá: CINEP/PPP.
- Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular/Programa por la Paz (Cinep/PPP) & Centro de Recursos para el Análisis de Conflictos (CERAC). (2018). *Segundo informe de verificación de la implementación del Acuerdo Final de Paz en Colombia*. Bogotá: CINEP/PPP.
- Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular/Programa por la Paz (Cinep/PPP). (2019). *Transformaciones del conflict armado y conflictividades sociales en San Andrés de Tumaco*. Bogotá: CINEP/PPP.
- Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica (2013). Basta ya! Colombia: Memorias de Guerra y Dignidad. Bogotá: CNMH.
- Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica. (2014). *Guerrilla y Población Civil. Trayectoria de las FARC 1949-2013*. Bogota: CNMH.
- Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica. (2015). *Desmovilizacion y Reintegracion Paramilitar: Panorama posacuerdos con las AUC*. Bogota: CNMH.
- Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica. (2017). *De los grupos precursors al Bloque Tolima (AUC)*. Informe No. 1. Bogotá: CNMH.

- Chernick, M. W. (1989). Negotiated Settlement to Armed Conflict: Lessons from the Colombian Peace Process. *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*. Vol. 30, No. 4, pp. 53-88.
- Chernick, M.W. (1996). Introducción. Aprender del pasado: breve historia de los procesos de paz en Colombia (1982-1996). *Colombia Internacional*, No. 36, pp. 4-8.
- Chernick, M.W. (2005). Economic Resources and Internal Armed Conflict: Lessons from the Colombian Case. In Cynthia Arnson and William Zartman (eds.) *Rethinking the Economics of War: The Intersection of Need, Creed and Greed*. Washington D.C.: Hopkins University Press.
- Chesterman, S. (2004). *You, the People – The United nations, Transitional Administration, and State-Building*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Comisión de la Verdad. (December 29, 2019). La vida en el ETCR El Oso. Retrieved from: https://web.comisiondelaverdad.co/actualidad/noticias/la-vida-en-el-etcr-el-oso
- Commission on Human Security. (2003). Human Security Now. New York, NY: Commission on Human Security.
- Colletta, N. (2012). Interim Stabilization in Fragile Security Situations. *Journal of Stability*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 45-51.
- Colletta, N. & Muggah, R. (2009). Context matters: Interim stabilisation and second generation approaches to security promotion. *Conflict, Security & Development*, Vol. 9, No. 4, pp. 425-453.
- Collier, P. et al. (2003). *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*. Washington, DC: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/The World Bank.
- Collinson, et al. (2010). States of fragility: stabilisation and its implications for humanitarian action. *Disasters*, Vol. 34, No. s3, pp. S275-S296.
- Collier, P. (2004). *Development and Conflict*. Centre for the Study of African Economics, Department of Economics, Oxford University. Retrieved from: http://www.un.org/esa/documents/Development.and.Conflict2.pdf
- ¿Como opera la columna 'Dagoberto Ramos' en la region sur de Colombia? (September 10, 2022). *Diario del Huila*. Retrieved from: https://diariodelhuila.com/como-opera-la-columna-dagoberto-ramos-en-la-region-sur-de-colombia/
- Cosoy, N. (November 30, 2017). "Nosotros sabemos trabajar y echar plomo": a un año de la firma del acuerdo de paz con las FARC, ¿está el vaso medio vacío o medio lleno? *BBC Mundo*. Retrieved from: https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-42172986
- Cox, M. (2008). 'Bosnia and Herzegovina: The Limits of Liberal Imperialism' in Building States to Build Peace, Call, C. with Wyeth, V. (eds.) Boulder: Lynne Rienner.
- Cunningham, K. G., & Loyle, C. E. 2021. Introduction to the Special Feature on Dynamic Process of Rebel Governance. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 65, No.1, pp. 3–14
- DANE. (2005). Censo Nacional de Hogares. Bogotá: Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadistica.
- DANE. (2015). Censo Nacional de Hogares. Bogotá: Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadistica.
- Dayton, R. (2019). The ELN's Attack on the National Police Academy in Bogotá and Its Implications. CTC Sentinel. Vol. 12, No. 2

- Deas, M. (1982). The Fiscal Problems of Nineteenth-Century Colombia. *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 287-328.
- Defensoría del Pueblo. (2005*). Informe de Riesgo No. 064- 05*. Bogotá: Sistema de Alertas Tempranas – SAT.
- Defensoría del Pueblo. (2015*). Informe de Riesgo No. 028-15*. Bogotá: Sistema de Alertas Tempranas – SAT.
- Defensoría del Pueblo. (2015b*). Informe de Riesgo No. 017-15*. Bogotá: Sistema de Alertas Tempranas – SAT.
- Defensoría del Pueblo. (2016). *Nota de Seguimiento No. 015-16*. Bogotá.: Sistema de Alertas Tempranas - SAT.
- Defensoría del Pueblo. (2018). Vigésimo Quinto Informe del Defensor del Pueblo al Congreso de la República. Bogotá: Defensoría del Pueblo.
- Defensoría del Pueblo. (2019). *Alerta Temprana No. 016-19*. Bogotá.: Sistema de Alertas Tempranas - SAT.
- Defensoría del Pueblo. (2022). *Alerta Temprana No. 016-22*. Bogotá.: Sistema de Alertas Tempranas - SAT.
  Dennys, C. (2013). For Stabilization. *Stability*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 1-14.
- Departamento Nacional de Planeación. (2018). Tumaco: Ficha de caracterización. Retrieved from: https://www.funcionpublica.gov.co/eva/admon/files/empresas/ZW1wcmVzYV83Ng==/archivos/1450105602_7acc167eaeb60ba96248f658b908e490.pdf
- DeShazo, P., McLean, P. & Mendelson Forman, J. (2009). Countering Threats to Security and Stability in a Failing State. CSIS.
- Di John, J., O'Meally, S. C., & Hogg, R. S. (2017). *Social service delivery in violent contexts : achieving results against the odds – a report from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nepal (English).* Washington, D.C. : World Bank Group.
- 'Don Y', el disidente de las Farc que azota a Tumaco. (October 31, 2016). *La Silla Vacía*. Retrieved from: https://www.lasillavacia.com/historias/silla-nacional/don-y-el-disidente-de-las-farc-que-azota-a-tumaco
- Dudley, S. (2004). *Walking Ghosts: Murder and Guerrilla Politics in Colombia*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Duffield, M. (1998). Post-modern conflict: Warlords, post-adjustment state and private protection. *Civil Wars*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 65-102.
- Duffield, M. (2001). Global Governance and the New Wars. London: Zed Books.
- Dugas, J.C. (2003). The emergence of Neopopulism in Colombia? The case of Álvaro Uribe. *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No 6, pp 1117-1136.
- Duncan, G. (2006). *Los Señores de la Guerra*. Bogotá: Planeta.
- Duncan, G. (November 5, 2006). El ripio. *El Pais*. Retrieved from: https://www.elpais.com.co/opinion/columnistas/gustavo-duncan/el-ripio.html
- Duncan, G. & Velasco, J. D. (2013). Revolucionarios pasados por coca: legado comunista y narcotráfico en las FARC. *Razón Publica*. Retrieved from: https://razonpublica.com/revolucionarios-pasados-por-coca-legado-comunista-y-narcotrafico-en-las-farc/
- Duque, T. (February 3, 2019). Tumaco sin homicidios o la paz mafioas. *La Silla Vacia*. Retrieved from: https://www.lasillavacia.com/historias/silla-nacional/tumaco-sin-homicidios-o-la-paz-mafiosa
- Dziedzic, M. ed. (2016). *Combating Criminalized Power Structures: The Overlooked Enemies of Peace*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

- Echandía Castilla, C. (2004). "Evolución reciente de la geografía del conflicto armado colombiano," In: Universidad Nacional del Colombia (ed.), Dimensiones territoriales de la guerra y la paz. Bogotá: Universidad Nacional del Colombia.
- Echandía Castilla, C. (2006). Dos décadas del escalamiento armado en Colombia (1986-2006). Bogotá: Universidad Externado.
- Echandía Castilla, C. (2013). *Narcotráfico: Génesis de los paramilitares y herencia de bandas criminales*. Serie Informes, No. 19. Bogotá: FIP.
- Edwards, B. & Yilmaz, S. (2016). Decentralization as a Post-conflict stabilization tool: The case of Sierra Leone, *Public Administration and Development*, Vol. 36, pp. 347-358.
- En el corazón de Tumaco. (2017). *Semana*. Retrieved from: https://especiales.semana.com/tumaco/capIntro.html
- Eizenstat, S., Porter, J. E. & Weinstein, J. (2005). Rebuilding Weak States. *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 84, No. 1, pp. 55-68.
- Elhawary, S. (2010). Security for whom? Stabilisation and civilian protection in Colombia. *Disasters*. Vol. 34, No. 2, pp. S388-405.
- Eriksen, S. S. (2009). The Liberal Peace Is Neither: Peacebuilding, State building and the Reproduction of Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 16, pp. 652-666.
- Escobedo, R. D., Guiza Suárez, L., & Rojas Álvarez, G. C. (2018). *Informe especial: Economias ilegales, actores armados y nuevos escenarios de riesgo en el posacuerdo*. Bogotá: Defensoria del Pueblo.
- Excombatientes de las Farc denuncian incumplimiento para su ubicación campamentaria. (February 8, 2017). *Caracol*. Retrieved from: https://caracol.com.co/emisora/2017/02/08/ibague/1486557284_753936.html
- Experiencia de Paz de lo indígenas Nasa de Tolima con las Farc. (March 31, 2017). *Verdad Abierta*. Retrieved from: https://verdadabierta.com/experiencia-de-paz-de-los-indigenas-nasa-de-tolima-con-las-farc/
- Farfán, H. (June 28, 2017). El Tolima siguió la transmisión de dejación de armas de las Farc. *El Nuevo Dia*. Retrieved from: https://www.elnuevodia.com.co/nuevodia/especiales/sucesos/335491-el-tolima-siguio-la-transmision-de-dejacion-de-armas-de-las-farc
- Falleti, T.G. (2005). A Sequential Theory of Decentralization: Latin American Cases in Comparative Perspective. *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 99, No. 3, pp. 327-346.
- FARC- EP. Informe al Estado Mayor Central de las FARC para el estudio y análisis del "Plan Patriota". s.f.
- Fearon, J. D. & Laitin, D. D. (2003). Ethnicity, Insrugency, and Civil War. American Political Science Review, Vol. 97, No. 1, pp. 75-90.
- Felbab-Brown, V. (2010). Conceptualizing Crime as Competition in State-Making and Designing an Effective Response. Retrieved from: https://www.brookings.edu/on-the-record/conceptualizing-crime-as-competition-in-state-making-and-designing-an-effective-response/
- Felbab-Brown, V. (2011). Human Security and Crime in Latin America: The political Capital and Political Impact of Criminal Groups and Belligerents Involved in Illicit Economies. Western Hemisphere Security Analysis Center, Vol. 40.
- Fernandez-Osorio, A. E. (2018). El Papel del Ejército Nacional de Colombia para el Fortalecimiento de la Paz en El Posacuerdo con las Farc. ORDIC.

- Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace (2016). Retrieved from: https://www.peaceagreements.org/viewmasterdocument/1845
- Fiscalía General de la Nación. (October 18, 2016). Desarticulada estructura criminal La Nueva Gente que tenia injerencia en Tumaco (Nariño). Retrieved from: https://www.fiscalia.gov.co/colombia/noticias/desarticulada-estructura-criminal-la-nueva-gente-que-tenia-injerencia-en-tumaco-narino/
- Fiscalía General de la Nación. (July 8, 2019). Judicializado presunto integrante de la Comisión Dagoberto Ramos de las disidencias de las Farc. Retrieved from: https://www.fiscalia.gov.co/colombia/seccionales/judicializado-presunto-integrante-de-la-comision-dagoberto-ramos-de-las-disidencias-de-las-farc/
- Fiscalía General de la Nación. (April 27, 2020). A la cárcel cabecilla de grupo residual señalado de intentar agrupar organizaciones disidentes en Tolima. Retrieved from: https://www.fiscalia.gov.co/colombia/noticias/a-la-carcel-cabecilla-de-grupo-residual-senalado-de-intentar-agrupar-organizaciones-disidentes-en-tolima/
- Flanigan S.T. (2008). Nonprofit Service Provision by Insurgent Organizations: The Cases of Hezballah and the Tamil Tigers. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism,* Vol. 31, No. 6, pp. 499–519.
- Flórez, M. (2016, December 19). La tragedia de Tumaco: 134 personas han sido asesinadas en lo que va del año. *Pacifista!* Retrieved from: https://pacifista.tv/notas/la-tragedia-de-tumaco-134-personas-han-sido-asesinadas-en-lo-que-va-del-ano/
- Förster, T. (2015). "Dialogue Direct: Rebel Governance and Civil Order in Northern Cote d'Ivoire." In: Arjona, A., Kasfir, N. & Mampilly, Z. (eds.), *Rebel Governance in Civil War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Frente Óliver Sinisterra: el blanco de las autoridades colombo-ecuatorianas. (April 13, 2018). *Verdad Abierta*. Retrieved from: https://verdadabierta.com/frente-oliver-sinisterra-disidencia-que-persiguen-autoridades-colombo-ecuatorianas/
- Fuerza Aéra Colombiana. (2018). Fuerza De Tarea Conjunta de Estabilización y Consolidación 'HÉRCULES' apoyará el desarrollo de Nariño. Retrieved from: https://www.fac.mil.co/es/noticias/fuerza-de-tarea-conjunta-de-estabilizacion-y-consolidacion-hercules-apoyara-el-desarrollo
- Fukuyama, F. (2004). The Imperative of State-building. Journal of Democracy, Vol. 15, N. 2, pp. 17-31.
- Fundación Ideas para la Paz. (2013). *Dinámicas del conflicto armado en Tolima y su impacto humanitario.* Retrieved from: https://storage.ideaspaz.org/documents/5b4f7483ae722.pdf
- Fundación Ideas para la Paz. (2014). *Dinámicas del conflicto armado en Tumaco y su impacto humanitario.* Retrieved from:
- Garzón, O. L. (May 15, 2017). Zozobra en Gaitania por atentados, extorsiones y presencia de policías de civil. *El Espectador*. Retrieved from: https://www.elespectador.com/colombia-20/conflicto/zozobra-en-gaitania-por-atentados-extorsiones-y-presencia-de-policias-de-civil-article/
- Gambetta, D. (1996). *The Sicilian Mafia: The Business of Private Protection*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Garay Salamanca, L. J. et al. (2008). La Captura y Reconfiguración Cooptada del Estado en Colombia. Bogota: Fundación Método, Fundación Avina y Transparencia por Colombia.
- Garcia Reyes, P. (2011). La paz perdida. Territorios colectivos, palma africana y conflicto armado en el Pacifico Colombiano. Tesis doctoral. Doctorado de

Investigación en Ciencias Sociales con Mención en Ciencia Política; FLACSO México. México.

- García Villegas, M. (2008). *Jueces sin Estado. La justicia colombiana en zonas de conflicto armado*. Bogotá: Siglo del Hombre Editores.
- García Villegas, M. (2009). Caracterización del regimen politico colombiano (1956-2008). In: García Villegas, M. & Revelo Rebolledo, J.E. (eds), *Mayorias sin Democracia: Desequilibrio de poderes y Estado de derecho en Colombia*, 2002-2009. Bogota: Colección Dejusticia, pp. 16-83.
- García Villegas, M. & Uprimny, R. (1999). El nudo gordiano de la justicia y de la guerra. Bogotá: IEPRI, CEREC, FESCOL, pp. 33-70.
- García -Villegas, M. & Revelo-Rebolledo, J. (2010). Estado Alterado. Clientelismo, mafias y debilidad institucional en Colombia. Bogota: DeJusticia.
- García Villegas, M. & Espinosa, J. R. (2015). The Geography of Justice: Assessing Local Justice in Colombia's Post-Conflict Phase. *Stability: International Journal of Security & Development*, vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 1-21.
- García Villegas, M. et al. (2016). Los territorios de la paz: La construcción del Estado local en Colombia. *Documentos dejusticia*, Vol. 28. Recovered from: https://www.dejusticia.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Los-territorios-de-la-paz-la-construcci%C3%B3n-del-Estado-local-en-Colombia.pdf
- García Villegas, M. & Rebolledo, J. E. (2008). La construcción del Estado local en Colombia. *Analisis politico*, No. 92, pp. 69-95.
- Garzón Vergara, J. C. (2015). Avoiding the Perfect Storm: Criminal Economies, Spoilers, and the Post-Conflict Phase in Colombia. *Stability: International Journal of Security & Development*, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 1-15.
- Garzón Vergara, J. C. et al. (2016). *Economías criminales en clave de postconflicto: tendencias y propuestas para enfrentarlas*. Bogotá: Fundación Ideas para la Paz.
- Garzón Vergara, J. C. & Llorente, V. (2018). ¿Por qué siguen aumentando los cultivos de coca en Colombia? Los desafíos para el nuevo Gobierno. Bogotá: Fundación Ideas para la Paz.
- Garzón Vergara, J. C. et al. (2018). *Las Garantías de Seguridad: una Mirada desde lo local. Serie Informes No. 31*. Bogotá: Fundación Ideas para la Paz (FIP)
- Garzón Vergara, J. C. et al. (2019). Las trayectorias de la reincorporación y la seguridad de los excombatientes de las FARC: Riesgos, respuestas del Estado y tareas pendientes. Bogotá: Fundación Ideas para la Paz.
- Gaviria, A. (2010). Cambio social en Colombia durante la segunda mitad del siglo XX. Centro de Estudios sobre Desarrollo Economico.
- Geddes, B. (2003). *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. Ann Arbour, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Gerring, J. (2004). What is a Case Study and What Is It Good for? American Political Science Review, Vol. 98, No. 2, pp. 341-354.
- Ghandour, Z. B. (2010). *A Discourse on Domination in Mandate Palestine: Imperialism, Property and Insurgency*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Giholdes, P. (1993). Sistema de partidos y partidos políticos en Colombia. FESCOL: Bogota.
- Giustozzi, A. (2000). *War, Politics, and Society in Afghanistan: 1978-1992*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.
- González Arias, J. J. & Briceño, L. H. (2002). *Escenario amapolero en el Sur del Tolima*. Mama Coca. Retrieved from: http://www.mamacoca.org/feb2002/art_gonzalez_escenario_amapolero_es.html

- González Cepero, P. et al. (2020). El problema del reclutamiento y la utilización de niños, niñas y adolescents: Desafíos y respuestas urgentes. Bogotá: Fundación Ideas para la Paz.
- González Posso, C. & Espitia, C. E. (2017). *XIII Informe sobe presencia de grupos narcoparamilitares, primer semestre 2017*. Bogotá: Indepaz.
- González González, F. E. (1989). Aproximación a la configuración politica en Colombia. Controversia. No. 153-154.
- González González, F. E. (2004). The Colombian conflict in historical perspective. In *Accord: Alternatives to war. Colombia's peace processes*. Ed. García-Durán, M. London: Conciliation Resources in collaboration with CINEP.
- González González, F. E. (2014). *Poder y violencia en Colombia*. Bogota: Odecofi/CINEP.
- González González, F. E. & Rettberg, A. (2010). Pensando la fragilidad estatal en Colombia. *Revista de Estudios Sociales*, No. 37, pp. 181-184.
- González González, F. E., Bolivar, I. J. & Vázquez, T. (2003). *Violencia politica en Colombia. De la nación fragmentada a la construcción del Estado*. Bogota: CINEP.
- Gordon, S. (2010). The United Kingdom's stabilization model and Afghanistan: the impact on humanitarian actors. *Disasters*, Vol. 34, No. S3, pp. S368-S387.
- Grajales, J. (2011). El proceso de desmovilización de los paramilitares en Colombia: entre lo político y lo judicial. *Desafíos* Vol. 23-II, pp. 149-194.
- Grasa, R. (2016). Los retos de la gestión de la violencia directa en el posacuerdo. El debate sobre desarme, desmovilización, reintegración y reforma del sector de seguridad. Bogotá: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.
- Grasa, R. (2017). La transición en materia de seguridad pública en la Colombia posacuerdo: preguntas y agenda para la próxima década. Bogotá: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.
- Grävingholt et al. (2007). Development Cooperation and Non-State Armed Groups. Bonn: Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik gGmbH.
- Gray, V. J. (2008). The New Research on Civil Wars: Does it Help Us Understand the Colombian Conflict? *Latin American Politics and Society*, Vol. 50, No. 3, pp. 63-91.
- Groves, R. T. (1974). The Colombian National Front and the Administrative Reform. Administration & Society, Vol. 6, No. 3, pp. 316-332.
- Guest, G. et al. (2012). *Applied Thematic Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Guevara, E. (1969). *Guerrilla Warfare*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- Guhl, E. (1976). *Colombia: bosquejo de su geografía tropical*. Bogotá: Instituto Colombiano de la Cultura.
- Gutiérrez, M. P. et al. (2022). *Caracterizando espacialmente el delito urbano en Tumaco*. Bogotá: Centro de Estudios Sobre Seguridad y Drogas (CESED).
- Gutiérrez-Sanín, F. (2004). Criminal Rebels? A Discussion of Civil War and Criminality from the Colombian Experience. *Politics & Society*, Vol. 32, No. 2, pp. 257-285.
- Gutiérrez Sanín, F. (2007). ¿Lo que el viento se llevó? Los partidos políticos y la democracia en Colombia 1958-2002. Bogotá: Norma.
- Gutiérrez Sanín, F. (2014). *El orangután con sacoleva. Cien años de democracia y repression en Colombia (1910-2010)*. Bogota: Debate/IEPIRI.
- Gutiérrez Sanín, F. (2015). ¿Una historia simple? Retrieved from: https://www.centrodememoriahistorica.gov.co/descargas/comisionPaz2015/GutierrezFrancisco.pdf

- Gutiérrez Sanín, F. (2020). *¿Un Nuevo Ciclo de la Guerra en Colombia?* Bogota: Penguin Random House.
- Gutiérrez Sanín, F. & Dávila Ladrón de Guevara, A. (2000). Paleontólogos o politologos: ¿que podemos decir hoy sobre los dinosaurios? *Revista de Estudios Sociales*, No. 6, pp. 39-49.
- Gutiérrez Sanín, F. & Guataqui, J. C. (2009). The Colombian case: Peace-Making and Power Sharing. Retrieved from: http://web.worldbank.org/archive/website01241/WEB/IMAGES/COLOMBIA.PDF
- Gutiérrez Sanín, F., Acevedo, T. & Viatela, J. (2007). *Violent Liberalism? State, Conflict and Political Regime in Colombia, 1930-2006*. Crisis States Research Centre Working Paper No.19, London School of Economics.
- Gutiérrez Sanín, F. & Giustozzi, A. (2010). Networks and Armies: Structuring Colombia and Afghanistan. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 33, No. 9, pp. 836-853.
- Guzman, G., Fals-Borda, O., & Umaña, E. L. (1962). *La Violencia en Colombia: Estudio de un proceso social*. Bogota: Ediciones Tercer Mundo.
- Heger, L. J. & Jung, D. F. (2017). Negotiating with Rebels: The Effect of Rebel Service Provision on Conflict Negotiations. Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol. 61, No. 6, pp.
- Hobsbawm, E. (1963). The Revolutionary Situation in Colombia. *World Today*. Vol. 19, No. 6, pp. 248-258.
- Hoffman, O. (2007). Comunidades Negras en el Pacifico colombiano. Innovaciones y dinámicas étnicas. Quito: IFEA-IRD y Ediciones Abya-Yala.
- Hoffman, C., & Schneckener, U. (2011). Engaging non-state armed actors in peace- and state-building: options and strategies. *International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 93, No. 883, pp. 603-621.
- Hoskin, G. (1998). The State and Political Parties in Colombia. In: *Colombia: The Politics of Reforming the State*. (Ed.) Posada-Carbó, E. London: Pelgrave Macmillan, pp. 45-70.
- Hough, P. A. (2011). Guerrilla Insurgency as Organized Crime: Explaining the So-Called “Political Involution” of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. *Politics & Society*, Vol. 39, No. 3, pp. 379-414.
- Hoyos, C. & Muggah, R. (2009). Can Coherent, Coordinated and Complementary Approaches to Dealing with Fragile State Yield Better Outcomes? *Politorbis*. No. 46-1, pp. 54-58.
- Huang, R. (2016). *The Wartime Origins of Democratization: Civil War, Rebel Governance, and Political Regimes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University.
- Huang, R, & Sullivan, P. (2020). Arms for Education? External Support and Rebel Social Services. Journal of Peace Research.
- Human Rights Watch. (2005). *Smoke and Mirrors: Colombia’s demobilization of paramilitary groups*, Vol. 17, No. 3.
- Human Rights Watch. (February 3, 2010). Paramilitaries’ Heirs: New Face of Violence in Colombia. Retrieved from: https://www.hrw.org/report/2010/02/03/paramilitaries-heirs/new-face-violence-colombia
- Human Rights Watch. (December 13, 2018). Recycled Violence: Abuses by FARC Dissident Groups in Tumaco on Colombia’s Pacific Coast. Retrieved from: https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/12/13/recycled-violence/abuses-farc-dissident-groups-tumaco-colombias-pacific-coast

- Humphries, M. & Weinstein, J. (2006). Handling and Manhandling Civilians in Civil War. *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 52, pp. 429-447.
- Iniciativa Barómetro. (2019). *Estado efectivo de implementación del Acuerdo de Paz de Colombia 2 años de implementación*. Notre Dame, IN: Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies.
- Iniciativa Barómetro. (2020). *Tres Años Después de La Firma Del Acuerdo Final de Colombia: Hacia La Transformación Territorial*. Notre Dame, IN: Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies.
- Integrante del partido político Farc en Tolima al parecer fue retenido y amenazado de muerte. (July 14, 2018). *Alerta Tolima*. Retrieved from: https://www.alertatolima.com/noticias/judicial/integrante-del-partido-politico-farc-en-tolima-al-parecer-fue-retenido-y
- International Crisis Group. (2017). Los grupos armados de Colombia y su disputa por el botin de la paz. *Informe sobre América Latina*, No. 63.
- International Crisis Group. (2019). Calming the Restless Pacific: Violence and Crime on Colombia's Coast. *Informe sobre América Latina*, No. 76.
- Isacson, A. (May 24, 2011). Little Progress in Troubled Tumaco, Colombia. *WOLA*. Retrieved from: https://www.wola.org/analysis/little-progress-in-troubled-tumaco-colombia/
- Isacson, A. and Poe, A. (2010) After Plan Colombia: Evaluating 'Integrated Action', the Next Phase of US Assistance. International Policy Report. Center for International Policy, Washington, DC.
- Jaramillo Arango, J. J. (April, 2018). Con terror y dólares de la cocaína, Guacho impone su poder en la frontera colombo-ecuatoriana. *Las 2 Orillas*. Retrieved from: https://www.las2orillas.co/con-terror-y-dolares-de-la-cocaina-guacho-impone-su-poder-en-la-frontera-colombo-ecuatoriana/
- Jaramillo, S. (2014). *La Paz Territorial*. Retrieved from: https://interaktive-demokratie.org/files/downloads/La-Paz-Territorial.pdf
- Jentzsch, C., Kalyvas, S. N., & Schubiger, L. I. (2015). Militias in Civil Wars. *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. *59*, No.1, pp. 755–769.
- Johnson, D. H. (1998). "The Sudan People's Liberation Army and the Problem of Factionalism", In: Clapham, C. (ed.), *African Guerrillas*. Oxford, James Currey, pp. 53-72.
- Johnson, K. (April 23, 2018). Tumaco: ¿La paz inalcanzable? Razón Publica. Retrieved from: https://razonpublica.com/tumaco-la-paz-inalcanzable/
- Johnson, K. (July 29, 2019). Bulding Trust in Colombia's Hub of Coca and Conflict. *International Crisis Group*. Retrieved from: https://www.crisisgroup.org/latin-america-caribbean/andes/colombia/building-trust-colombias-hub-coca-and-conflict
- ¿Jóvenes sin esperanza? (2017, May 14). *Semana*. Retrieved from: https://especiales.semana.com/tumaco/cap1.html
- Kaldor, M (2007). *New and old wars: Organised violence in a global era*. 2nd edition. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Kalyvas, S. N. (2006). *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Kasfir, N. (2002). Dilemmas of Popular Support in Guerrilla War: The National Resistence Army in Uganda, 1981-86. Paper presented at LiCEPT. November. University of California, Los Angeles.
- Kasfir, N. (2005). Guerrillas and Civilian Participation: The National Resistance Army in Uganda, 1981-86. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 2, pp. 271-296.

- Kasfir, N. (2008). Guerrilla Governance: Patterns and Explanations. APSA 2009 Toronto Meeting Paper, Retrieved from: https://ssrn.com/abstract=1449105.
- Kasfir, N. (2015). 'Rebel Governance – Constructing a Field of Inquiry: Definitions, Scope, Patterns, Order, Causes'. In Arjona, A, Kasfir, N., & Mampilly, Z. (eds.). *Rebel Governance in Civil War*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 21-46.
- Keen, D. (2005). *The Best of Enemies: Conflict and Collusion in Sierra Leone*. Oxford: James Currey, Palgrave Macmillan.
- Keister, J. M. (2011). States within states : how rebels rule. UC San Diego Electronic Theses and Dissertations
- Kingston, P. & Spears, I. (2004). *States-within-States: Incipient Political Entities in the Post-Cold War Era*. New York, NY: Palgrave.
- Knight, M. & Ozerdem, A. (2004). Guns, Camps and Cash: Disarmament, Demobilization and Reinsertion of Former Combatants in Transitions from War to Peace. *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 41, No.4, p. 499-516.
- Kline, H.F. (1995). *Colombia: Democracy Under Assault*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Kolbe, A. R. & Muggah, R. (2011). 'Securing the State: Haiti before and after the earthquake.' In Lebrun, E. (Ed.). *Small Arms Survey: States of Security*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Krakowski, (2015). Colombian Paramilitaries Since Demobilization: Between State Crackdown and Increased Violence. *Latin American Politics and Society*, Vol. 57, No. 4, pp. 28-50.
- Krause, K. & Jutersonke, O. (2005). Peace, Security and Development in Post-Conflict Environments. *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 36, No. 4, pp. 447-462.
- Kurtenbach, S., & Rettberg, A. (2018). Understanding the relation between war economies and post-war crime. Third World Thematics, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 1-8.
- Lake, David A., Building Legitimate States After Civil Wars: Order, Authority, and International Trusteeship (April 2007). *SSRN.*
- Lambach, D. (2007). Oligopolies of violence in post-conflict societies. *GIGA Working Papers*, no. 62. Hamburg: GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies / Leibniz-Institut fur Globale und Regionale Studien.
- Lang, H., & Al Wari, M. (2016). After liberation: Assessing stabilisation efforts in areas of Iraq cleared of the Islamic State. Washington, DC: Center for American Progress.
- La primera disidencia de las FARC. (July 8, 2016). *Semana*. Retrieved from: https://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/frente-primero-de-las-farc-anuncio-desde-el-guaviare-que-no-dejara-las-armas/481118/
- Las Farc mataron a 'Don Y'. (November 16, 2016). *La Silla Vacía*. Retrieved from: https://www.lasillavacia.com/historias/silla-nacional/las-farc-mataron-a-don-y-/
- Las 'grietas' del Andén Pacifico rumbo al posconflicto. (December 12, 2017). *Verdad Abierta*. Retrieved from: https://verdadabierta.com/las-grietas-del-anden-pacifico-rumbo-al-posconflicto/
- Leal Buitrago, F. (1989). *Estado y Política en Colombia*. In: Wills-Otero, L., Rettberg, A. & Escobar, L.J.O. (2016). *Obra de Francisco Leal Buitrago (Tomo II). Estudios sobre el Estado y la política en Colombia*. Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes.
- Leal Buitrago, F. (1996). *Tras las Huellas de la Crisis Política*. Bogotá: Tercer Mundo Editores./IEPERI.

- Leal Buitrago, F. (2011). Una Visión de Seguridad en Colombia. *Análisis Político*, Vol. 24, No. 73, pp. 3-36.
- Leal Buitrago, F. & Dávila Ladrón de Guevara, A. (1990). Clientelismo: El Sistema politico y su expression regional. Bogota: IEPRI.
- Lederach, J.P. (1995). *Preparing for Peace: Conflict Transformation Across Cultures*. New York: Syracuse University Press.
- Leech, G. (2011). *The FARC: The Lost Insurgency*. Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing.
- LeGrand, C. (1984). Labor acquisition and social conflict on the Colombian frontier, 1850–1936. Journal of Latin American Studies, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp. 27-49.
- LeGrand, C. (1986). *Frontier Expansion and Peasant Protest in Colombia, 1830-1936*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.
- LeGrand, C. (2003). The Colombian Conflict in Historical Perspective. *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 55-56, pp. 165-209.
- León, J. (2003). *Pais de plomo. Cronica de Guerra*. Bogota: Planeta.
- Lemay-Hébert, N. (2015). 2015, United Nations Stabilisation Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). in J Koops, N MacQueen, T. Tardy & P Williams (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*. Oxford University Press, pp. 722-732.
- Lessing, B. (2020). *Conceptualizing Criminal Governance*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Loaiza, L. (November 26, 2019). Columna Dagoberto Ramos de las Ex-FARC mafia ejecutó atentado en Colombia. *InSight Crime*. Retrieved from: https://es.insightcrime.org/noticias/analisis/columna-dagoberto-ramos-de-las-ex-farc-mafia-ejecuto-atentado-en-colombia/
- Loaiza, L. & Navarrete, M. A. (February 20, 2020). 'Contador' – Colombia's Sought After Patron of Cocaine. *InSight Crime*. Retrieved from: https://insightcrime.org/news/analysis/contador-patron-cocaine-colombia/
- López Hernandez, C. (2010). *Y refundaron la patria? De cómo mafiosos y politicos reconfiguraron el Estado colombiano*. Bogota: Random House Mandadori.
- López Hernandez, C. (2016). *Adios a las FARC, y ahora que?* Bogota: Debate.
- López-Uribe, M. & Sánchez, F. (2018). On the agrarian origins of civil conflict in Colombia. LSE-Stanford-Universidad de los Andes Conference on Long-Run Development in Latin. Retrieved from: https://www.lse.ac.uk/lacc/publications/PDFs/Sanchez-LopezUribe-OriginOfConflict-03-12-2017.pdf
- Los golpes más Fuertes a las Farc. (September 21, 2010). *BBC*. Retrieved from: https://www.bbc.com/mundo/america_latina/2010/09/100923_colombia_farc_cronologia_golpe_mono_jojoy_amab
- Lothe, E. & Peake, G. (2010). Addressing symptoms but not causes: stabilisation and humanitarian action in Timor-Leste. *Disasters*. Vol. 34, No. 3, pp. S427-43.
- Lozano-Espitia, I. & Restrepo, J. C. (2016). El papel de la infraestructura rural en el desarrollo agricola en Colombia. *Conyuntura Económica*, Vol. 46, No. 1, pp. 107-147.
- Lozano Mancera, N. (2018). *Comportamiento del homicidio: Colombia, año 2018*. In *Forensis 2018: Datos para la vida*. Instituto Nacional de Medicina Legal y Ciencias Forenses. Retrieved from: http://www.medicinalegal.gov.co/documents/20143/386932/Forensis+2018.pdf/be4816a4-3da3-1ff0-2779-e7b5e3962d60

- Mac Ginty, R 2012 Against Stabilization. Stability. *International Journal of Conflict and Security*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 20–30.
- Macías Tolosa, A. & Bayona Sánchez, J. (2019). La Unidad Policial para la Edificación de la Paz y su modelo organizacional para la construcción de paz en Colombia. *Revista Logos, Ciencia & Tecnología*, Vol. 11, No. 3, pp. 136-151.
- Macrae, J. (2000) The Monopolitics of Humanitarian Intervention: Defining the aid-politics boundary, Notes for an ODI seminar, 31 May 2000.
-
- Malaquias, A. (2001). Diamonds are a guerrilla's best friend: The Impact of illicit wealth on insurgency strategy. Third World Quarterly, Vol. 22, No. 3, pp. 311-325.
- Mampilly, Z. (2007). Stationary Bandits: Understanding Rebel Governance. Dissertation. University of California, Los Angeles.
- Mampilly, Z. (2011). *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life During War*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Mampilly, Z. & Stewart, M. A. (2021). A Typology of Rebel Political Institutional Arrangements. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 65, No. 1, pp. 15-45.
- Mann, M. (1986). *The Sources of Social Power: A History of Power from the Beginning to A.D. 1760*. Vol. 1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mao Zedong. (1961). *On Guerilla Warfare*. New York, NY: Praeger.
- Martinez Cortes, P. (2013). Ley de victimas y restitutucion de tierras en Colombia en context: Un análisis de las contradicciones entre el modelo agrario y la reparación a las víctimas. Berlin: FDCL.
- Mason, A. (2003). Colombia's Conflict and theories of world politics. *Social Science Research Council's Items and Issues*, Vol. 4, No.2-3, pp. 1-11.
- Marten, K. (2015). *Warlords: Strong-arm Brokers in Weak States*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Massé, F. & Camargo, J. Actores Armados Ilegales y Sector Extractivo en Colombia, V Informe. (2012). CITpax Colombia and Observatorio Internacional DDR – Ley de Justicia y Paz, pp. 20–25.
- Mauceri, P. (2001). Estado, élites y contrainsurgencia: una comparación preliminar entre Colombia y Peru. *Colombia Internacional*, No. 52, pp. 44-64.
- Matan a la profesora colombiana Liliana Astrid Ramírez, la cuarta líder social asesinada en sólo dos días. (October 20, 2017). *Notimérica*. Retrieved from: https://www.notimerica.com/politica/noticia-colombia-matan-profesora-colombiana-liliana-astrid-ramirez-cuarta-lider-social-asesinada-solo-dos-dias-20171020023938.html
- Matta Colorado, N. (2018). La Guerra que armó "la Oficina" por la cocaína de Tumaco. *El Colombiano*. Retrieved from: https://www.elcolombiano.com/antioquia/seguridad/la-guerra-que-armo-la-oficina-por-la-cocaina-de-tumaco-HL8841779
- Mazzoldi Díaz, G. et al. (2018). Territorio, seguridad y violencias de género en Tumaco. Bogotá: Fundación Ideas para la Paz.
- McColl, R. W. (1969). The Insurgent State: Territorial Bases of Revolution. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 59, No. 4, pp. 613-631.
- McFee, E. K. (2020). "Making a Presence": Reconciliation and the State in Colombia. Retrieved from: https://polarjournal.org/2020/11/24/making-a-presence-reconciliation-and-the-state-in-colombia/

- Ministère de la Défense de la République Française (MDRF). (2010). Sécurité, Développement, Gouvernance: Contribution des Forces Armées à la Stabilisation. DIA-3.4.5_STAB.
- Miranda, B. (April 13, 2018). Colombia: qué es el Frente Oliver Sinisterra, el grupo disidente de las FARC al que acusan de la muerte del equipo de prensa de El Comercio de Ecuador. *BBC Mundo*. Retrieved from: https://www.bbc.com/mundo/noticias-america-latina-43762143
- Mejía, A.T. (1998). "Violence and the State in Colombia." In *Colombia: The Politics of Reforming the State*. Ed. Posada-Carbó, E. London: Pelgrave Macmillan, pp. 111-124.
- Mejia Londoño, D., Uribe Trujillo, M. J., & Ibañez Londoño, A. M. (2011). Una evaluación del Plan de Consolidación Integral de la Macarena (PCIM). Documentos CEDE.
- Metelits, C. (2010). *Inside Insurgency: Violence, Civilians, and Revolutionary Group Behaviors*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Molano, A. (1987). *Selva adentro: Una historia oral de la colonización del Guaviare*. Bogotá: El Áncora Editores.
- Molinares, C. & Reyes le Palisot, E. (2012). Pobreza, debilidad institucional, cultivos ilícitos, trafico de drogas y grupos armados ilegales en Buenaventura y Tumaco. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung. Retrieved from: https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/kolumbien/09889.pdf
- Muggah, R. (2005). No Magic Bullet: A critical Perspective on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) and Weapons Reduction in Post-conflict Context. *The Round Table*, Vol. 94, No. 379, pp. 239-252.
- Muggah, R. (2010). The effects of stabilisation on humanitarian action in Haiti. *Disasters*. Vol. 34, s. 3, pp. 1-20.
- Muggah, R. (2014). Deconstructing the fragile city: Exploring insecurity, violence and resilience. Environment and Urbanization, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp. 1-14.
- Muñoz, M. & Pachón, M. (2021). "Paz sí, pero no así"? Voter Profiles and Attitudes Toward the 2016 Colombian Peace Agreement. *Latin American Politics and Society*, Vol. 63, No. 1, pp. 95-117.
- NATO. (December 1, 2015). Allied joint doctrine for the military contribution to stabilization and reconstruction. Document Number ajp-3.4.5. Retrieved from http://standards.globalspec.com/std/9979829/nato-ajp-3-4-5
- Nussio, E. (2011). Learning from Shortcomings: The Demobilization of Paramilitaries in Colombia. *Journal of Peacebuilding and Development*, Vol. 6, No. 2, pp. 88-92.
- Nussio, E. & Howe, K. (2016). When Protection Collapses: Post-Demobilization Trajectories of Violence. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol. 28, no. 5, pp. 848-867.
- Observatorio del Programa Presidencial de Derechos Humanos y DIH. (2009). *Dinámica reciente de la violencia en la Costa Pacífica nariñense y caucana y su incidencia sobre las comunidades afrocolombianas*. Bogota: Vicepresidencia de la Republica.
- Ocampo, J.A. (2015). *Historia Economica de Colombia*. Bogota: Fondo de Cultura Economica.
- O'Donnell, G. (2001). Democracy, Law, and Comparative Politics. *Studies in Comparative International Development*, Vol. 36, No. 1, pp. 7-36.

- OECD. (2008). Concepts and Dilemmas of State Building in Fragile Situations: from Fragility to Resilience. OECD/DAC (Development Assistance Committee) Discussion Paper. OECD, Paris.
- OECD. (2012). Think global, act global: Confronting global factors that influence conflict and fragility. Paris: OECD.
- Oficina del Alto Comisionado para la Paz. (2016). *Texto completo del Acuerdo Final para la Terminación del Conflicto y la Construcción de una Paz Estable y Duradera*. Retrieved from: http://www.altocomisionadoparalapaz.gov.co/procesos-y-conversaciones/Paginas/Texto-completo-del-Acuerdo-Final-para-la-Terminacion-del-conflicto.aspx
- Offstein, N. (2003). *An Historical Review and Analysis of Colombian Guerrilla Movements*. Bogotá: CEDE.
- Olson, M. (1993). Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development. *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 87, No. 3, pp. 567-576.
- Osorio Montoya, D.E. (2018). La Difícil Apertura Democrática en Colombia. *Documentos de Politicas Publicas*, No. 13, pp. 1-28.
- Oquist, P. H. (1980). *Violence, Conflict, and Politics in Colombia*. New York, NY: Academic Press.
- Orlando Melo, J. (1988). *Historia de Antioquia*. Bogota: Presencia.
- Orlando, Melo, J. (2018). *Historia Minima de Colombia*. Bogota: Editorial Critica.
- Ortiz, R. D. (2002). Insurgent Strategies in the Post-Cold War: The Case of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 25 Issue 2, pp. 127-143.
- Pachón, M. (2009). Colombia 2008: éxitos, peligros y desaciertos de la politica de seguridad democrática de la administración Uribe. *Revista de Ciencia Politica*, Vol. 29, No. 2, pp. 327-353.
- Paes, W. C. (2005). The challenges of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in Liberia. *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 253–61.
- Palacios, M. (2001). "Presencia y ausencia de populismo: Para un contrapunto Colombo-Venezolano." *Del populismo de los antiguos al populismo de los modernos*. Ed. Hermet, G., Loaeza, S. & Prud'homme, J.F. Mexico DF: El Colegio de Mexico, pp. 327-364.
- Palacios, M. (2006). *Between Legitimacy and Violence: A History of Colombia, 1975-2002*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Palau, M. (2019, May 24). In Colombia's Tumaco, the war isn't over. *The New Humanitarian*. Retrieved from: https://www.pulitzercenter.org/reporting/colombias-tumaco-war-isnt-over-its-just-beginning
- Palma Oliva, C. J. (2021). *La disidencia Oliver Sinisterra en Nariño, 2017-2021*. Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia.
- Paris, R. (2004). *At War's End: Building Peace After Civil Conflict*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Paris, R., & Sisk, T. D. (eds.) (2010). *The Dilemmas of Statebulidng: Confronting the contradictions of post-war peace operations*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Patiño Villa, C.A. (2010). *Guerra y construcción del estado en Colombia, 1810-2010*. Bogota: Debate.
- Pavanello, S. & Darcy, J. (2008). Improving the Provisio of Basic Services for the Poor in Fragile Environment: International Literature Review Synthesis Paper. Report prepared for AusAID by the Overseas Development Institute, London.

- Payne, J. L. (1968). *Patterns of Conflict in Colombia*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- PCRU (Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit). (2007). Hot Stabilisation. Unpublished mimeo.
- Pecaut, D. (1987). *Orden y violencia: Colombia 1930-1954*. Bogota: CEREC.
- Pecaut, D. (1999). "From the Banality of Violence to Real Terror: The Case of Colombia." In: Koonings & Kruijt, eds. *Societies of Fear*, pp. 141-167.
- Pecaut, D. (2000). "Configurations of Space, Time, and Subjectivity in a Context of Terror: The Colombian Example." *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, Vol. 14, No. 1, Colombia: A Nation and Its Crisis, pp. 129-150.
- Pecaut, D. (2011). *Guerra contra la Sociedad*. Bogota: Editorial Planeta Colombia.
- Pecaut, D. & González, L. (1997). Presente, pasado y futuro de la violencia en Colombia*.* *Desarrollo Económico*, Vol. 36, No. 144, pp. 891-930.
- Peclard, D. & Mechoulan, D. (2015). Accounting for Variations in Rebel Governance. Working Papers. Swiss Peace.
- Pedraza, J. C. (May 2, 2017). Las Farc denuncian el asesinato del padre de un guerrillero en Tolima. *El Tiempo*. Retrieved from: https://www.eltiempo.com/politica/proceso-de-paz/las-farc-denuncian-el-asesinato-del-padre-de-un-guerrillero-en-tolima-83712
- Peña Salinas, V. H. & Ochoa Lancherso, J. A. (2008). Puerto Boyacá en los orígenes del paramilitarismo. *Derecho y Realidad*, Vol. 6, No. 12.
- Peralta Ardila, M., & Sánchez Salcedo, J. F. (2022). Appropriation and Spatial Order in La Fila and El Oso ETCRs (Tolima, Colombia). *Investigación & Desarrollo*, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp. 198-248.
- Perito, R. (2006). The US experience with Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan. United States Institute of Peace. Retrieved from: https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/sr152.pdf
- Phelan, A. (2021). FARC's Pursuit of "Taking Power": Insurgent Social Contracts, the Drug Trade and Appeals to Eudaemonic Legitimation. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, Vol. 44, No. 12, pp. 971-993.
- Piccolino, G. & Ruette-Orihuela, K. (2021). The turn from peacebuilding to stabilization: Colombia after the 2018 presidential election. Third World Quarterly, Vol. 42, No. 10, pp. 2393-2412.
- Pion-Berlin, D. (1989). *The Ideology of State Terror*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Pizarro, E. (1989). Los orígenes del movimiento armado comunista en Colombia (1949-1966). *Analisis Politico*. Vol. 7, pp. 7-32.
- Pizarro, E. (1991). *Las FARC (1949-1966). De la autodefensa a la combinación de todas las formas de lucha*. Bogota: Tercer Mundo Editores-IEPERI.
- Podder, S. (2014). Mainstreaming the non-state in bottom-up state-building: linkages between rebel governance and post-conflict legitimacy. *Conflict, Security & Development*, Vol. 14, No. 2, pp. 213-243.
- Poland, B. D. Transcription Quality as an Aspect of Rigor in Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, No. 1, Vol. 3, 1995, pp. 290-310.
- Policia Nacional de Colombia (2022). Estadistica delictiva. Retrieved from: https://www.policia.gov.co/grupo-informacion-criminalidad/estadistica-delictiva
- Posada-Carbó, E. (1998). *Colombia: The Politics of Reforming the State*. London: Pelgrave Macmillan.

- ¿Por qué están matando a los indígenas del Cauca? (August 12, 2019). *Semana*. Retrieved from: https://www.semana.com/nacion/articulo/por-que-los-disidentes-de-las-farc-estarian-matando-a-los-indigenas-del-cauca/627678/
- Posada-Carbó, E. (1998). Reflection on the Colombian State: In Search of a Modern Role. In Eduardo Posada-Carbó (ed.), Colombia: *The Politics of Reforming the State*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Prendergast, P., & Plumb, E. (2002). "Building Local Capacity: From Implementation to Peacebuilding," in *Ending Civil Wars: The Implementation of Peace Agreements*, (eds.) Stephen John Stedman, Donald Rothchild, and Elizabeth Cousens. Boulder, CO: Lynn Rienner Publishers.
- Prieto, C. A. (2013). Las Bacrim y el crimen organizado en Colombia. *Policy Paper 47*. Bonn: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.
- Prieto, J. (February 23, 2017). Las 10 razones porque el EPL es un problema mas. *La Silla Vacia*. Retrieved from: https://www.lasillavacia.com/historias/silla-nacional/las-10-razones-por-las-que-el-epl-es-un-problema-que-se-le-crecio-al-gobierno/
- Procuraduría General de la Nación. (2019). *Informe sobre el reclutamiento de niños, niñas y adolescentes*. Retrieved from: https://www.procuraduria.gov.co/portal/media/docs/Informe%20final%20sobre%20reclutamiento%20final.pdf
- Provost, R. (2021). 'Rebel Rule of Law and FARC Justice'. In: Provost, R. (ed.). *Rebel Courts: The Administration of Justice by Armed Insurgents*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Quiñones Caicedo, J. E. (2021). Diagnóstico de la situación actual de los juzgados penales municipales en tumaco Nariño para el fortalecimiento de la figura del vencimiento de términos. Universidad de Bogotá Jorge Tadeo Lozano. Retrieved from: https://expeditiorepositorio.utadeo.edu.co/handle/20.500.12010/24628
- Quinta Brigada captura a alias Guadalupe, jefe del ELN en el sur del país. (July 2, 2016). *El Heraldo*. Retrieved from: https://www.elheraldo.co/nacional/quinta-brigada-captura-alias-guadalupe-jefe-del-eln-en-el-sur-del-pais-269654
- Raeymaekers, T., Menkhaus, K., & Vlassenroot, K. (2008). State and non-state Regulation in African Protracted Crises: Governance Without Government? *Afrika Focus*, Vol. 21, No. 2, pp. 7-21.
- Ramos, J. & Garrido, D. (1995). Gasto estatal y administración de justicia en Colombia. Borradores Semanales de Economia, Vol. 45.
- Ramsbotham et al., (2011). Contemporary Conflict Resolution. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Rangel, A. (2010). "El éxito de la seguridad democrática". In Rangel A. & Medellín. *Politica de seguridad democrática*. Bogotá: Norma.
- Rebosio, M., & Wam, P. E. (2011). Violent Conflict and the Road Sector: Points of Interaction. World Bank, Washington, DC.
- Reisinger, C. (2009). A Framework for the Analysis of Post-conflict Situations: Liberia and Mozambique Reconsidered. *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 16, No. 4, pp. 483–498.
- Reno, W. (1998). *Warlord Politics and African States*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Restrepo, J. A. & Muggah, R. (2008). Colombia's quiet demobilization: a security dividend? In Muggah, R. (Ed.). *Security and Post Conflict Reconstruction: Dealing with Fighters in the Aftermath of War*. London: Routledge.

- Restrepo, J. A., Spagat, M. & Vargas, J. F. (2006). The severity of the Colombian conflict: Cross-country datasets versus new micro-data. *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 43, No. 1, pp. 99-115.
- Rettberg, A. (2015). Gold, oil and the lure of violence: the private sector and post-conflict risks in Colombia. NOREF Report. Retrieved from: https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/Rettberg_NOREF%20Clingendael_Gold%20oil%20and%20the%20lure%20of%20violence_the%20private%20sector%20and%20post-conflict%20risks%20in%20Colombia_Sept%202015_FINAL.pdf
- Reyes Posada, A. (1991). Paramilitares en Colombia: Contexto, alidaos y consecuencias. *Análisis político*, No. 12, pp. 35-47.
- Reyes Posada, A. & Bejarano, A. M. (1988). Conflictos agrarios y luchas armadas en la Colombia contemporánea. *Análisis Político*, No. 5, pp.6-27.
- Reyes Martínez, J. E. (2013). La zona de consolidación del sur del Tolima. Limitaciones para el desarrollo, oportunidades y potencialidades. *Temas y Reflexiones*, Vol. 2, pp. 104-130.
- Richani, N. (2003). Sistemas de Guerra: la economía política del conflicto en Colombia. Bogotá: IEPIRI.
- Rodríguez, J. D. (2015). Génesis, actores y dinámicas de la violencia política en el pacifico nariñense. Bogotá: Odecofi-CINEP.
- Rodríguez, S. (July 5, 2018). En confusos hechos fue asesinado líder social en el Tolima. *RCN Radio*. Retrieved from: https://www.rcnradio.com/colombia/region-central/en-confusos-hechos-fue-asesinado-lider-social-en-el-tolima
- Roldán, M. (1989). Guerrillas, contrachusma y caudillos durante la violencia en Antioquia: 1949-1953. *Estudios Sociales*, No. 4.
- Roldán, M. (2002). *Blood and Fire: La Violencia in Antioquia, Colombia, 1946-1953*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Romero, M. (2003). *Paramilitares y autodefensas, 1982-2003*. Bogotá: Editiorial Planeta.
- Rotmann, P. (2016). Toward a Realistic and Responsible Idea of Stabilisation. *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, Vol. 5, No. 1, p.5.
- Ryan, G. W. & Russell, B. H. (2016). Techniques to Identify Themes. *Field Methods*, Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 85-109.
- Saéz, A. (2018). *Crónica de una Paz Incierta: Colombia Sobrevive*. Madrid: Circulo de Tiza.
- Safford F. & Palacios, M. (2001). *Colombia: Fragmented Land, Divided Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Salazar, A. (1990). *No Nacimos Pa' Semilla*. Bogotá: CINEP.
- Salas Salazar, L. G., Wolff, J. & Camelo, F. E. (2019). Towards violent peace? Territorial dynamics of violence in Tumaco (Colombia) before and after the demobilisation of the FARC. *Conflict, Security & Development*. Vol. 19, No. 5, pp. 497-520.
- Sambanis, N., & Milanovic, B. (2014). Explaining Regional Autonoy Differences in Decentralized Countries. Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 47, No. 13,
- Sánchez, G. (1977). *Las ligas campesinas en Colombia: Auge y reflujo*. Bogotá: Ediciones Tiempo Presente.
- Sánchez, G. (1983). *Los días de la revolución: gaitanismo y 9 de abril en provincia*. Bogotá: Centro Cultural Jorge Eliacer Gaitán.

- Sánchez, G. (1992). The Violence: An Interprative Synthesis. In: Berquvist, C., Peñaranda, R. & Sánchez, G. (Eds.). *Violence in Colombia: The Contemporary Crisis in a Historical Perspective*. Willmngton: Scholarly Resources Books, p.88-91.
- Sánchez, G. (2000). Guerra prolongada, negociaciones inciertas en Colmbia. *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'études andines*, Vol. 29, No. 3, pp. 269-305.
- Sánchez, G. & Meertens, D. (1983). *Bandoleros, gamonales y campesinos: el caso de la violencia en Colombia*. Bogotá: El Ancora Editores.
- Sánchez, G. & Meertens, D. (2001). *Bandits, Peasants, and Politics: The Case of "La Violencia" in Colombia*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Sánchez, F. & Chacón, M. (2006). Conflicto, estado y decentralización: del progreso social a la disputa armada por el control local 1974-2002. In IEPRI (eds), *Nuestra Guerra Sin Nombre: Transformaciones del Conflicto en Colombia*. Bogotá: Planeta.
- Sánchez, F. et al. (2010). Land Conflicts, Property Rights, and the Rise of the Export Economy in Colombia, 1850-1925. *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 70, No. 2, pp. 378-399.
- Sánchez de la Sierra, R. (2020). On the Origins of the State: Stationary Bandits and Taxation in Eastern Congo. *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 128, No. 1, pp. 32-74.
- Saavedra, A. M. (October 25, 2017). El nuevo plan para Tumaco es parecido al viejo plan para Tumaco. *La Silla Vacía*. Retrieved from: https://www.lasillavacia.com/historias/silla-nacional/el-nuevo-plan-para-tumaco-es-parecido-al-viejo-plan-para-tumaco
- Schlichte, K. (2009). *In the Shadow of Violence: The Politics of Armed Groups*. Frankfurt/Main: Campus Verlag.
- Schultze-Kraft, M. (2012). La cuestión militar en Colombia: la fuerza pública y los retos de la construcción de la paz. In Angelika Rettberg (ed.) *Construcción de paz en Colombia*. Colombia: Universidad de los Andes, pp. 405-433.
- Seawright, J. (2016). The Case for Selecting Cases That Are Deviant or Extreme on the Independent Variable. *Sociological Methods & Research*, Vol. 45, No. 3.
- Seawright, J. & Gerring, J. (2008). Case Selection Techniques in Case Study Research. A Menu of Qualitative and Quantitative Options. *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 61, No. 2.
- Segura, R. and Mechoulan, D. (2017). Made in Havana: How Colombia and the FARC Decided to End the War. New York, NY: International Peace Institute.
- Selby, R. (2011). 'The Political Economy of Peace Processes'. In Pugh et al (Eds.). *Whose Peace? Critical Perspectives on the Political Economy of Peacebuilding*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Shaw, M. & Kemp, W. (2012). *Spotting the Spoilers: A Guide to Analyzing Organized Crime in Fragile States*. New York, NY: International Peace Institute.
- Sherman, J. (2008). Afghanistan: National-led State Building' in Building States to Build Peace, Call, C. with Wyeth, V. (eds.). Boulder: Lynne Rienner
- Silva Ávalos, H. (June 7, 2017). Colombia: Ground Zero of the Cocaine Trade. *InSight Crime*. Retrieved from: https://insightcrime.org/investigations/narino-colombia-ground-zero-cocaine-trade/
- Sin Farc, pero con otros actores armados: la nueva amenaza en el Sur del Tolima. (February 26, 2019). *Semana Rural*. Retrieved from: https://semanarural.com/web/articulo/sur-del-tolima-amenazas-a-lideres-sociales/840
- Sistema de Información sobre agresiones contra Personas Defensoras de Derechos Humanos en Colombia SIADDHH – Programa Somos Defensores. (2016). *El Cambio. Informe anual 2015*. Retrieved from: https://somosdefensores.org/wp-

content/uploads/2018/08/Documentos/TODOS%20LOS%20INFORMES/informes%20en%20espa%C3%B1ol/informes%20anuales/INFORME%20SOMOS%20DEFENSORES%202015%20ANUAL_ESPA%C3%91OL.pdf

- Sistema de Información sobre agresiones contra Personas Defensoras de Derechos Humanos en Colombia SIADDHH – Programa Somos Defensores. (2017). *Contra las Cuerdas. Informe anual 2016*. Retrieved from: https://somosdefensores.org/informe-anual-1/
- Sistema de Información sobre agresiones contra Personas Defensoras de Derechos Humanos en Colombia SIADDHH – Programa Somos Defensores. (2018). *Piedra en el Zapato. Informe anual 2017*. Retrieved from: https://somosdefensores.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/INFORME-SOMOS-DEFENSORES-2017-ANUAL_ESPAN%CC%83OL.pdf
- Sistema de Información sobre agresiones contra Personas Defensoras de Derechos Humanos en Colombia SIADDHH – Programa Somos Defensores. (2019). *La Naranja Mecánica*. Informe anual 2018. Retrieved from: https://somosdefensores.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/informe-somos-defensores-2019-espanol-web.pdf
- Soto, L. (April 29, 2018). Las 6 cosas que revela la marcha de Tumaco. *La Silla vacía*. Retrieved from: https://www.lasillavacia.com/historias/silla-nacional/las-6-cosas-que-revela-la-marcha-de-tumaco
- Soto, L. (August 22, 2018). Holmes Niscué sabia que Guacho lo iba a matar. *La Silla Vacía*. Retrieved from: https://www.lasillavacia.com/historias/silla-nacional/holmes-niscue-sabia-que-guacho-lo-iba-a-matar/
- Staniland, P. (2012). States, Insurgents, and Wartime Political Orders. *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 10, No.2, pp. 243–64.
- Stedman, J. (1997). Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes. *International Security*, vol. 22, no. 2, pp. 5-53.
- Stewart, M. A. (2018). Civil War as State-making: Strategic Governance in Civil War. *International Organization*, Vol. 72, No. 1, pp. 205-226.
- Stokes, D. (2005). *America's Other War: Terrorizing Colombia*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Stokke, K. (2006). Building the Tamil Eelam State: Emerging State Institutions and Forms of Governance in LTTE-controlled Areas in Sri Lanka. *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 27, pp. 1021-1040.
- Supuesto panfleto de las Farc está rondando en poblaciónes del sur del Tolima. (August 2, 2018). *Alerta Tolima*. Retrieved from: https://www.alertatolima.com/noticias/judicial/supuesto-panfleto-de-las-farc-esta-rondando-en-poblaciones-del-sur-del-tolima
- Sweig, J.E. (2002). What Kind of War for Colombia. Foreign Affairs, Vol. 81, No. 5. Recovered from: https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/colombia/2002-09-01/what-kind-war-colombia.
- Tafur Villarreal. & A & Mejia Baldión, A. (2020). *Nuevas y viejas violencias: Desafíos para la no repetición en el sur del Tolima*. Ibagué: Centro de Estudios Regionales.
- Tafur Villarreal et al. (2020). Desafíos de equidad frente a la pandemia COVID-19: Recomendaciones para el departamento del Tolima. Ibagué: Centro de Estudios Regionales.
- Taussig, M. (2003). *Law in a Lawless Land: Diary of a Limpieza in Colombia*. Chicago, IL, London: The University of Chicago Press.

- Taydas, Z. (2010). Why Do Civil Wars Occur? Understanding the Importance of Institutional Quality. *Civil Wars*, Vol. 12, No. 3, pp. 195-217.
- Terpstra, N. & Frerks, (2017). Rebel Governance and Legitimacy: Understanding the Impact of Rebel Legitimation on Civilian Compliance with the LTTE Rule. *Civil Wars*. Vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 279-307.
- Thompson, L. B. (1989). *Low-intensity Conflict: The Patterns of Warfare in the Modern World*. Lexington, Mass: Lexington Books.
- Tickner, A. (2000). Tensiones y consecuencias indeseables de la política exterior estadounidense en Colombia. *Colombia Internacional*, No. 49-50, pp. 40-61.
- Tilly, C. (1985). War Making and State Making as Organized Crime. In: Evans, P. B., Rueschemeyer, D. & Skocpol, T. (eds), *Bringing the State Back In*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 169-191.
- Tilly, C. (1992). *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1992*. Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell.
- Thomas, D. R. (2016). A General Inductive Approach for Analyzing Qualitative Evaluation Data. *American Journal of Evaluation*. Vol. 27, No. 2.
- Thoumi, F. E. (1995). Political economy and illegal drugs in Colombia. London UK: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Tobón, S. & Cajamarca, A. (2018). *Una apuesta por la competividad de Tumaco: construcción territorial, inclusión productiva y bienestar social*. Bogotá: Instituto de Ciencia Política Hernán Echavarría Olózaga.
- Tokatlian, J. G. (2000). Colombia at War: The Search for a Peace Diplomacy. *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society*, Vol. 14, pp. 333–362.
- Toledo at al. (2003). *War in Colombia: Made in U.S.A*. New York, NY: International Action Center.
- Trejos, L. (2020). *Situación de los actores armados en el Caribe colombiano: del orden armado a la anarquía criminal*. Bogotá: Instituto Colombo-Alemán para la Paz (CAPAZ).
- Trinquier, R. (2006). Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency. Westport, Conn: Praeger Security international.
- Tumaco, convulsionado por la violencia. (2016, September 9). *Verdad Abierta*. Retrieved from: https://verdadabierta.com/tumaco-convulsionado-por-la-violencia/
- Uberti, O. (2022). Un análisis del reclutamiento forzado de Niños, Niñas Adolescentes y Jóvenes (NNAJ) en el Departamento de Chocó, Colombia. Universidad Autónoma del Caribe. *Revista Encuentros*, Vol. 20, No. 02, pp. 141-153.
- Ucko, D. H. (2016). Can limited intervention work? Lessons from Britain's Sierra Leone. *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 39, No. 5-6, pp. 847-877.
- UK Stabilisation Unit. (2008). The UK Approach to Stabilisation: Emerging UK Experience and Best Practice. Stabilisation Unit Guidance Note. London: Stabilisation Unit.
- UK Stabilisation Unit (2009) Quick Impact Projects – QIPs. Retrieved from: http://www.stabilisationunit.gov.uk/attachments/
- 104_QIPs%20handbook%20WEB%20Version2009.pdf.
- UK Stabilisation Unit. (2014). The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation. London: Stabilisation Unit.
- UK Stabilisation Unit. (2019). The UK Government's Approach to Stabilisation: A guide for policy makers and practitioners. London: Stabilisation Unit.
- Unidad para las Victimas. (2022). Visor Geográfico de Victimas. Retrieved from: https://vgv.unidadvictimas.gov.co/#

- United Nations. (2014). UN International Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (revised 2019). Retrieved from: https://pressbooks.pub/leadershipconsiderations/chapter/4-6-disarmament-demobilization-and-reintegration-programmes-implemented/
- United Nations (April 13, 2017). "Security Council decides UN Mission in Haiti will close by October; approves smaller follow-on operation." *UN News*. Retrieved from: https://news.un.org/en/story/2017/04/555342
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2016). *Colombia: Monitoreo de territorios afectados por cultivos ilícitos 2015.* Bogotá: SIMCI-UNODC.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. (2018). *Colombia: Monitoreo de territorios afectados por cultivos ilícitos 2017.* Bogotá: SIMCI-UNODC.
- United Nations Refugee Agency. (2018). *Informe de desplazamientos masivos 2018*. Retrieved from: https://www.refworld.org.es/publisher,UNHCR,,,5c378f994,0.html
- United Nations Human Rights Council. (2018). *Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation of human rights in Colombia*. Retrieved from: https://reliefweb.int/report/colombia/annual-report-united-nations-high-commissioner-human-rights-situation-human-rights-0
- United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for the Human Rights. (2022). *Violencia Territorial en Colombia: Recomendaciones para el Nuevo Gobierno*. Retrieved from: https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-07/reporta-Informe-Violencia-Territorial-en-Colombia-Recomendaciones-para-el-Nuevo-Gobierno-Oficina-ONU-Derechos-Humanos.pdf
- Uprimny, R. & Vargas, A. (1990). La palabra y la sangre: violencia, legalidad y guerra sucia en Colombia, In: *La irrupción del paraestado*, Palacio, G. (ed.), Bogotá: CERAC.
- Uribe de Hincapié, M.T. (1999). Las soberanías en disputa: ¿Conflicto de identidades o de derechos? *Estudios Políticos*, No. 15, pp. 23-45.
- Uribe Sarmiento, J. J. (December 5, 2016). El sur del Tolima: de epicentro del conflicto a laboratorio de paz. *Razón Publica*. Retrieved from: https://razonpublica.com/el-sur-del-tolima-de-epicentro-del-conflicto-a-laboratorio-de-paz/
- Uribe, S, Otero-Behamón, S., & Peñaranda, I. (2020). Making the State: Roads, War, and Local Orders in the FARC Territories. *Revista de Estudios Sociales*, Vol.75, pp. 87-100.
- U.S. Department of State (2018). A Framework for Maximizing the Effectiveness of U.S. Government Efforts to Stabilize Conflict-Affected Areas. Stabilization Assisstance Review (SAR). Retrieved from: https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/SAR-Final.pdf
- Valencia Agudelo, G. D. (2007). Reconstrucción analítica del proceso de desarme, desmovilización y reinserción con las Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia, 2002-2007. *Perfil de Coyuntura Económica*, Vol. 10, pp. 147-191.
- Valencia, L. & Ávila M. A. (2011). La nueva realidad de las FARC. Corporación Nuevo Arco Iris. Retrieved from: https://www.rebelion.org/docs/132833.pdf
- Valencia, L. & Ávila M. A. (2016). *Los Retos del Postconflicto: Justicia, seguridad y mercados ilegales*. Bogota: Ediciones B.
- Valencia, L. et al. (2017). *En qué están los territorios que dejan las FARC; estado de las zonas de concentración y las agresiones a líderes sociales*. Bogotá: Fundación Paz & Reconciliación. Retrieved from: https://pares.com.co/wp-

content/uploads/2017/01/Informe-en-qu%C3%A9-estan-los-territorios-que-dejan-la-FARC.pdf

- Valencia, L. et al. (2017b). *La ciudad de Tumaco. Una historia de recomposición de actores en el territorio*. Estudios de Seguridad. Documentos de análisis Línea de Seguridad Urbana y Crimen Organizado. Bogotá: Fundación Paz & Reconciliación.
- Valencia, L. et al. (2018). *Como va la paz*. Bogotá: Fundación Paz & Reconciliación. Retrieved from: https://e7c20b27-21c2-4f2b-9c38-a1a16422794e.usrfiles.com/ugd/e7c20b_23e5aec137954d029d40e2b7d51f3e6f.pdf
- Van Cott, D. E. (2000). *The Friendly Liquidation of the Past: The Politics of Diversity in Latin America*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Varela, D. et al. (2014). Institutional Responses to Social Demands: Enhancing Access to Justice in Colombia. In Cissé, H. (Ed.), *The World Bank Legal Review*, Vol. 5, pp. 165-189).
- Vargas Velasquez, A. (2011). El Sistema politico colombiano al inicio del gobierno de Santos. *Nueva Sociedad*. 115-131.
- Vega Cantor, R. (2004). Las luchas agrarias en Colombia en la década de 1920. *Cuaderno de Desarrollo Rural*, Vol. 52, pp. 9-47.
- Vélez, C., Guio, N., & Junca, S. (2015). *Institucionalidad socavada: justicia local, territorio y conflicto*. Bogotá: Fundación Ideas para la Paz.
- Villar, L. & Ramirez, J. M. (2014). Infraestructura regional y pobreza natural. Fedesarrollo: Working Papers, no. 61.
- Visoka, G. & Lemay-Hébert, N. (2022). Normalization in World Policits. An Ann Arbour, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Vlassenroot, K. & Raeymaekers, T. (2004). *Conflict and Social Transformation in Eastern DR Congo?* Gent: Academia Press Scientific Publishers.
- Walter, B. F. ((1999). Designing Transitions from Civil War. Demobilization, Democratization, and Commitments to Peace. *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 1, pp. 127-155.
- Walter, B. F. (2004). Does Conflict Beget Conflict? Explaining Recurring Civil War. Journal of Peace Resarch, Vol. 41, No. 3., pp. 371-388.
- Weber, M. (1947). The Theory of Social and Economic Organizations. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Weber, M. (1968). *Economy and Society*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Weinstein, J. (2007). *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Wennemann, A. (2014). Negotiated Exits from Organized Crime? Building Peace in Conflict and Crime-affected Contexts. *Negotiation Journal*, vol. 30, no. 3, pp. 255-273.
- Whaites A. (2008). States in Development: Understanding State-building. Department for International Development, London,UK: DFID.
- Whittaker, D. J. (2002). *The Terrorism Reader*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Wickham-Crowley, T. P. (1987). The Rise (And Sometimes Fall) of Guerrilla Governments in Latin America. *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 2, No. 3, pp. 473-499.
- Willis Obregon, M.S. (1998). En contra de la marea o sobre como las violencias, a veces, producen democracias. *Revista de Estudios Sociales*. Vol. 1. Pp. 16-21.
- Wills, M. E. (2015). Los tres nudos de la Guerra Colombiana. Comisión Histórica del Conflicto y sus Víctimas, Contribución al entendimiento del conflicto armado en Colombia. Bogotá: Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica.

- Wood, E. J. (2003). *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Worrall, J. (2017). (Re-)emergent orders: understanding the negotiation(s) of rebel governance, *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, Vol. 28, No. 4-5, pp. 709-733.
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case Study Research: Design and the Methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Zahar, M. J. (2001). Protégés, Clients, Cannon Fodder: Civil-Militia Relations in Internal Conflicts. In: Simon Chesterman (ed.), *Civilians in War*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Zerrougui, L. (January 28, 2019). Strengthening the Rule of Law and Protection of Civilians in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. *UN Peacekeeping*. Retrieved from: https://unpeacekeeping.medium.com/strengthening-the-rule-of-law-and-protection-of-civilians-in-the-democratic-republic-of-the-congo-36f7f987c350
- Zhou, Y. (2009). Decentralization, Democracy, and Development Recent Experience from Sierra Leone. World Bank: Washington DC.
- Zyck, S. A. & Muggah, R. (2015). Preparing Stabilisation for 21st Century Security Challenges. Stability: International Journal of Security and Development, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 3-9.

Chapter 9 Appendixes

Appendix 1 List of interviews for Tumaco case study

Table 1 Interviews Tumaco

Code	Interviewee	Date
1	Zaida Mosquera, director of the Chamber of Commerce of Tumaco & Raul Araujo employee of the Chamber of Commerce of Tumaco	March, 2020
2	Employees of a State established in the framework of the 2016 Peace Agreement	March, 2020
3	Mayor's Office employee	July, 2021
4	Director General of the National Federation of Fishermen Fenapescol	March, 2020
5	Three pastors based in Tumaco	March, 2020
6	Former press secretary for the Mayor of Tumaco	March, 2020
7	Former executive director for the Corporation for the agribusiness development of Tumaco - Cordeagropaz	July, 2021
8	Lgal representative of an agro-industrial company Salamnca Oleaginosas	March, 2020
9	Employee of the National Tax and Customs Department	March, 2020
10	Member of the UN Verification Misision in Colombia	March, 2020
11	Teacher, former employee of the Secretary of Education in Tumaco	March, 2020
12	Javier Florez Henao, National Land Agency	February, 2020
13	High-ranking Navy official stationed in Tumaco	March, 2020
14	Raul Delgado, former governor of the department of Nariño	August, 2021
15	High-ranking official of the Hercules Task Force	March, 2020

Appendix 2 List of interviews for South Tolima case study

Table 2 Interviews South Tolima

Code	Interviewee	Date
1	Member of an association of coffee growers (Chaparral)	August 7, 2021
2	Journalist Juanita Velez (videocall)	July 20, 2021
3	Delegate of the Grupo Motor South Tolima (Rioblanco)	July 31, 2021
4	Andrés Tafur, Centro de Estudios Regionales en Universidad del Tolima (Ibague)	July 31, 2021
5	Indigenous leader (Chaparral)	July 28, 2021
6	Fernando Osorio, former Tolima governor (videocall)	July 18, 2021
7	Mayor’s Office employee (Rioblanco)	July 28, 2021
8	President of ASOPEP coffee association (Planadas)	July 30, 2021
9	Viviana Morales, women and indigenous movements leader (videocall)	August 17, 2021
10	Lilly Ospina, director of the Codhes Tolima (videocall)	August 17, 2021
11	Jhon Uribe, Universidad de Ibagué (videocall)	July 8, 2021
12	Estaban Cortazar, Universidad de Ibagué (videocall)	July 5, 2021
13	Campesino leader (Planadas)	July 30, 2021
14	Carlos Javier Ramírez, coordinator of a victims’ association (Planadas)	July 30, 2021
15	Former FARC combatant (Rioblanco)	July 29, 2021
16	Eric González, local journalist (Chaparral)	July 28, 2021
17	Augusto Arias, Agencia de Renovacion del Territorio (videocall)	July 21, 2021
18	Carlos Montoya, Jurisdicción Especial para la paz (videocall)	July 1, 2021
19	Edwin Castaño, Ombudsman in Rioblanco	July 29, 2021

Appendix 3 Semi-structured questionnaire used in the interviews in Tumaco and South Tolima

Entrevistas semiestructuradas en los tres territorios con población local, legisladores, lideres sociales, funcionarios, expertos y periodistas, etc.

La siguiente entrevista trata sobre **la implementación de paz en la época de la administración Santos** (diciembre, 2016 – agosto, 2018).

1. Panorama general

¿Como recuerda aquella primera fase de la implementación de paz de la época Santos?

- ¿Que tal completa era la desmovilización de las FARC?
- ¿Que sucedió en los territorios pos-FARC?
- ¿Quien reemplazó a las FARC en sus funciones para-estatales?
- ¿Que tipo de orden se estableció (paz, continuidad, guerra, nueva hegemonía, proliferación de nuevos grupos)?
- ¿Violencia bajó, aumentó o no cambió?

2. Esfuerzos del estado en la recuperación de los territorios pos-FARC

¿Empezó el estado a sustituir a las FARC en sus funciones estatales después de la desmovilización de la guerrilla?

¿Mejoraba el estado su presencia institucional en el territorio pos-FARC?

¿Se notó algo nuevo sobre la presencia del estado en el territorio? ¿Estaba mas cerca a las comunidades?

¿Se notaron algunas intervenciones 'de choque' en la materia de justicia? (ex. servicios móviles de sistemas locales de justicia; ampliación de cobertura, fortalecimiento de sistemas locales; campañas de denuncia de la extorsión y/o amenazas; judicialización mas eficaz)

¿Se notaron algunas intervenciones 'de choque' en la materia de gobernanza? (ex. participación de la sociedad civil; incrementación y facilitación de acceso a la administración publica; capacitación & inversión en los lideres locales; medidas anti-corrupción)

¿Se notaron algunas intervenciones ‘de choque’ en la materia socio-económica? (ex. asistencias productivas agropecuarias, empleo, nuevas vías – mejor movilidad)

3. Evaluación de los esfuerzos del estado y la situación de seguridad en zonas pos-FARC

Según usted, la seguridad en las zonas pos-FARC: ¿mejoró, deterioró o no cambió durante la implementación de paz en la época de la administración Santos?

¿Como evalúa usted los esfuerzos del estado para sustituir a las FARC y mejorar la seguridad?

¿Mejoraba la confianza en las instituciones del estado? ¿En la paz?

¿Mejoraba la legitimidad del estado?