

# CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND ETHNIC ISSUES

## W10-12: THE COLOMBIAN CONFLICT

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# THE INCEPTION

- The Colombian conflict has been one of the deadliest ethno-nationalist conflicts in the world
- It costs more than 200.000 people's lives
- It is a conflict between the Colombian government, far-right paramilitary groups and far-left armed groups
- Far-left armed groups: Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the National Liberation Army (ELN) and the Popular Liberation Army (EPL).

# ASYMMETRIC WAR

- Low-intensity asymmetric war
- The FARC's so-called aims;
  - to protect the rights of poor people against the government,
  - to protect them from government violence,
  - to provide equality and communism
- The Colombian government fights against terrorism, security and protect its citizens,
- The paramilitary groups so-called aims;
  - to fight against guerilla groups

# VIOLENCE AND FINANCIAL SOURCES

- The conflict started in 1958 through 'Frente Nacional' (National Front)
- In the 1970s FARC and ELN focused on inequality. According to their opinion, it could have only been achieved through communism.
- The level of violence increased in the 1980s
- Drug trafficking increased violence
- FARC started to control drug trafficking and illegal trade in the country.
- FARC started to fight against drug cartels to control drug trafficking

# THE FIRST TERM

- The 1960s and 1970s
- The 1960s witnessed a conflict between leftist FARC and the Colombian government
- The level of violence was relatively low.
- The fight was mostly in the rural areas
- The M-19 Movement was established in the 1970s. It is a urban guerilla group.

# THE SECOND TERM

- The 1980s and 1990s
- The government's effort to decrease the influence of FARC, ELN and M-19 was relatively successful
- The government achieved a negotiation process with M-19 which ended through a ceasefire in 1985.
- The negotiations with non-state armed groups proceeded with temporary terms of non-violence
- Ceasefires were broken after the terrorist group's attacks on military bases.
- Peace process included the FARC, M-19 and other guerilla groups.

# THE SECOND TERM

- The FARC increased its income in the mid-1990s. The terrorist group utilised kidnapping and drug trafficking
- The armed forces of Colombia attacked Puerto Lleras where was the centre of the FARC militants.



# THE THIRD TERM

- The 2000s and 2010s witnessed both violent and political resolution efforts.
- Thousands of people lost their lives because of the terrorist attacks which was responded to by counter-terrorism measures of the Colombian state.
- The AUC (paramilitary group) started the disarmament process in 2006.
- The FARC continued assassinations in the third term, too.

# PEACE ATTEMPTS

- Two important figures played mediator role:
  - Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez
  - Colombian Senator Piedad Cordoba
- The discussions were on the exchange of the FARC members in the prison and hostages who were held by the FARC
- The Colombian President Uribe terminated mediators by blaming them for legitimising terrorism.
- In 2013, the peace process maintained despite the guerilla attacks which killed nineteen soldiers.

# PEACE ACCORD

- The peace process between the Colombian government led by President Juan Manuel Santos and the FARC leadership.
- Official negotiations began in September 2012 and ended through an agreement in August, 2016.
- After the final agreement between the main armed protagonists, a referendum took place in October 2016.
- The result: 50,2% no, 49,8% yes
- The Colombian government and FARC revised the signed agreement and sent it to the Congress

# CONCLUSION

- The violent conflict was deployed by the FARC
- More than 200.000 people lost their lives
- Ethno-nationalist characteristics
- Revolutionary goals and communism
- Paramilitary groups' attacks on leftist groups
- Official negotiations brought to an end through a peace deal in 2016.