



THE APPRENTICE'S MISRULE:

AUTHORITARIANISM, WAR AND PANDEMIC

Report on the second year of government of Iván Duque

SUMMARY

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In September 2019, more than 500 social and non-governmental organizations grouped into three human rights platforms presented a report that assessed the first year of President Iván Duque Márquez's administration. Almost a year later, we have maintained this coordination effort to deliver an analysis of the management of the executive branch of government, structured in 7 chapters.

1. Two years of misgovernment

This period has been characterized by, among other events, the need to take exceptional measures in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is important to mention the extraordinary powers exercised by the executive branch of government during this emergency, which during the first 3 months of the pandemic issued 164 decrees, of which only 11 were directly related to the health system. This situation has had several consequences, perhaps the most important being that President Ivan Duque has ruled by decree on a number of issues, many of those not strictly related to the pandemic and that haven't had the necessary judicial and political oversight, strengthening the national government's authoritarian and arbitrary exercising of power.

In addition, we are witnessing a process of *dzenaturalizing* the public-state relationship that manifests itself in practices involving *corporate co-governance*, in which the public sector is being used to facilitate profits for the private sector. This situation generates a regressive situation in terms of human rights. In this context, the political system's checks and balances of executive power has also been compromised, as the Congress of the Republic no longer acts as a limit on the power of the executive, but as an additional expression of corporate power.

In addition, the expansion of post-demobilization armed groups has been notable, especially in areas where the FARC-EP no longer have a presence. These zones have experienced an influx of paramilitary groups such as the Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AGC/Gulf Clan) and armed groups such as "Los Rastrojos", the Autodefensas Conquistadoras de la Sierra (Los Pachenca), the Caparrapos (successors to the United Self-De-

fence Forces of Córdoba and Urabá) and La Constru (successors to the Southern Front of Putumayo of the AUC). The AGC has a presence in 22 of the country's 32 departments, while either the AGC or other paramilitary groups have a presence in 29 departments, representing approximately 90% of the national territory.

Within the framework of the COVID-19 pandemic, protests were held in several cities against the insufficient response by the government in addressing the difficult situation faced by people forced into preventive lockdown. There was evidence of excessive use of force by the Mobile Anti-Riot Squad (ESMAD), which acted without engaging in dialogue or creating a space for consultation with the population and using their weapons (stun guns and tear gas) in an excessive and indiscriminate manner against people who require special protection, such as children, pregnant women and the elderly.

It is important to note that all of these situations have occurred in a context of high impunity. According to the Global Impunity Index -IGI-, 57% of Colombian departments have a high level of impunity. It is calculated that 71.3% of crimes that occur are not reported to any relevant authority. The reasons given for this situation are the high level of mistrust of government authorities responsible for administering the justice system and the inefficiency of government agents who receive the reports.

2. Pandemic and authoritarianism

Economic growth in Colombia is estimated to be around 4% per year, a percentage that does not correspond to the expectations generated by the econo-

mic policies that have been successively implemented in the country. These policies have made development fundamentally dependent on the mining and energy sectors and exports from some primary industries. Economic growth is generally below the long-term estimation and the average for the five-year period 2015-2019 is 2.5%, which indicates that the country is not achieving a strong economic performance. All of the National Development Plans since the turn of the century have positioned mining exports as the main engine of development.

Financially, the policies implemented during the pandemic reflect extreme differences in the allocation of resources from the Emergency Mitigation Fund (FOME). 60 billion pesos have been allocated as credit guarantees for the financial system compared to 0.96 billion pesos allocated to the Ministry of Health and the National Health Institute, which evidences the *corporate co-governance* approach mentioned above. It is important to note that the measures taken in the area of health are the responsibility of private actors (the EPS health provider companies) and have not been assumed as a public responsibility, which is why there is no effective mass testing program and complete data on the extent of the pandemic is not available. In addition, an emphasis has been placed on increasing the number of intensive care units and the incorporation of public health measures that contribute to the early detection of cases while the prevention of infections and spreading the virus has been neglected. Although technically speaking the government has responded to the pandemic, in practice it has not done this directly but has left this task to others.

There have also not been any differentiated measures in accordance with the

specific needs of the most remote regions that have less access to health services. This crisis has highlighted the deplorable working conditions of health workers following a gradual process of labor flexibilization and privatization of this service. In Colombia, this degradation of the health service began with Law 100 of 1993, of which then Senator Alvaro Uribe Vélez was the sponsor.

In terms of access to basic rights, goods and services, it is important to mention central aspects such as the *right to water*. The measures adopted to guarantee access to water ignore community processes and privilege business that control aqueducts, and also completely ignore the differentiated impacts of isolation. In Colombia there are many civil organizations, associations and Community Action Councils that don't have bank accounts and don't have access to a water system, which means that they cannot benefit from the government programs that support the companies that

provide this service. In addition, there is a serious problem associated with the impossibility of citizen participation during lockdown and other preventive measures, as at least 23.8 million people do not have access to the internet in Colombia (a situation that is worse in rural areas). This has significantly reduced the population's access to mechanisms for citizen oversight, prior consultation and the immediate processing of applications to access surface and underground water sources.

In the area of education, the lack of internet access has been compounded by the



lack of technological devices. The DANE census in 2018 indicated that 50.8% of households in the municipal capitals have a computer, while in rural areas only 9.4% of families have access to technological resources. However, there are no initiatives being developed by the Ministry of Education that satisfy specific needs in the area of public education, especially in the rural context. The prospect of students returning to their schools is also worrisome, as there are no protective conditions in classrooms and outdoor areas where there is overcrowding, a lack of drinking water and no hygiene and disinfection equipment and supplies for students, teachers and general staff.

In the area of finance, it is necessary to highlight the economic crisis that the country is currently facing. A contraction in the GDP of 5.5% has been projected for this year along with a fiscal deficit of 8.2% GDP and a debt level of 65.6%, which is without a doubt the worst recession in the country's history. What is even more worrying are the government's priorities to address this situation, in which financial institutions are in first place, companies are in second place, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) are in third place and workers are last. This prioritization by the government is highly questionable, considering that MSMEs represent 96% of all companies in Colombia. Financial intermediation by the public sector has led to banks using public resources to finance loans with high interest rates, expanding their profit margins precisely at a time when the population is experiencing high levels of economic vulnerability. The government has only executed 12% of the budget allocated to avert the crisis: of the \$29.6 billion allocated to the emergency, only \$3.6 billion has been executed, with the majority of these resources used for fi-

nancial intermediation (\$2.3 billion). There is no reasonable explanation for the low execution of these resources. The Ministry of Finance has frozen \$26.3 billion with which it could finance three months of basic income for nine million homes.

A basic income has become an important social demand during this period and there are already four legislative initiatives for this proposal. None of them have been approved due to the lack of interest from Congress and the complete lack of interest from the National Government. According to the DANE 54.7% of the economically active population (23.3 million people) are part of the popular economy and 12.2 million have informal employment (which means they earn enough each day to survive and have no capacity to save). The unemployment figure was close to 20% in April 2020 (which means that more than 5.5 million people were unemployed), with an average of 23.5% for the 13 main cities, including a worrying 25.8% in Neiva and 25.1% in Ibagué.

The department of Amazonas has always been characterized by extreme abandonment by the state that is evident in the deplorable situation of the department's health services. In Amazonas there is only one intensive care ward and as of June 25, 2020 there were 2,113 COVID-19 cases in Leticia and 107 in Puerto Nariño. Of these cases, 711 are from the indigenous population. For the Amazon region, which includes departments such as Vaupés and Guainía, there are 3,972 cases. The media has tried to defend the idea that the infection came across the border from Brazil and the government response to this crisis was to send a thousand soldiers to "defend" the border instead of responding directly through health measures. It should be noted that most of the data on the situation in the Amazon

is not disaggregated in terms of ethnicity, which disguises the differentiated impact of the pandemic and the lack of response to the specific needs of the region.

3. They are killing us, no more silence

The year 2019 is considered the most violent year for Colombian human rights defenders in the last decade. According to data from the Information System on Aggressions against Human Rights Defenders (SIADDHH) from the We are Defenders program, during 2019 a total of 844 individual aggressions against human rights defenders were registered, of which 124 were homicides. This figure reveals a 4.8% increase in cases compared to 2018 when 805 acts of aggressions were documented. Of the total number of aggressions in 2019, 74.4% were threats, 14.6% murders, 6% attacks, 3.4% arbitrary detentions, 0.8% information theft, 0.3% disappearances and 0.1% criminal charges. Most of these events were directed against land and territory defenders, which meant that there was an increase in attacks against indigenous leaders (271 cases). Between January and March 2020 a total of 197 aggressions were registered by the Somos Defensores Program, of which 47 were murders, an increase of 88% compared to the same period in 2019. In addition, there were 33 massacres in rural areas of the departments of Antioquia, Cauca and Norte de Santander in the same period.

There has been a gradual rise in social protests during this period of government. Probably one of the most important moments of social protest in the last year was the National Strike that began on November 21, 2019 and brought together different social, popular, trade union, peasant, indigenous, Afro-descendant, student, fe-

minist and LGBTI organizations to reject a series of regressive labor and pension reforms by the Duque government and to demand the implementation of the Peace Agreement. This important wave of social mobilization was accompanied by strong repression from public security forces. There were arbitrary detentions, aggressions by security agents against civilians (between August 2019 and June 2020 there were 554 people injured by police or military, of which 21 cases were caused by tear gas and 22 cases of eye injuries). These have included violent acts against women (acts of harassment and other forms of sexual violence), racist violence and physical and verbal aggressions, specifically directed towards young people.

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2019 was also characterized as one of the most violent years for female human rights defenders as there was a 50% increase in murders compared to the total figures for 2018. The Gender Officers under the Delegate for Women's Rights and Gender Affairs at the Ombudsman's Office reported 104 acts of violence against female defenders caused by the exercising of their leadership and defending human rights, of which 86 (82.7%) corresponded to threats, 5 (4.8%) to persecution, 4 to sexual violence (3.8%), 1 to an act of aggression by the government's security detail (1%) and 8 to other types of aggression (7.7%). Compared to the same period in 2018, an increase of 50.88% in threats was recorded, rising from 57 in 2018 to 86 in 2019. There was also an increase of 166.67% in other types of acts of

aggression against female human rights defenders, increasing from 3 in 2018 to 10 in 2019. The National Institute of Legal Medicine recorded 4 cases of alleged sex crimes against female human rights defenders and 2 against women engaged in union or trade union activities, representing a 20% increase compared to 2018.

In terms of guarantees for the LGBTI population, the Human Rights Directorate within the Interior Ministry should develop an action plan that would articulate all of the institutions responsible for the implementation of LGBTI public policy. However, after almost two years, the action plan for this policy has still not been approved. This cannot be considered as a result of simple apathy or slowness from the government, as since Ivan Duque became President the Human Rights Directorate has been led by representatives of the same sectors that fundamentally oppose the rights that this public policy seeks to guarantee. One of these civil ser-

vants has even publicly spoken against the rights of LGBTI people and, according to allegations by former staff from the Directorate, deliberately obstructed the approval of the action plan. Most of the actions related to the rights of LGBTI people that were included in the draft of the National Development Plan disappeared in its final version. Furthermore, the Special Unit of the Public Prosecutor's Office responsible for these crimes has not incorporated specific guidelines for investigating attacks against LGBT human rights defenders.

Since the beginning of the 1960s there has been a change in the nature of Colombia's military forces, with powers granted for the control of the local population, the prioritization of internal security and the expansion of their power within the State. This has led to the militarization of institutions and social life. At the same time, intelligence agencies were created under the doctrine of national security and the focus on an "internal enemy". These agencies



carry out illegal intelligence operations and have used the information obtained to commit crimes against humanity and engage in genocidal practices. These illegal practices have been maintained over time and currently continue in the government led by Ivan Duque. The intelligence agencies are used to persecute members of the political opposition, human rights defenders, journalists, etc. In May 2020, a journalistic investigation revealed a series of illegal operations conducted by the government. One of these was "Operation Cane", through which counter-intelligence information was collected on corruption in the Army that involved 16 army generals, around 230 officers and non-commissioned officers, leaders of the Centro Democrático political party (the current president's party), drug trafficking organizations, paramilitaries, the Gulf Clan, the Envigado Office criminal group, the ELN guerrilla group and FARC dissidents. The government responded to the scandal by threatening those who leaked the information to the press and the journalists who conducted the investigation. Another illegal intelligence operation was conducted by the cyber-intelligence and counter-intelligence battalions, which involved monitoring, information analysis, surveillance and threats made to more than 130 national and foreign citizens, as well as the persecution of those who participated in Operation Cane in order to eliminate the possibility of more information being disclosed. When he was the head of the Army, General Nicasio Martínez didn't just hinder the attempts to purge corrupt officers, but also initiated a code of "operational silence" and implemented practices from the security policies that were used during the Uribe Vélez government.

The reactivation of incentives for "operational results" was one of these practices, which in the past produced an exacerbation

increase in extrajudicial executions (known as the False Positives scandal). A new intelligence unit was also created to conduct surveillance of the following groups: Supreme Court magistrates responsible for processes that involved the prosecution of political figures for crimes involving corruption or who were examining the validity of previous rulings made by the Constitutional Court; Senators who were defending the peace process and the holding of debates on serious human rights violations; and members of organizations such as the José Alvear Restrepo Lawyers' Collective who were defending victims in legal action against members of the armed forces.

Meanwhile, the excuse of saving lives has been used to justify the deployment of technologies that capture and process large amounts of data on health and mobility through an application called "CoronApp". The government has ignored and even criminalized resistance by citizens who choose not to download and install the App. All of the legal protection mechanisms designed to prevent large data systems from being used to monitor people's actions, especially journalists, social leaders, human rights defenders and ethnic leaders, seem to be suspended during the "state of emergency". For this reason there is no clarity on how the government will use the information obtained through the use of this technology.

4. Democracy without guarantees

The second year of Ivan Duque's government was characterized by evidence of the relationship between political elites and drug trafficking. On March 3 of this year, recordings of telephone conversations held by the deceased drug trafficker

José Guillermo Hernández Aponte, alias “Ñeñe”, were publicly released, in which he referred to the possible purchase of votes for Duque’s campaign during the second round of the presidential elections in 2018.

For the first time since the signing of the 2016 Peace Agreement, elections for local authorities were held in 2019 across the entire national territory. It is important to note that there was an increase in voter turnout, which reached 61%. A notable event was the election of Guillermo Enrique Torres Cueter as Mayor of the Municipality of Turbaco (Bolívar), who ran as a candidate for the Colombia Humana - UP party and was previously known as Julian Conrado, “the singer from the FARC”. The participation of women in the elections continued to be significantly low because although there are rules requiring at least 30% women candidates, this measure has not translated into an increase in the number of women elected.

It should be noted that the local electoral campaigns occurred in the midst of a difficult security situation. During the three months of the campaign (July 27, 2019 - October 25, 2019), a total of 135 acts of violence against candidates were recorded, with candidates from the Colombia Humana - UP party reporting the highest number of aggressions, with a total of 22 (16.3%). Although the government designed a *Timely Action Plan* (PAO) to respond to electoral violence, it lacked preventive measures. There was a 40% increase in the number of candidates killed compared to the previous election.

Regarding the situation in prisons, Iván Duque and his ruling Centro Democrático party have played a decisive role in continuing and worsening the Unconstitutional Conditions in Colombian prisons declared by the Constitutional Court in

2013 and 2015. At the beginning of his government, Iván Duque announced an *Instant Impact Plan* and a *National Criminal Policy Plan*, but there is still no official public document with more information about the plans. One of the notable measures from the president’s proposals is reducing entry into the prison system. However, the figures show that there has been an increasingly disproportionate use of prison as a method to solve social problems and provide justice. This means that Colombia has the third highest imprisonment rate in Latin America (225 people per 100,000 inhabitants) and has the second highest prisoner population in South America: 112,039 as of May 31, 2020. Of these prisoners, 33,043 have not yet received their sentence, a situation that demonstrates the abuse of the preventive detention mechanism. As a result, prisons are extremely overcrowded. According to data from the National Penitentiary and Prison Institute (INPEC), 92 of the 132 prisons in the country are severely overcrowded. The Riohacha prison has a particularly severe situation, with an overcrowding rate of 302%. This situation creates favorable conditions for the spreading of COVID-19, as it is virtually impossible for prisoners to practice social distancing. As of June 30, 2020, 1,651 active cases had been reported in the prisons, of whom 1,471 are prisoners located in 24 prisons. The difficult situation in the prisons led to multiple protests during March 2020 (hunger strikes and riots in nearly 24 prisons across the country). The government’s response was the excessive use of force, a situation that led to 23 inmates being killed by firearms while 84 were injured on March 21, 2020 in La Modelo prison in Bogotá. According to data provided by the media, acts of torture were committed against several prisoners.

5. The return of war: frustrated peace

In the country's recent history, the governments led by Álvaro Uribe and his political heir Iván Duque are the only ones that have refused to negotiate with the guerrillas. Instead of solving the armed conflict, they have prolonged it. The lack of democratic guarantees for the political opposition is starkly reflected in the assassination of social leaders and ex-combatants from the FARC. While these murders did not begin during the current government, Duque's administration has been characterized by a passive attitude toward these acts of violence. Killings of former FARC combatants are also on the rise. From January 1, 2020 to June 30, 25 ex-combatants have been killed, reaching a total of 220 dead since the signing of the Peace Agreement, as well as 39 attempted murders and 14 forced disappearances of ex-combatants.

As of the time of writing this report, there are 183 former members of the FARC-EP who continue to be held in prisons (some with serious health conditions) and who have not been transferred to the Transitional Verification Zones (ZVTN), which had been agreed on as part of the Peace Agreement. Nor has the Differential Life Path Camino program been implemented, which was focused on removing ex-combatants under the age of 15 from guerrilla camps. This has meant that they have not been included in the reincorporation process and don't have access to primary, secondary and higher education or sexual and reproductive health programs, as established in the Peace Agreement.

In terms of financing compliance with the agreements, 9% of the financial resources for its implementation come from inter-

national cooperation. The largest amount of resources was allocated to Point 4, the Solution to the Problem of Illicit Drugs, while for Point 3, End of the Conflict, which includes measures for the economic, political and social reincorporation of former combatants of the FARC-EP and security guarantees, only 3.4% of international cooperation resources were allocated. Important achievements from the Peace Agreement, such as the Racial-Ethnic Chapter are underfunded and only 12.14% progress has been made in meeting the goals for this approach, followed by the gender approach with 23.65% progress in achieving its goals, the PDETs with 23.88% and an overall total of 27.08% of the goals achieved after almost four years since the signing of the Final Agreement. Despite this data, there is little transparency regarding the specific use of resources as it is difficult to identify links between what was spent and what was established in the Implementation Framework Plan and the Peace Agreement. Three years after signing the Peace Agreement, only 4% of what was agreed has been completed and only an additional 10% is beginning to be implemented. There is either limited implementation nothing being done for the remaining 86,. Point 1 (Comprehensive rural reform) of the Peace Agreement has the lowest implementation results.

There is incomplete monitoring of compliance with the gender approach for the Peace Agreement by the Presidential Advisory Office for Stabilization and Consolidation, which heads the High-level Government Entity for Gender. This entity only works on 51 of 106 indicators from the Gender Chapter in the Implementation Framework Plan (PMI). The implementation of the gender approach for Comprehensive Rural Reform (RRI) and the Comprehensive National Crop Substitution Program (PNIS) has also faced a



number of specific challenges. First, there has been a low level of technical capacity regarding gender issues among the entities responsible for RRI and PNIS, primarily because they do not have staff (as in the previous government) who can lead the implementation of the approach.

6. The Face of War, Pandemic and Poverty

Iván Duque's government has been characterized by the escalation of violence in several regions of the country. Its response has been focused on increasing the presence of the military, which instead of translating into increased security and peaceful relations at the territorial level, has instead contributed to an increase in violent actions. This has also meant that humanitarian responses have not been provided for the multiple shortages experienced at the regional level. In addition, there is still evidence of alliances and collusion between armed forces and paramilitary groups.

In Chocó, in the period between January 2018 and September 2019, the Ombudsman's Office issued 19 early warning alerts, advising that at least 46% of the territory is at risk due to the repositioning of illegal armed groups disputing the control of strategic routes for arms and drug trafficking. During the first semester of 2019, 11,300 people from 54 communities were victims of confinement.

In Cauca, there are also selective actions by the public forces, which act in collusion with illegal armed actors, and are articulated with the imposition of economic mining and extractive, energy, agro-industrial and infrastructure projects. These projects are focused on the indiscriminate exploitation of natural resources

for the benefit of agents outside the communities that inhabit the territory.

In La Guajira, the persistence of the *Unconditional Conditions* declared in the year 2017 is notable. These are caused by the collective and generalized violation of the rights of the Wayúu indigenous people. The lack of potable water, access to health, food and ethnic participation characterize the situation of communities affected by extractive industries and abandonment by the State. In the current context of the pandemic, the public health emergency presents particular risks for communities near mining areas, where according to reports from the municipal Health Secretariat, the respiratory health of communities has been disproportionately affected.

In Catatumbo, the escalation of violence has been expressed in an increase in homicides. Between January 2019 and May 2020 there were 218 homicides and four femicides (all committed by ex-partners). Between 2019 and March 2020 there were 44 acts of violence and 11 murders of social leaders in Norte de Santander. This means that during the first quarter of 2020 there was an increase of 88% in this crime compared to the same period in the previous year. Since 2018, "Los Pitufos", the name given to the workers who carry out forced coca eradication, have been present in the territory contrary to the pre-existing agreements for crop substitution. This situation has led to confrontations between members of the security forces and farmers, in 2020 three farmers have been murdered by soldiers due to disputes over coca eradication. A massacre occurred in the municipality of Tibú on July 18, 2020 that left six people dead. Meanwhile, 835 people have been forcibly displaced from their territories. It is important to highlight the precarious conditions of the regional health system,

where there is a severe shortage of hospitals (accessing a hospital can require between 3 and 9 hours of travel for many people) and the low availability of medical staff, with one doctor for every 2,432 inhabitants. However, if the city of Ocaña (the largest in the region) is excluded from this calculation, the ratio is much lower, with just one doctor for every 3,221 inhabitants.

In Antioquia there have been geostrategic and territorial advances made by paramilitary groups accompanied by implicit support for their activities due to actions or lack of actions by the State, a strategy that has been previously used in the country. All 125 municipalities in Antioquia report the presence of at least one paramilitary structure. The most predominant are: the Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia, Los Caparrapos and the Aburrá Valley Office. Between 2018 and June 2020 there were 630 homicides, 56 forced disappearances, more than 6,300 acts of forced displacement, and 145 social leaders who were victims of violent actions. In the context of COVID-19, there has been a high number of arbitrary detentions by police of people protesting in the streets (95% of cases), which evidences an indiscriminate use of the Police Code. The response from the national government has been an increase in militarization, forced eradication and the implementation of the PAO, a policy that ignores the voices and needs of communities.

In Putumayo, there have been reports of three armed actors since 2018: dissidents from the 48th, 49th, 31st and 1st fronts of the FARC, a paramilitary structure called “La Constru” and a group of 30 to 40 drug traffickers who came from Nariño and created small squads of armed actors to obtain territorial control over drug trafficking routes. In addition, the Gulf Clan and the Sinaloa Mafia are present in the

department. Their violent actions include threats, assassinations, massacres and dismemberment. The declaration of an economic, social and environmental emergency decreed by Iván Duque has only served to strengthen the government’s security and defense policy, tightened the grip of neoliberal economic policies, increased the militarization of strategic territories and consolidated extractive and drug trafficking economies. The declaration of a state of emergency has also been used as an excuse by the different armed actors to intensify their control of territories and to make death threats against those who are infected with COVID-19. As of June 2020, 13 social leaders have been murdered in the department this year and several have been threatened, which has led to acts of forced displacement.

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The southern region of the department of Córdoba is one of the areas prioritized for the implementation of the Peace Agreement. Despite this, since 2017 there has been an increase in violence in the zone. According to data provided by the Ombudsman’s Office, between the end of 2018 and December 2019 there were 14 massive displacements as well as massacres, homicides, forced disappearances and acts of forced recruitment. Violent actions committed by members of the security forces have also been registered. From the signing of the Peace Accord to July 2020 a total of 45 social leaders were assassinated. 23 of these murders were committed during the current government. Today, the Gaitanist Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, the Virgilio Peralta Arenas Bloc (known as “Los

Caparros”) and the New Front 18 - Cacique Coyará, FARC-EP dissident group, all have a presence in the department and are disputing territorial control. Within the framework of planning for the PDETs, communities and organizations presented 1,183 initiatives while 2,046 families were registered for the National Plan for the Substitution of Crops of Illicit Use (PNIS). Despite these promising actions, it is clear that the priority has been the continuity of extractive projects and that the State has not made the payments agreed on with the families that form part of PNIS. As of July 2020 nine people linked to the PNIS have been murdered.

7. International Relations

In terms of the relationship with the United States, there has been a setback to the approach maintained during the Barack Obama administration, which was much more focused on negotiation and achieving peace agreements with guerrilla groups. On the contrary, the Trump administration has not supported the peace process with the ELN. In this case, the emphasis is on the fighting drug trafficking and the return of environmentally perverse and ineffective policies such as glyphosate fumigations (despite it being demonstrated that 50% of the fumigated coca crops are replanted) and the militarization of rural areas. In addition, we are witnessing an *ideologization* of foreign policy based on a right/left polarization that affects the possibility of dialogue between countries with different political perspectives, especially with the countries known as the *troika of tyranny*: Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua. In this context, Duque’s government has favored U.S. interventionism in Latin America, especially with the excuse of achieving a regime change in Venezuela.

In terms of migration dynamics, the closure of official border crossings with Venezuela in 2019 and the Colombian government’s announcement that it will not penalize the transit of migrants through informal border crossings has reconfigured the dynamics of migration flows, encouraging use of the informal crossings and generating a new source of illegal income. The extent of the Venezuelan migration phenomenon has overshadowed the return of Colombian victims of the conflict who had moved to Venezuela and have now returned due to the crisis in the neighboring country. It should be noted that the unemployment rate in the border departments is five times higher than the national average and the rate of informal employment is 80%, 20% higher than the national average. The border municipalities have an average unmet basic needs (UBN) index of 52.81%, while the national average is 27.76%. Despite the social needs these statistics evidence, this government’s border policies almost exclusively emphasize security and public order.



This book continues the reflection that began a year ago about the same character: an apprentice, an apprentice learning spells. The apprentice learnt the dark arts of the spells, but yet no one is amazed, no one is attracted by what he does. His spells don't work, they just generate rejection and incredulity. Generally you would never write a book about someone like this, but this apprentice is the president of Colombia, who has now spent two years in the job and has another two years to keep doing what he does: misgovern. This book talks about this misgovernment, which is devastating exercise in authoritarianism and war during a global pandemic and the exacerbation of inequalities.

Diverse platforms of human rights, social sectors and people are included in these pages, as well as territorial visions, showing how Ivan Duque is doing everything he can to destroy the Peace Agreement that the country voted for and to worsen the conflict in all its forms. No human right in Colombia is safe right now with this president.



Con el apoyo de:

