

TOPIC B

Guerrilla Warfare in Latin America



DISEC
Disarmament and International Security Committee



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Introduction

The issue of the National Freedom Armed force (ELN) is one of the longest-running armed guerilla developments in Latin America. Established in Marxist philosophy and formed by decades of political insecurity and socio-economic imbalance, the ELN looks to challenge Colombian sway and territorial security. Despite several endeavors from Colombian president President Gustavo Petro's "Total Peace" activity, the armed group remains dynamic, undermining national compromise through savagery, illicit economies, and cross-border operations.

Definition of Key Terms

- **ELN (Ejército de Liberación Nacional):**
A Marxist-Leninist guerrilla group established in 1964. Different from the now-demobilized FARC, the ELN keeps up a decentralized command and stands against total disarmament.
- **Total Peace:**
A Colombian government approach beneath President Petro pointed at accomplishing comprehensive peace through transactions with all outfitted on-screen characters.
- **Ceasefire:**
A formal or casual suspension of dangers between combatant parties.
- **IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons):**
Civilians forced to escape their homes due to conflict but who stay inside national borders.
- **Narco-trafficking:**
The illegal development, generation, and dispersion of opiates, frequently utilized by armed groups for funding.
- **Paramilitary Powers:**
Irregular armed groups, often supported or tolerated by the state in the past, that have historically clashed with or cooperated with guerrilla organizations.

Background information

The National Liberation Army (ELN) developed in the mid-1960s in reaction to significant imbalance and political prohibition in Colombia, intensely affected by the Cuban Insurgency. Composed at first of radical undergraduates, clerics, and union individuals, the group spread the Marxist-Leninist rhetoric and utilized equipped battle to attain political power. The bunch recognized itself by its decentralized, combined command structure, which has contributed to both its versatility and inner disunity.

For decades, the ELN financed its operations through kidnappings, blackmail, and progressively, mediate trafficking. Whereas the 2016 peace bargain between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) finished that group's guerilla, it too made a vacuum that the ELN exploited—expanding into previous FARC regions and venturing up enlistment, particularly in underserved areas and over the permeable Venezuela-Colombia border.

Areas such as Catatumbo, Arauca, and Chocó ended up as epicenters of humanitarian issues, seeing frequent clashes between ELN, FARC and other armed groups. In January 2025 alone, battling between the ELN and other bunches in Norte de Santander driven to over 100 passings and the uprooting of more than 50,000 civilians.

Later peace transactions have wavered. In September 2024, after an ELN assault on a military base in Arauca murdered two warriors and injured more than 20, the Colombian government suspended exchange. In spite of the fact that a few localized ceasefires have been brokered, they stay delicate, and the ELN's administration denies to grant up the use of force, arguing the state has failed to supply genuine attempts for social equity.

Besides that, the ELN has progressively gained territory in Venezuela, where it appreciates clear operational opportunities. This cross-border nearness has internationalized the struggle, raising concerns regarding territorial steadiness and complicating Colombia's capacity to conduct counterinsurgency operations.

The groups also attack basic infrastructure, counting oil pipelines just like the Bicentenario, and enforces strikes that cripple local economies. These activities are financially annihilating, sustaining underdevelopment and making cycles of chaos and lack of order.

Major Parties Involved

- **ELN**



The central actor, currently fighting and seeking political and territorial power.

- **Colombia**



The government of Colombia has been pushing for peace initiatives since late 20th century issues.

- **FARC Protesters:**

Compete with the ELN for impact; not a political party due to the 2016 peace agreements.

- **Venezuela:**



Often blamed for harboring and protecting ELN forces, refusing to kick out groups near the Colombian border.

- **United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia (UNVMC):**



Plays a checking part in ceasefire and peace preparation endeavors.

- **Civil Society and IDPs:**

Casualties of viciousness and relocation, vital to post-conflict modifying endeavors.

Possible Solutions

- **Multilateral Mediation:**
Empower the UN and regional bodies like CELAC to mediate between the ELN and the Colombian government.
- **Sanctions on External Support:**
Target individuals or regimes providing safe haven or material support to the ELN.
- **Strengthening Ceasefire Mechanisms:**
Introduce third-party monitoring of localized ceasefires with clear verification standards.
- **Inclusive Peace Frameworks:**
Engage civil society and affected communities in the peace process to enhance legitimacy.
- **Socioeconomic Investment:**
Improve state presence through schools, clinics, and infrastructure in conflict zones to counter ELN influence.

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