



VICIOUS CIRCLE OF CORRUPTION AND ARMED CONFLICT: CHALLENGE TO PEACEBUILDING

Analysis of the relationship between corruption, armed conflict and peacebuilding in Colombia





Corporación Transparencia por Colombia

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Introduction

Corruption defined as “*the abuse of positions of power or trust by a particular actor or group in power to obtain private benefits to the detriment of collective interests, and which undermines democratic institutions, the rule of law and affects the guarantee of Human Rights.*” (Transparencia por Colombia, 2023c), implies recognizing that it is a problem linked to politics.

These abuses and their impact on democracy and human rights are major when the exercise of politics is articulated with violence. In Colombia, this articulation has taken the form of an internal armed conflict with strong political roots, which has lasted for more than six decades, and in which corruption has been central. Although there are controversies about the characterization of political violence in Colombia¹, at the legal level the Colombian State has recognized the existence of the internal armed conflict through Law 1448 of 2011 "By which measures of care, assistance and comprehensive reparation are dictated for the victims of the internal armed conflict and other provisions are dictated."

Transparencia por Colombia (2023c) has raised the need to address corruption from a systemic perspective, which requires understanding that the Colombian State and political system have been structured amid a long-term internal armed conflict and within the framework of complex corruption schemes. Consequently, as evidenced in this document, it can be stated that corruption and armed conflict have a relationship of interdependence, which has been exacerbated and strengthened by the dynamics of organized crime linked to drug trafficking and other illegal economies.

On the other hand, it is necessary to analyze how corruption can create obstacles to peace-building processes. In this regard, the [Study of the perception of everyday violence in Colombia](#) (Cifras & Conceptos, Universidad del Rosario, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung & El Tiempo, 2022) investigated the dynamics of everyday violence other than the armed conflict and forms of peace building. When asked, "*What do you consider to be the main obstacles or barriers to achieving daily peace in Colombia?*", 50% of those surveyed said that corruption is the main obstacle, which reflects a citizen concern and a matter of necessary public intervention.

Transparencia por Colombia, the Colombian chapter of Transparency International, as a civil society organization interested in contributing to the construction of a Colombia free of corruption, that lives with integrity and acts for the common good, presents this document with the support of the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) within the framework of the project "*Towards a more transparent and responsible exercise of power*", and of the Fondation Charles Léopold Mayer pour le Progrès de l'Homme (FPH) within the framework of the project "*Governance and citizen participation in the fight against corruption in Colombia*".

This document is part of the initiatives carried out by Transparencia por Colombia to deepen the understanding of corruption and its impact on structural problems, through the generation of innovative analysis methodologies, and seeks to delve deeper into some of the findings of

¹ See: Historical Commission on the Conflict and its Victims (2015). [Contribution to the understanding of the armed conflict in Colombia](#). Bogotá

Transparencia por Colombia and its Citizen Corruption Monitor in the [Radiography of Corruption 2021-2022](#) and the [Radiography of Corruption 2016 – 2020](#).

In addition to contributing to the understanding of the links between corruption, armed conflict and peacebuilding, the aim is to contribute to the understanding of the specific context of the continuation of the armed conflict and the implementation of the 2016 Peace Agreement, in which corruption materializes in Colombia; considering that understanding the contexts is key to the implementation of best anti-corruption practices. (Rahman, 2022).

As background for this analysis, Transparencia por Colombia has conducted various studies on corruption risks in the implementation of the 2016 Peace Agreement: [Corruption in Territories of Peace](#) (2016), [Budget transparency in the implementation of the Peace Agreement](#) (2018), [Corruption risks in the implementation of the Peace Agreement](#) (2020), [Gaps and needs in citizen control of the implementation of the Peace Agreement](#) (2022), [Public contracting in the implementation of the Peace Agreement](#) (2023), y [Analysis of royalty resources allocated to the implementation of the Peace Agreement](#) (2023), among others.

The document is structured in five sections. First, some conceptual and methodological notes are presented on the sources of information analyses in the document and the way in which this information was processed. The second section presents the evolution of corruption and armed conflict as issues relevant to citizens in Colombia. The third section presents the results of the research on the links between armed conflict and corruption. The fourth section addresses the relationship between corruption and peacebuilding, analyzing the emergence of new markets and dynamics of corruption in peacebuilding processes and the need to advance in the articulation of the peace and anti-corruption agendas.

Finally, some recommendations are presented to advance the articulation of these agendas, considering the lessons learned in terms of transparency and anti-corruption from the 2016 Peace Agreement, and in perspective of the Total Peace commitment of the current National Government.

1. Conceptual and methodological notes

1.1. Main categories of analysis

This document is structured around three central categories of analysis: *corruption*, *internal armed conflict*, and *peacebuilding*.

A. Corruption

As previously noted, corruption is understood as "*the abuse of positions of power or trust by a particular actor or group of power to obtain private benefits to the detriment of collective interests, and which deteriorates democratic institutions, the rule of law and affects the guarantee of Human Rights*" (Transparencia por Colombia, 2023c).

This is a complex phenomenon that occurs within the framework of reticular networks and has acquired a systemic character in Colombia. Systemic corruption can be understood as a situation in which the entities in charge of preventing, investigating, judging, and sanctioning corruption have been affected by this problem, affecting the institutional foundations, and generating a process of cultural normalization of corruption (Salcedo-Albarán, Zuleta, de León Beltrán, & Rubio, 2007).

There are different types of corruption with manifestations, actors, and consequences (Transparencia por Colombia, 2021b):

- *Political corruption*: This involves the misuse of power through manipulation of policies, institutions and procedural rules in resource allocation and financing. In this type of corruption, political decision-makers abuse their position to maintain or strengthen their power, status, and/or wealth, compromising the integrity of the political process.
- *Administrative corruption*: This involves the improper use of the authority or position of a public actor for the purpose of obtaining personal benefits or for the benefit of third parties. This practice leads to a detriment to the collective interest by putting at risk public resources and the adequate provision of goods and services intended for the general benefit of society.
- *Judicial corruption*: Refers to the abuse of power within the judicial branch for the purpose of obtaining personal benefits or for third parties, interfering with the independence and impartiality of the judicial process and affecting the proper administration of justice.
- *Private corruption*: This involves the abuse of power by private sector actors, causing harm to the public or private interest. This type of corruption involves any company, institution or owner not controlled by the public sector, compromising the integrity of transactions, and generating negative impacts in the public or private sphere.

A particular expression of corruption is the *capture and co-opted reconfiguration of the State*, which aims to capture institutional designs, reconfiguring the institutionality for the benefit of the actors of corruption (Garay Salamanca, Salcedo-Albarán, de León-Beltrán, & Guerrero, 2008). The traditional conception of state capture considered the phenomenon as a form of corruption linked to the exclusively economic benefit of legal economic actors (Garay Salamanca, Salcedo-Albarán, de León-Beltrán, & Guerrero, 2008, p. 94), while the capture and co-opted reconfiguration of the State is a complex form of corruption, motivated not only by economic interest, but also by an interest in legitimizing a social, political, and judicial order:

“...the action of legal and illegal organizations that, through illegitimate practices, seek to modify, from within, the political regime in a systemic manner and influence the formation, modification, interpretation and application of the rules of the game and policies in order to obtain sustainable benefits and achieve that their interests are politically and legally validated and socially legitimized in the long term, even if these do not obey the guiding interest of social welfare” (Garay Salamanca, Salcedo-Albarán, de León-Beltrán, & Guerrero, 2008, p. 96).

This form of corruption has characteristics such as: a) articulation of legal and illegal actors; b) pursuit of sustained benefits over time; c) search for impunity; d) capture of branches of public power, control bodies and the accusing body (including the influence on the approval of norms: capture of the rules of the game); e) political organizations as a vehicle (co-opted or created) to mobilize interests; f) use of direct and symbolic violence (Garay Salamanca, Salcedo-Albarán, de León-Beltrán, & Guerrero, 2008).

It is a complex form that links political corruption in the ways of accessing power, administrative and private corruption to manage political, economic and social interests, and judicial corruption to guarantee impunity (Restrepo Hung M. , 2019), with a predominant place of political corruption due to its ability to co-opt decisions, actors and institutions, which is why its connection with illegal armed actors has generated a dramatic scenario in Colombia.

Indeed, illegal armed actors play a central role in the capture and co-opted reconfiguration of the State². In the processes of access to political power, these types of actors have repertoires that range from illegal financing of politics and armed proselytism, through the purchase of votes and reaching violent coercion of voters, candidates, and financiers. To achieve this, armed actors and structures associated with illegal economies such as drug trafficking co-opt and/or create political organizations that they promote with these repertoires and once they reach positions of power, their political, economic, social, and judicial interests are promoted.

B. Internal armed conflict

The definition of *internal armed conflict* is adopted, as is that of international humanitarian law, as found in Protocol II additional to the Geneva Conventions, on the protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts and approved by Colombia through Law 171 of 1994, which establishes that an internal armed conflict is one that takes place “*in the territory of a High Contracting Party [State] between its armed forces and dissident armed forces or organized armed groups which, under responsible command, exercise such control over a part of its territory as to enable them to carry out sustained and concerted military operations*” (Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, 1977).

The definition of internal armed conflict does not include all social and political conflicts in which violence is used: internal tensions associated with protests, riots, disturbances, among others, are not classified as internal armed conflicts. In this sense, the first article of Protocol II additional to

² Esta forma de corrupción con involucramiento de actores armados y economías ilícitas también ha sido denominada *corrupción estratégica* (Medina, 2010).

the Geneva Conventions of 1949 states that the provisions of the Conventions shall not apply to situations of internal tension, disturbances, riots, and sporadic and isolated acts of violence.

Two elements used to differentiate these manifestations of violence from an internal armed conflict are the level of intensity and the organizational capacity of the armed groups (armed groups that participate in internal armed conflicts have a chain of command, the ability to plan and execute coordinated operations and issue and enforce orders in the territories where they are present).

One of the main implications of the existence and recognition of an internal armed conflict is the application of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), which seeks to limit the forms, methods and means of waging war, to protect non-combatants and their property. Some of the main instruments of IHL are the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their additional protocols, the Rome Statute, and the international custom of IHL.

C. Peacebuilding

A basic definition raises that peacebuilding consists of “actions aimed at identifying and supporting structures that tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict” (Boutros-Ghali, 1992). Although it is a concept built on local and international learning, and is subject to controversy, at least three different approaches can be identified to address its scope.

Table 1. Interpretations of the concept of peacebuilding

	Minimalist / Negative Peace	Intermediate / Positive Peace	Maximalist
Conception of Violence	Any relationship mediated by the direct use of physical force that causes personal or material harm	Systemic, structural, and cultural situations that lead to conflicts that cause violations of human rights and affect basic human needs	
Conception of Peace	Elimination of physical violence	Overcoming all forms of violence	Any non-consensual regulation or attempt at regulation of the conflict
Peacebuilding actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cessation of hostilities - Redress of direct effects of physical violence - Elimination of incentives for physical violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cessation of hostilities - Realization of human rights - Promotion of development - Promotion of non-violent forms of conflict resolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Structural reforms of the State and/or the economic model that address the causes and treat the consequences of violence - Promotion of civil initiatives
Plazo	Short	Medium	Long

Prepared by the authors based on Rettberg (2003), Mora (2019) and the School of Peace Culture of the Autonomous University of Barcelona (2020)

The first approach is defined as a *minimalist interpretation of peacebuilding*. From this perspective, there is an observational conception of violence, that is, violence is defined

according to the visible results of the action and not by its origin, so peace is understood as the elimination of physical violence (negative peace) and peacebuilding actions are oriented towards stopping physical violence. The broader positions within this approach include the repair of the direct effects of physical violence, and the more restricted positions recognize as violent and potentially repairable only that which is carried out by illegal actors.

The second approach is known as the *intermediate interpretation of peacebuilding*, which associates violence with social, economic, and political systems or structures that affect the dignity of people and thus the satisfaction of their needs and human rights. From the above it follows that violence is not limited to its visible manifestation. From this perspective, peace is conceived as overcoming all manifestations of violence (positive peace), for which the agenda and actions of peacebuilding must be linked to strategic reforms for the promotion of development in the medium term, particularly in the territories most affected by the conflict.

Finally, a third approach is known as *maximalist interpretation*; this approach considers that violence is associated with social, economic and political systems or structures, in which different violent expressions can occur, which is why this approach considers that peace addresses the regulation of conflicts with identifiable criteria of social justice within the framework of wide-ranging participatory processes and full guarantees, which demands structural reforms to the State and/or the economic model.

From a maximalist perspective, peacebuilding is understood as the “*set of measures, approaches and stages necessary to transform violent conflicts into more peaceful and sustainable relations*” (Escola de Cultura de Pau, 2006). Peacebuilding is a long-term process that addresses the causes and effects of conflicts, and therefore includes actions to protect human rights, guarantee security, humanitarian aid, economic development, conflict prevention and strengthening democratic government structures, among others (United States Institute of Peace, 2010).

1.2. Sources and processing of information

This document is based on two main sources: a) the set of reports prepared by the *Comisión para el Esclarecimiento de la Verdad* (CEV); and b) the database on corruption facts built by Transparencia por Colombia on the Citizen Corruption Monitor platform³. In addition, the databases of the *Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica* (CNMH) and the *Jurisdicción Especial para la Paz* (JEP). All this information is open to the public and is cited throughout the document for consultation.

a) Reports from the Comisión para el Esclarecimiento de la Verdad. The 2016 Peace Agreement contemplated the creation of a comprehensive system of truth, justice, reparation and non-repetition, of which the Comisión para el Esclarecimiento de la Verdad (CEV), was a part, as a state entity that operated between 2017 and 2022 with the objective of seeking to clarify patterns and explanatory causes of the internal armed conflict.

³ [Monitor Ciudadano de la Corrupción.](#)

The CEV generated eleven reports that were analyzed to prepare this document, as well as partial documents and consultancy documents. A qualitative content analysis technique was used, which allowed various fragments of the reports to be coded into a set of categories based on their comprehensive reading and the identification of words and phrases related to the phenomenon of corruption. In this way, it was possible to structure an analysis that accounts for the relationship between corruption and armed conflict based on the fragments scattered and unstructured throughout the reports.

- b) **Data from the Citizen Corruption Monitor.** Transparencia por Colombia generates data and reports on the phenomenon of corruption. One of the tools it has built is the Citizen Corruption Monitor, which is based on a database developed from the identification of corruption events in the Digital Press Archive of the *Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular (CINEP)*⁴, in the period 2016-2022, which are contrasted, verified, and categorized, to later complement the information collected, validate the data and, finally, publish the results in open data format⁵. It should be noted that some of the events recorded in the period 2016-2022 have as their initial date of occurrence a date prior to the year in which the press records or follows up on them.

Specifically, 245 events have been recorded related to: 1) the development of the internal armed conflict; 2) events associated with the “peace sector”; and 3) acts of corruption that have taken place in territories prioritized for the implementation of the 2016 Peace Agreement and other state peace initiatives. Additionally, this document collects information from the first version of Radiography of Corruption 2010–2016, which focused on acts of corruption identified in consolidation municipalities.

⁴ Available in: <https://archivoprensa.cinep.org.co/>

⁵ The data is available at: <https://www.monitorciudadano.co/hechos-corrupcion/>, where you can also consult the [methodological document](#).

2. Corruption and armed conflict in public opinion

The perception of conflict and corruption in public opinion partially accounts for the intensity of both phenomena in the citizenry, which is closely linked to the levels of acceptance, resignation, or rejection of each problem. From a historical perspective, the Comisión de la Verdad points out that corruption has been present in the public debate and that it has progressively been articulated to the debate on violence. During the period that the Commission calls “historical background” (1920-1958), a reference to the “moral and democratic restoration of the Republic” can be observed in the speech of the liberal Jorge Eliecer Gaitán⁶ criticizing pockets of corruption within the Conservative Party and the liberal government and the way in which this could lead to violence (CEV, 2022b, p. 49).

Once the armed conflict entered a phase of development and intensification, the Truth Commission notes that corruption continued in the public debate. For example, in the period that the commission calls “The illusion of a new country and the war for territory” (1990-2002), one can observe in the speech of the conservative Álvaro Gómez Hurtado⁷ a reference to the “regime” as responsible for corruption, national decadence and violence. (CEV, 2022b, p. 297). This shows that at the origins of the armed conflict and throughout its development, the mention of corruption has been present in the public debate and occupies a place in public opinion.

Currently, public opinion studies show the presence of corruption and conflict as relevant problems for citizens in Colombia. These studies allow us to affirm that they are two of the main problems that the country faces, and that the interest of citizens in addressing corruption increases when the intensity of the armed conflict decreases.

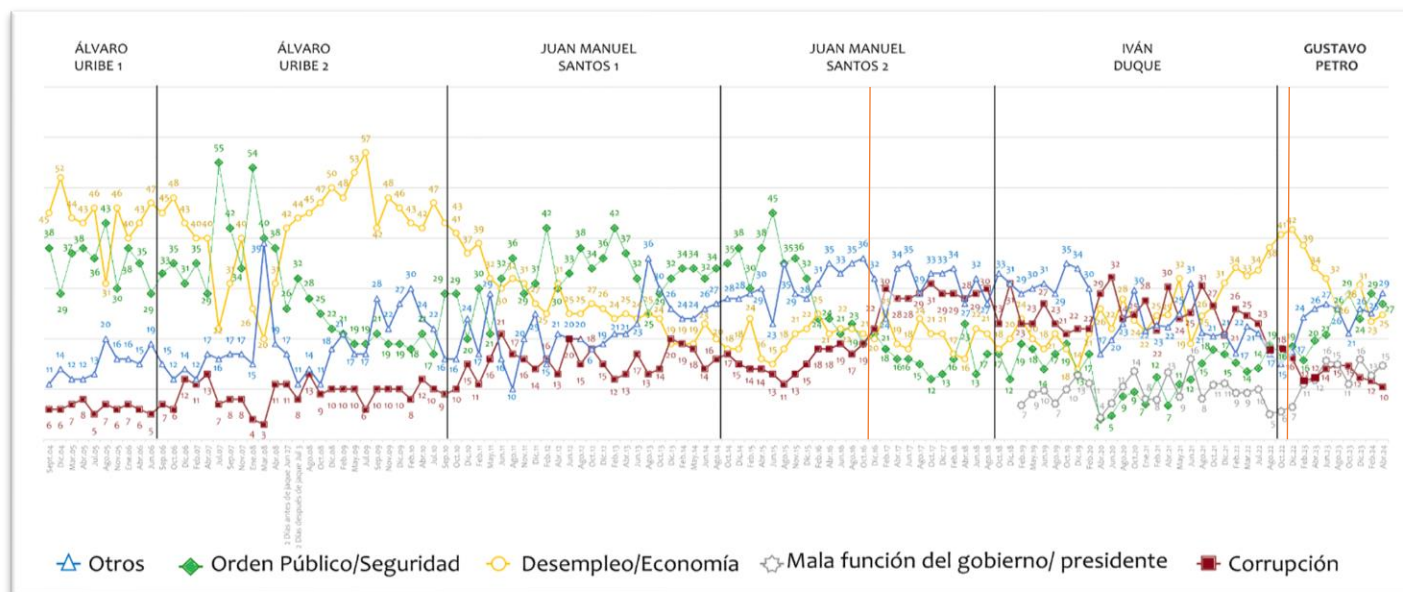
This is confirmed by the Invamer Poll survey, which investigates citizens' perceptions of the country's main problems, including public order and security (partly linked to the armed conflict) and corruption. Since the survey began in September 2004 and until October 2016, public order was always ranked above corruption as a problem affecting the country. The trend was reversed between the measurements of October and December 2016, when in November of the same year the Peace Agreement between the Colombian State and the FARC-EP was signed, which led to a reduction in the intensity of the armed conflict and, with it, a change in citizen perception.

⁶ Jorge Eliecer Gaitán: political leader who founded the dissidence of the Liberal Party, called “Unir”. He was assassinated in Bogotá on April 9, 1948, which had as one of its effects the intensification of bipartisan violence and the subsequent mutation of that violence into an internal armed conflict.

⁷ Álvaro Gómez Hurtado: political leader who founded the dissidence of the Conservative Party called the “National Salvation Movement”. He was assassinated in Bogotá on November 2, 1995. On September 30, 2020, the members of the last secretariat of the FARC-EP acknowledged the authorship of the murder before the Jurisdicción Especial para la Paz.

This trend continues until the October 2022 measurement, but in December 2022 public order and security are again above corruption as the main problem in the country according to this measurement. Although there is no event of such notoriety and scope in December 2022 as the 2016 Peace Agreement, there is a related legal and political event: in November 2022, the “Total Peace Law” (Law 2272 of 2022) was approved, which has given legal support to the Colombian government to negotiate new peace agreements with other armed organizations outside the law.

Chart 1. What is the main problem that Colombia has at the moment?



Source: Invamer (2024). Changes in trends are indicated in orange in November 2016 (signing of the Peace Agreement with the FARC-EP) and November 2022 (issuance of the Total Peace Law).

Other studies have recognized this relationship in public opinion. Surveys on political culture, carried out by the Instituto de Estudios Políticos y Relaciones Internacionales of the Universidad Nacional de Colombia and Cifras & Conceptos, show that, after the signing of the Peace Agreement in 2016, citizens' concerns have moved towards problems other than the armed conflict, including corruption. (IEPRI; Cifras & Conceptos, 2022).

The change generated in citizen concerns after the signing of the Peace Agreement may imply a deeper change in what the Comisión de la Verdad called "normalization of corruption" and which is associated with processes of systemic corruption. The Comisión de la Verdad argues that after decades of armed conflict, Colombian society may have developed a relative tolerance or acceptance of corruption as a lesser evil compared to the violence and insecurity caused by the conflict. **As the intensity of the conflict eased with the Peace Agreement, attention shifted to corruption, which previously might have been overshadowed by the urgency of addressing violence.**

Table 1. Impact on minds and hearts

*“This scenario [of armed conflict] has been shaping, for a large part of the population, a context in which it has been common to follow those who have armed power or those who trade the possibility of deciding for immediate economic benefit, **which has normalized corruption in all social strata**. It is the coexistence in many territories usually linked to illegal economies, such as drug trafficking or illegal mining under armed control. The permanence and strengthening over time of these high-level economic, social, and political networks in local or regional power, but also nationally, and not only the coercive power of armed groups, have had an important impact on minds and hearts as a legacy of violence and impunity.”*

(Comisión de la Verdad, 2022a. Findings and Recommendations: The Impacts of War Degradation. p. 62).

3. Corruption and armed conflict: interdependent phenomena

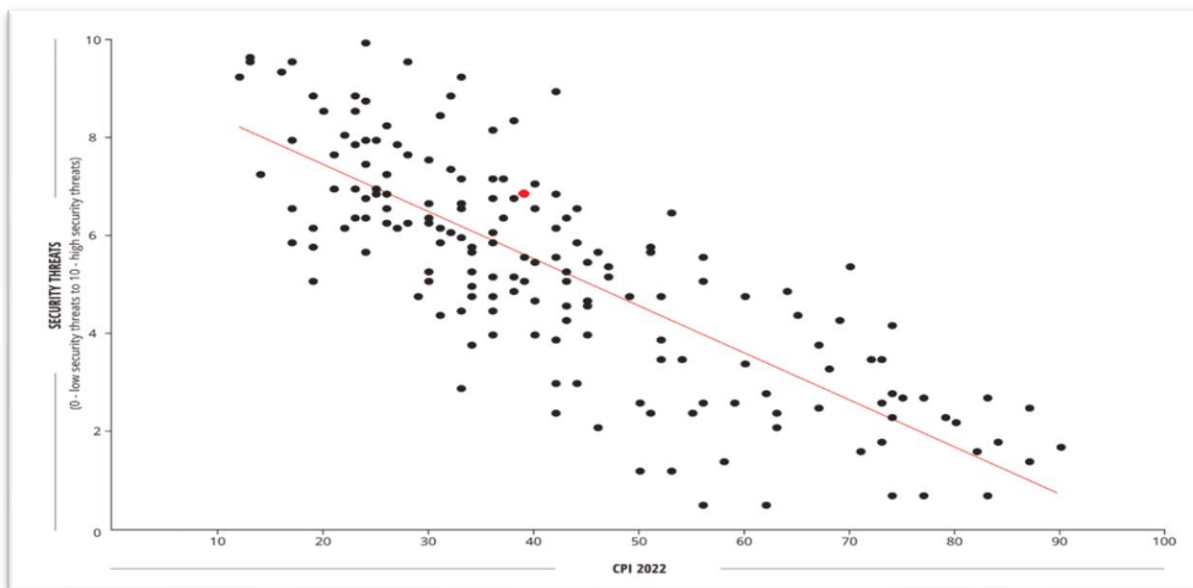
In Colombia, political corruption and armed conflict have influenced the configuration of the political system, affecting the consolidation of democracy, the social rule of law, economic development, the judicial system, and the guarantee of human rights. Although there is no consensus on how these phenomena interact, below are some ways in which political corruption and armed conflict have been related in Colombia: 1) in a vicious circle or spiral of causes and consequences; 2) to capture and co-opt the State; and 3) in serious violations of human rights. Finally, some trends in corruption in territories prioritized for peacebuilding are presented.

3.1. Vicious circle or spiral of causes and consequences

The first relationship identified has been called a “vicious circle”: the probability of generating conflicts increases in scenarios of systemic corruption, while environments of violent conflict are conducive to corruption (Hopp-Nishanka, Rogers, & Humphreys, 2022). This correlation is observed in Transparency International's 2022 Corruption Perceptions Index report, which identified corruption as a fundamental threat to peace and security, finding that countries with higher perceptions of corruption tend to experience more violent threats and be worse at dealing with them and ensuring the security of their populations, while countries with high CPI scores are more resilient to threats posed by organized criminal groups.

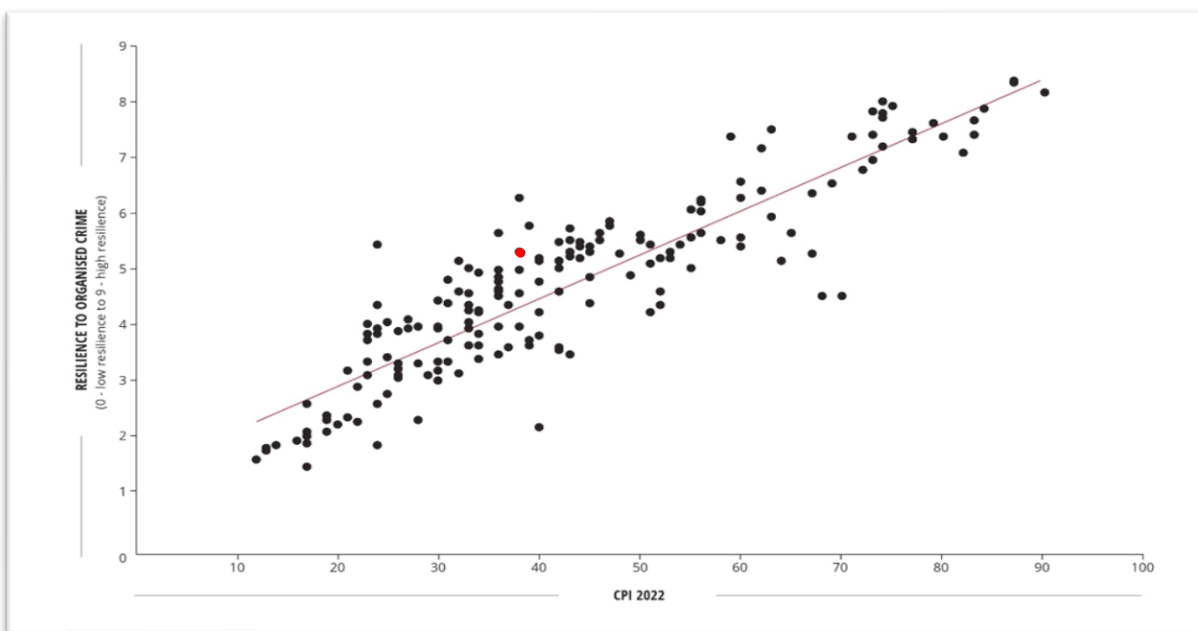
Hopp-Nishanka, Rogers, & Humphreys (2022) point out that armed conflict and corruption can become interdependent elements of a system: the marginalization of minority groups and the violation of their political and economic rights by corrupt elites can lead to armed resistance and violent conflict, which in turn implies a governance based on the use and abuse of the coercive power of the State by the elites. The erosion that this generates in the trust in State action and the limitation in the guarantee of rights has as a consequence that sectors of the population are attracted by the discourses of non-State armed groups, which are strengthened, in a vicious circle.

Chart 2. Corruption and security threats



Source: Transparency International(2023). In red: Colombia.

Chart 3. Corruption and resilience to organized crime



Source: Transparency International(2023). In red: Colombia.

This correlation indicates that **corruption can simultaneously be a cause of armed conflict, a driving force for its persistence and prolongation, and a consequence of the deterioration of the conflict.** This is evident in some of the reports of the Comisión de la Verdad which corruption is simultaneously presented in a spiral of causes and consequences as one of the processes that

concur to give rise to the armed conflict (CEV, 2022b, p. 77), and as a consequence of the armed conflict (CEV, 2022c, p. 286).

Table 2. Corruption as a cause and consequence of the armed conflict in Colombia

<p><i>“(…) which gave rise to the insurgent and counterinsurgent war, the beginning of which is explained by the concurrence of several processes: 1) the absence of electoral competition for the management of power in a centralist and presidential regime; 2) the distribution of state resources in a clientelist manner between the two parties, leaving out the minorities; 3) new frustration with the agrarian reform; 4) military autonomy in the management of public order that led to repression; 5) direct interference by the United States in national conflicts; 6) consequences of the Cold War that were expressed regionally; 7) emergence of an urban citizenry that was not aligned with the traditional parties and was mobilized for unsatisfied fundamental rights;; 8) fraud and corruption.”</i></p>	<p><i>“The corollary of the above [of the armed conflict] is the stigmatization, persecution, murder, extermination of organizations and leaders, the weakening of social mobilization, of the right to exercise opposition and protest, the coercion by violent methods of participation in electoral processes of those who aspire to occupy positions or to elect leaders, the co-optation of institutions, the use of public resources in favor of criminality, violence exercised by state agents against the population that they must protect, corruption and impunity.”</i></p>
<p>(Comisión de la Verdad, 2022b. Thou shalt not kill. Historical account of the internal armed conflict in Colombia. p. 77).</p>	<p>(Comisión de la Verdad, 2022c. Suffering war and rebuilding life. Impacts, confrontations, and resistance. The impacts of armed conflict on democracy. p. 286).</p>

Likewise, the Comisión de la Verdad points out that corruption has been a factor in the persistence, worsening (CEV, 2022a, p. 317), reproduction and escalation (CEV, 2022a, p. 329) of the armed conflict. In addition, the reports of the Comisión de la Verdad show that the relationship between these phenomena has been inscribed within the framework of a process of capture and attempted co-opted reconfiguration of the State, as presented below.

3.2. Capture and co-opted reconfiguration of the State

From the reports of the Comisión de la Verdad it can be deduced that there were two relevant factors that enabled armed actors and drug trafficking structures to undertake a process of capture and co-opted reconfiguration of the State in Colombia. First, the Comisión de la Verdad recognizes that the Colombian State has been built during armed conflict, which implies a tension between legitimacy, legality, and crime (CEV, 2022a, p. 89). This is especially problematic in territories with low economic and institutional development where the armed conflict has been more intense. Second, the Commission's reports highlight the presence and growth of the drug trafficking phenomenon since the late 1970s, which permeated the action of legal and illegal actors and generated resources, incentives, and dynamics for the dissemination of corruption (CEV, 2022g, p. 32).

These two elements allowed the development of a complex corruption process in which political corruption has been central as a driver of harmful effects on democracy, human rights, and the purpose of decentralizing power. Likewise, political corruption has been a facilitator of other

types of corruption (administrative, judicial, private), and multiple political sectors of the country have participated in it, as seen below.

Garay Salamanca, *et al* (2008), identify three phases of the attempt at co-opted reconfiguration of the State by actors outside the law:

- a) *Participate directly in the Congress of the Republic.* In this phase, for example, we can identify the way in which the Medellín Cartel attempted to participate in politics, with Pablo Escobar as a representative in the House, and Carlos Lehder's attempt to form a political movement of regional and national scope.
- b) *Infiltrating the process of electing the President of the Republic.* In this phase, the infiltration of drug trafficking money, specifically from the Cali Cartel, into the 1994 presidential campaign, in the so-called process 8000, is identified.
- c) *Influencing and conditioning the election of Congressmen and the development of "parapolítica."* In this phase, the authors show the links between drug trafficking and paramilitarism, aimed at controlling local electoral processes and the election processes of congressmen in some regions of the country.

In particular, the expressions of the third phase show a structural, systematic (in the sense of being repetitive) and systemic (in the sense of affecting one or more systems, including the political system, the judicial system and the economic system) situation of the capture and attempted co-opted reconfiguration of the State, in which illegal actors linked to the armed conflict and local elites who mobilized their particular interests to the detriment of the collective interest directly participate.

Alliances between political groups at the regional level and armed actors - mainly paramilitaries, but also guerrillas (CEV, 2022d), were forged in order to advance the capture and attempt to reconfigure the State in different management areas, taking advantage of the tension in which the construction of the Colombian State is inscribed and the resources of drug trafficking mainly, but also of other illegal economies derived, for example, from smuggling and illegal mining.⁸

These alliances were expressed through *local and national pacts* (CEV, 2022b, p. 412). Restrepo identifies at least 10 pacts or alliances with departmental, regional, and national scope, forged between paramilitary structures and politicians between 2000 and 2003. Initially, paramilitary groups turned to intermediaries to participate in politics, but progressively they entered political negotiations with their own candidates and political organizations (CEV, 2022b, p. 293).

One element of these pacts was the financing of politics with resources from illegal economies and actors, including both the financing of electoral campaigns and the financing of political parties, with which they sought to control municipal public administrations (mayors and

⁸ "In the fight against illegal mining, it is necessary to confront the phenomenon of corruption as a priority. In a study by the Anti-Corruption Experts Commission, it was noted that agents linked to illegal mining "have an enormous capacity to corrupt political actors and state officials through the use of violence." (CEV, 2022c, p. 214).

councils), while at the national level they sought to occupy the greatest possible number of seats in the Congress of the Republic within the framework of the phenomenon known as “parapolítica”. (CEV, 2022a, p. 291 & 329) (CEV, 2022b, p. 293).

Table 3. Capture and co-opted reconfiguration of the State

“The “parapolítica” scandal showed that the money that financed regional and national politics also contributed to the worsening of the war and the corruption of the Colombian political regime. The damage to the rules of the game of democracy and the ways of doing politics was deepened, due to the distortion of transparent and democratic competition, and the capture of public institutions for the benefit of his interests, among others. For example, Salvatore Mancuso established a network of alliances with the political actors of Córdoba that counted on their decision and will, without exerting the pressure of weapons. In the same region, as a former congresswoman accused of having ties to the paramilitaries explained to the Comisión de la Verdad, candidates for Congress who did not have a relevant weight in local politics, after the injection of drug trafficking money and the support of private paramilitary armies, obtained more votes than traditional politicians: “Eleonora won with 82,000 votes in Córdoba, which was crazy. That is, for a girl who had just been a councilor of Tierralta with 400 votes”.

(Comisión de la Verdad, 2022a. Findings and recommendations. Drug trafficking as a protagonist of the armed conflict and a factor in its persistence. p. 327).

Once these spaces were captured, an attempt was made to reconfigure the functioning of the State at the different territorial levels. At the local level, where there were no mayors or councillors who supported these alliances, pressure was put on them through violence⁹, limiting their capacity for action. (CEV, 2022c, p. 271). On the other hand, some of these local leaders were involved in the dynamics of violence¹⁰. At the local level of government, the capture included:

- 1) Extracting income from the treasury to finance the acquisition of weapons and war clothing (CEV, 2022d, p. 102).
- 2) Building clientelist networks to control public contracting and public employment (CEV, 2022a, p. 321) (CEV, 2022c, p. 271) (CEV, 2022d, p. 102).

⁹ *“he AUC killed the political competitors of its allies or threatened them into resigning. In other cases, they banned them from participating in politics in the regions. An example of this is the case of Eudaldo León Díaz, mayor of El Roble, Sucre, who denounced Governor Salvador Arana for acts of corruption in a community council presided over by Álvaro Uribe. He was murdered on April 10, 2003. Arana was convicted by the Supreme Court for aggravated forced disappearance, aggravated homicide and for being a co-author of a conspiracy to promote illegal armed groups”* (CEV, 2022b, p. 512).

¹⁰ *“In La Guajira, a department with high levels of corruption, several political sectors established links with armed actors, drug trafficking and smuggling. One of these cases was the link established by Juan Francisco Gómez Cerchar, former councilman and twice mayor of Barrancas (1995-1997 and 2002-2003), who even became governor of the department (2011-2013) with the criminal gang led by alias Marquitos Figueroa and the Northern Block of the Self-Defense Forces. This politician was dismissed for corruption and sentenced to 55 years in prison for three homicides.”* (CEV, 2022c, p. 271).

- 3) Regulating the use and vocation of land (linked to land dispossession processes) and other local regulations (CEV, 2022c, p. 271).
- 4) Choosing municipal officials at will (CEV, 2022c, p. 271).
- 5) Money laundering and financing of terrorism.

Rent extraction occurred, for example, through corruption in entities such as the state oil company, Ecopetrol, which made it possible to extract monetary resources and the theft of crude oil and fuel to finance paramilitary groups (CEV, 2022a, p. 308 y 340) (CEV, 2022c, p. 271). But it also occurred through the awarding of public contracts at the municipal level of government, configuring patronage networks with guerrilla organizations (CEV, 2022d, p. 972).

The process of capture also included pressure and bribery of local judicial officials to, among other things: guarantee impunity with respect to investigations into members of these alliances and state agents involved in these dynamics, as well as promote the legalization of lands taken from people displaced by violence. These processes of capture and reconfiguration led to the silencing of territories through violent control of public debate, persecution of social organizations and groups, journalists, and a progressive normalization of violence.

At the national level, the phenomenon known as *parapolítica* included guaranteeing the election of congressmen of the Republic who were in line with and at the service of the interests of paramilitarism (CEV, 2022a, p. 327). This situation had antecedents in the attempt by drug trafficking organizations to influence anti-drug policy and extradition agreements by influencing the Congress of the Republic (CEV, 2022a, p. 329).

3.2.1. Illegal campaign financing and rent-seeking: political corruption and criminal actors

The Comisión de la Verdad points out that the presence of drug trafficking money in political campaigns has been an issue on the public agenda at least since 1977, when the United States embassy in Colombia informed its government in cables about the possible relationship between drug traffickers and presidential campaigns in previous periods and the presence of corruption in institutions at the central level of government (CEV, 2022a, p. 325 y 326).

Table 4. Financing of presidential campaigns by drug trafficking

“The Commission had access to U.S. government documents in which representatives and agencies expressed serious concerns about the level of penetration that these funds could have in the 1974 campaigns, won by Alfonso López Michelsen; the 1978 campaign, won by Julio César Turbay Ayala; and the 1982 campaign, in which López Michelsen tried to be reelected. It is difficult to determine who financed whom, but the political and electoral system has been able to promote clientelism and increasing electoral corruption that has undermined democratic transparency – especially at the regional level – and has encouraged tolerance of the circulation of resources of dubious transparency as a basis for political activity.”

(Comisión de la Verdad, 2022a. Findings and recommendations. Drug trafficking as a protagonist of the armed conflict and a factor in its persistence. p. 326).

In recent decades, with a greater amount of evidence, two processes have revealed the influence of illegal money and actors in the financing of politics. The first of these demonstrated the scope of the penetration of drug money in politics, while the second would demonstrate how the financing of politics was part of a more complex process of capture and attempted co-opted reconfiguration of the State at the regional and national level.

First, in 1994, the influx of money from the Cali cartel into Ernesto Samper's presidential campaign, in the so-called "Proceso 8000", seriously damaged Colombian institutions, citizen confidence in the democratic process and generated diverse impacts on the economy and international relations, among others. The Accusations Committee of the House of Representatives ordered the case against Ernesto Samper to be shelved, citing a lack of evidence to show that the then candidate had been aware of the influx of illegal funds into his campaign.

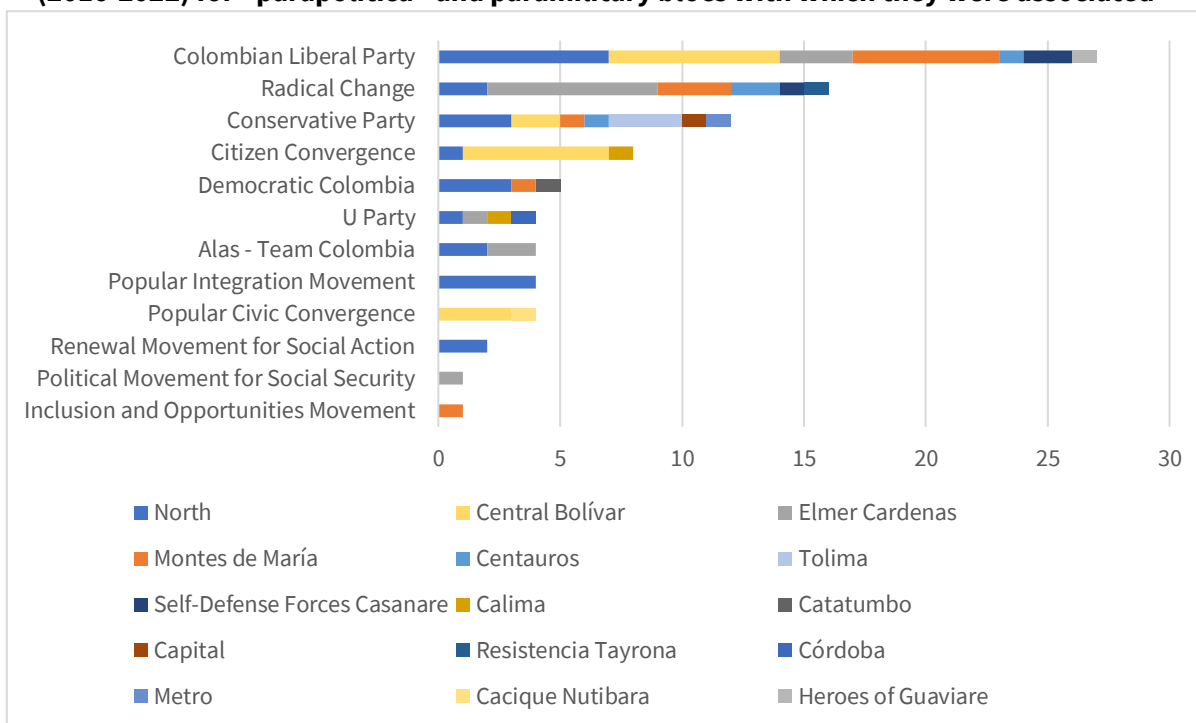
Secondly, in 2005, in the Congress of the Republic, at least 35% of the congressmen who took office would have been supported by paramilitarism according to the versions of various paramilitary commanders within the framework of the Law of Justice and Peace. This process known as *parapolítica* would demonstrate an interest on the part of drug trafficking and paramilitarism not only to have a degree of influence in political processes, but to capture decisive scenarios of politics to promote their agendas and interests.

Years later, the Citizen Corruption Monitor identified at least 44 incidents related to political financing by illegal armed organizations, predominantly by paramilitaries and paramilitary successor groups, but also by guerrilla organizations. Seven of these occurred after the signing of the 2016 Peace Agreement, and at least two of these show links between politicians and armed actors in municipalities prioritized for implementing the Peace Agreement.¹¹

Restrepo (2022) identified at least 88 convictions for paramilitarism issued by the Supreme Court of Justice between 2016 and 2022 against senators (35 convictions), representatives to the House (37 convictions) and governors (16 convictions). The judgments show the impact of paramilitarism on the party system. They show that 12 political organizations endorsed congressmen and governors convicted of paramilitarism. Four of these 12 parties maintain their legal status and currently have representation in the Congress of the Republic, while three of these four were the parties that endorsed the most paramilitary politicians according to the judgments of the Supreme Court of Justice (Restrepo, 2022, pp. 24-30).

¹¹ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [And the vaccine against corruption?](#) and [The dissident infiltrator.](#)

Chart 4. Political Parties that endorsed congressmen and governors with a final sentence (2016-2022) for “parapolítica” and paramilitary blocs with which they were associated

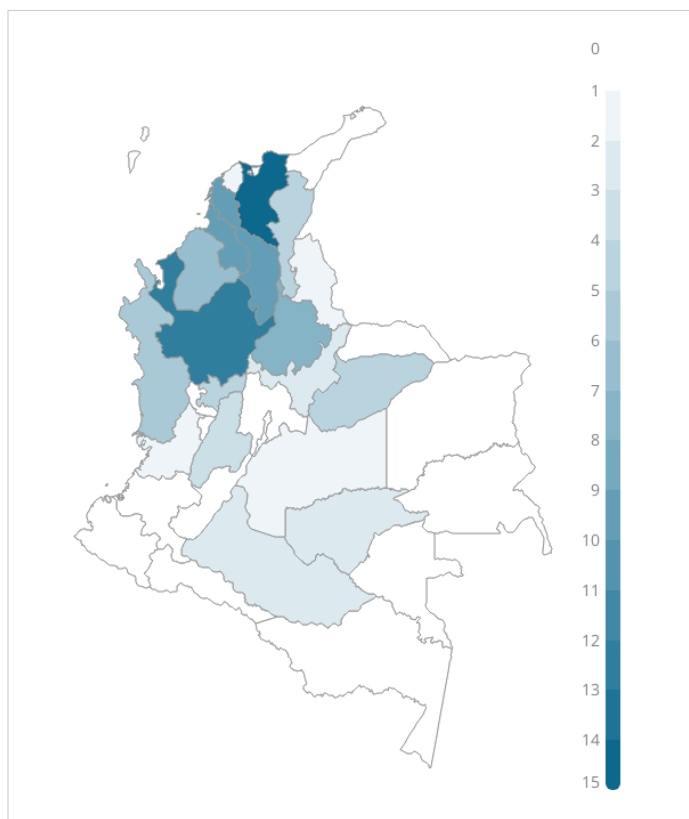


Source: Prepared by the authors based on Restrepo (2022), with data from the Supreme Court of Justice and the Attorney General's Office of the Nation

28.4% of the sentences show links between paramilitary politicians and the Northern Bloc of the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC), which was commanded by Salvatore Mancuso; 20.4% with the Central Bolívar Bloc commanded by Carlos Mario Jiménez “Macaco”; 15.9% with the Elmer Cárdenas Bloc commanded by Fredy Rendón Herrera “El Alemán”; 13.6% with the Héroes de Montes de María Bloc commanded by Edward Cobos “Diego Vecino” and Rodrigo Mercado “Rodrigo Cadena”; and the remaining 12.5% with 11 other paramilitary structures (Restrepo, 2022, p. 24-30). The cases with a final sentence cover 18 of the country's 32 departments.

The financing of politics by paramilitarism was part of a nationwide operation that involved “*least 400 elected politicians, 109 public officials and more than 5,000 civilians with different positions and responsibilities. Thus, these are not isolated cases but rather a political network of great territorial and institutional significance that undoubtedly changed the political and electoral map.*” (Ungar & Cardona, 2010). The purpose, as has been pointed out, was to capture decision-making spaces to seek the reconfiguration of the State. In this regard, Restrepo(2022) analyzes the impact of the so-called "paramilitary takeover of the Congress of the Republic" on the process of political reform and the law on alternative penalization, legislative initiatives of great interest to paramilitary structures and politicians allied to them.

Map 1. Departments where the events that led to convictions of *parapolíticos* occurred between 2016 and 2022



Source: Prepared by the authors based on Restrepo (2022), with data from the Supreme Court of Justice and the Attorney General's Office of the Nation

At the local level of government, the Citizen Corruption Monitor has also recorded the participation of mayors in rent-seeking in favor of armed groups, particularly the channeling of public funds to successor structures of paramilitarism and the ELN, contracting in favor of paramilitarism¹², and alliances between councilors, the Clan del Golfo, and the ELN¹³. Finally, the Citizen Corruption Monitor has also recorded events in which university rectors, municipal government secretaries, governors, and congressmen gave orders or requested that paramilitary groups murder people¹⁴.

¹² Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. Delivery of public resources: [That is the business partner](#) & [Mayor of crying](#). Direction of contracting: [Infrastructure for the AUC](#).

¹³ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [Councilman advised the Clan del Golfo](#) & [Councilman Duarte Díaz: Front man and money launderer for the ELN](#).

¹⁴ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [With list in hand](#); [Principal to repeat ethics class](#); [From possession to the gravee](#) & [Traces of armed pressure](#).

3.2.2. Co-optation of the administration of justice and legalization of land dispossession: judicial corruption and administrative corruption

In the context of the armed conflict, justice has been affected by armed actors and drug trafficking. Judicial officials have been attacked with violence and in some cases have joined corruption networks (CEV, 2022a, p. 294) (CEV, 2022d, p. 906) seeking impunity in proceedings brought for serious human rights violations (CEV, 2022a, p. 437), corruption and drug trafficking, among others. This had the effect of fragmenting judicial investigations, omitting contexts, concealing criminal networks, low inter-institutional cooperation to jointly analyze criminal investigations and investigations into unusual or suspicious financial movements, the absence of investigation into money paths and money laundering mechanisms (CEV, 2022a, p. 375).

The Citizen Corruption Monitor has recorded this type of practice, with at least 15 cases of corruption that occurred between 2008 and 2021, in which actors in the armed conflict have sought to co-opt judicial investigation and the administration of justice at the municipal level, linking specialized prosecutors, networks of prosecutor's officials and judges at the municipal level¹⁵ with paramilitary organizations and successors of paramilitarism such as the Clan del Golfo, other drug trafficking structures, the FARC-EP and dissident structures of that organization¹⁶.

Likewise, the impact on the national level of the Supreme Court of Justice is recorded with the so-called "Cartel de la Toga" in which magistrates, an anti-corruption prosecutor and defense lawyers of paramilitary politicians were linked, in a structured network of judicial corruption that charged high sums of money to politicians with immunity in exchange for influencing judicial decisions in the Attorney General's Office of the Nation and the Supreme Court of Justice¹⁷. In addition, there are reports of drug traffickers linked to paramilitarism offering money and other gifts to federal agents of the United States National Security Investigations Office.¹⁸

Although it is not part of the judicial branch, corruption within Instituto Nacional Penitenciario y Carcelario (INPEC) can be mentioned as the entity responsible for penitentiary and prison policy attached to the Ministry of Justice and Law. Particularly, some events associated with the armed conflict, such as: 1) homicides and forced disappearances carried out by paramilitaries with the participation of INPEC guards in prison establishments; 2) permissiveness with paramilitary leaders so that they could maintain their operations from prisons; 3) formation of networks

¹⁵ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [Low-profile drug trials](#).

¹⁶ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. Paramilitaries: [Entrance by exit](#). Successors of paramilitarism: [Criminal prosecution](#); [Friendly prosecutor](#); [Playing for two teams](#) & [Corruptio in fraganti](#). Drug traffickers: [Pocket witnesses](#); [Money makes the dog dance](#); [Tailored punishment](#) & [Justice for the highest bidder](#). FARC-EP dissidents: [The doctor's double life](#).

¹⁷ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [A very cunning lawyer, he likes to walk on paths rather than roads](#); [Robes without honor or shame](#) & [Impunity for high officials](#).

¹⁸ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [Agent discovered](#).

dedicated to theft and kidnapping by members of INPEC in association with the ELN; and 4) the collaboration of guards in the escapes of members of the Clan del Golfo.¹⁹

On the other hand, one of the specific expressions of co-optation of the administration of justice by these alliances between local and regional elites and armed actors is the legalization of land dispossession²⁰, to which processes of administrative corruption are also linked. The dispossession carried out with violence was accompanied by judicial corruption and co-optation of entities such as the “*Instituto Colombiano de la Reforma Rural (Incora), the Instituto Colombiano de Desarrollo Rural (Incodor), the Oficina de Registros Públicos, notaries and local authorities*” (CEV, 2022d, p. 430) which sought to legalize land dispossession operations.

In this regard, the Citizen Corruption Monitor records at least 11 cases of corruption reported by the press associated with the legalization of land dispossession operations, which show that: 1) lands seized by the FARC-EP and the ELN were awarded to cattle ranchers by the director of INCORA; 2) irregular allocation of land by INCODER officials to people with ties to the FARC-EP; 3) lands seized from peasants by paramilitarism were titled to politicians and businessmen allied to paramilitarism; and 4) lands that were to be destined for the victims were awarded to businessmen, politicians and magistrates of the high courts by notaries and registrars of public instruments with the participation of councilors, government secretaries, Territorial Committees for comprehensive attention to the displaced population, intermediaries, individuals, and national and multinational private companies.²¹

Table 5. Land dispossession in the interdependence relationship between corruption and armed conflict

“The Incora was created by Law 135 of 1961 on agrarian reform and was abolished in 2003; it was replaced by the Incoder, which was established by Decree 1300 of 2003. In 2015, the liquidation of the Incoder was ordered and the current National Land Agency was created by Decree 2363 of 2015. The liquidation of the Incora and the Incoder was due to multiple allegations of corruption that included the execution of maneuvers by some officials of these institutions to carry out the dispossession of lands from peasants.”

(Comisión de la Verdad, 2022d. Even war has its limits. Human rights violations, breaches of international humanitarian law and collective responsibilities. p. 442).

¹⁹ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. Homicides and disappearances: [Just like in his kingdom](#). Permissiveness: [Hotel instead of prison](#). Criminal networks: [“That guy from Inpec made us into a mess”](#). Escapes: [Heads roll because of the ringleaders](#).

²⁰ The Colombian State recognized the existence of the internal armed conflict and created provisions to compensate victims, including measures for land restitution (Law 1448 of 2011). In this way, it is recognized, as noted by the Comisión de la Verdad, that within the framework of the conflict, land accumulation processes have been generated “*based on fraud, corruption and violence*” (CEV, 2022a, p. 113).

²¹ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. Land allotment to cattle ranchers: [In thief mode](#). Land allotment to people with ties to the FARC-EP: [Land wholesale](#). Land titling to politicians allied with paramilitarism: [Getting to the bottom of land dispossession](#) & [A crime against humanity](#). Land allotment to high court judges: [A concert to commit crimes](#); [They appropriated what belonged to others](#); [That land had an owner](#); [Ill-gotten land. Take it!](#) & [The land was stolen from you and then turned into a dump](#).

3.2.3. Corruption in the Armed Forces, intelligence agencies and entities responsible for fighting drug trafficking: administrative corruption

The Citizen Corruption Monitor indicates that the sector most affected by corruption has been the security and defense sector (Transparencia por Colombia, 2024). When reviewing the events recorded by the Monitor, 113 cases of corruption involving the armed forces and related to the armed conflict are identified. 61% of these events have to do with extrajudicial executions, which is discussed in more detail below. The remaining 39% of these events are analyzed below.

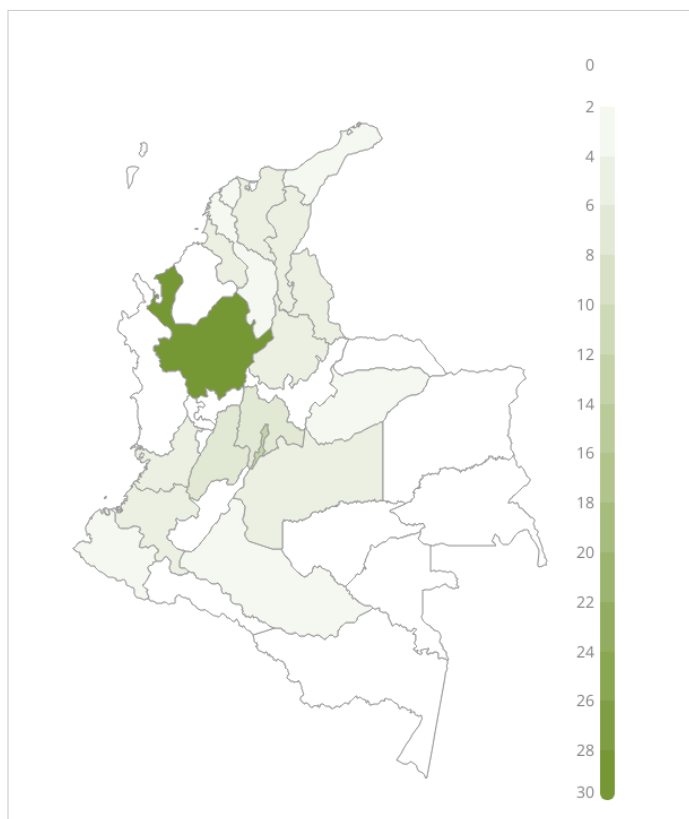
The first form of corruption that is evident in these events is related to the formation of corruption networks for the sale of weapons and information to armed organizations involved in the conflict such as the ELN, the Clan del Golfo, Los Rastrojos, the Oficina de Envigado and the dissidents of the FARC-EP. Personnel of various ranks from the Ejército Nacional, the Armada and the Policía Nacional have participated in these networks²².

The second form of corruption is related to the appropriation by soldiers of the Ejército Nacional y and members of the Policía Nacional of money seized in operations against the FARC-EP and of cocaine seized from drug trafficking organizations. However, this is not the only way in which the armed forces have been linked to drug trafficking. The third form of corruption shows the formation of drug trafficking support networks within the Unidad Nacional de Intervención Policial, the Seccional de Investigación Criminal (Sijin), the Ejército Nacional, as well as the individual participation of members of these forces in drug trafficking organizations²³.

²² Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. Arms and information sales to the ELN: [Weapons and lies](#); [When the ship sinks...](#) & [Secrets not well kept](#); to the Clan del Golfo: [The backfire](#), & [The informant](#); to Los Rastrojos: [Like a stone in the shoe](#); to the Oficina de Envigado and the dissidents of the FARC-EP: [A baton of command with cracks](#) & [The great arms dealer of the country is the National Army of Colombia](#).

²³ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. Money theft: [Dreaming costs nothing](#) & [From soldier to fugitive](#). Cocaine theft: [Recycling drugs](#) & [Hidden cove](#). Participation in drug trafficking structures: [Judge and party](#); [U A "coca" of rice](#); [The small "salary" of Matamba for soldiers in Nariño](#).

Map 2. Departments where corruption incidents involving the Armed Forces and intelligence agencies occurred



Source: Source: Prepared by the authors based on Radiography of Corruption (2024).

Drug trafficking is a central phenomenon in the armed conflict, with a high capacity to structure corruption processes, consequently its money and actors have come to affect the institutions for drug control: the Consejo Nacional de Estupefacientes (CNE), the Dirección Nacional de Estupefacientes (DNE) and the Sociedad de Activos Especiales (SAE), the Dirección de la Aeronáutica Civil (DAAC), the Policía Antinarcoóticos, among other entities, have had several of their directors and officials convicted of corruption, drug trafficking, and human rights violations (CEV, 2022a, p. 332).

The fourth form of corruption identified is the joint action of the armed forces, intelligence agencies and paramilitary structures in operations that violate human rights, including participation in assassinations, genocides, massacres, murder of protected persons and forced

disappearances²⁴. Likewise, operations carried out exclusively by the Ejército Nacional were recorded in which serious human rights violations occurred.²⁵

The Comisión de la Verdad points out the co-optation of state intelligence agencies by armed groups. An example of this is the case of abuse of power exercised by the Administrativo Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad (DAS)²⁶, which originated after the dissolution of the Servicio Colombiano de Inteligencia(SIC) (CEV, 2022a, p. 482). After the dismantling of these agencies, as the Comisión de la Verdad points out, truth and justice have not been achieved in relation to the uses and abuses of power from these bodies, which remains a pending task to compensate the victims, including victims in exile and victims generated by the operation of these agencies beyond Colombian borders (CEV, 2022e, p. 128).

Finally, the Comisión de la Verdad highlights the opacity of reserved spending in the armed forces and intelligence agencies as a facilitating element of corruption in the context of the armed conflict.

Table 6. Confidential spending

“The general confidentiality of intelligence and counterintelligence information, as well as that of national security and the abusive use of this information, also became a mechanism of impunity, since the activities are secret, the resources are used without sufficient control, there is obscurity in the exercise of public functions and irresponsible use by those who have had the duty to guard the information and resources of the State. A profound change and transparency in intelligence agencies are pillars of the change in the security model, so that it focuses on people and communities.”

(Comisión de la Verdad, 2022a. Findings and recommendations. Security model. p. 432).

3.2.4. Corruption as a vehicle for corporate participation in the armed conflict: private corruption

In the context of the armed conflict, some local, national, and multinational companies have been involved in private corruption processes with a high public impact. A first mechanism of involvement is associated with the financing of illegal armed organizations. A distinction must be

²⁴ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. Assassinations: [DAS tainted by the assassination](#); [Assassination without answers](#) & [Jaime was killed](#). Genocide of the Unión Patriótica: [Massacre in Campamento: A fight for justice](#). Massacres: [From the Army, to Ecopetrol, to AUC collaborator](#); [To the Corner of Shame](#); [Army, Police and Self-Defense Forces: the memory of the massacre](#); [They separated 8...](#); [Last stop Mapiripán](#); [The bitter history of El Salado](#); [“Whistles of Horror”: Military and Paramilitaries in the same bag](#) & [Dirty coexistence](#). Homicide of a protected person and forced disappearance: [Extortionate security](#); [Traces of Violence](#); [Searching through the rubble](#); [Victory for Colectivo 82](#) & [They took him to the grave](#).

²⁵ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [Operation Berlin: Children's Holocaust in Santander](#); [Military Forces against the indigenous population in Valle del Cauca](#) & [Justice is for everyone](#).

²⁶ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [The ghost of the DAS](#); [Listening](#) & [ChuzasDAS](#).

made here: there was private financing of armed organizations under pressure and intimidation, but there was also private financing of these actors due to political sympathy or economic convenience.

Financing under pressure or intimidation, in extortionate dynamics, is observed in cases such as that of the Ecuadorian construction company Hidalgo e Hidalgo, which allegedly had to pay money to the ELN and the FARC-EP so that the guerrilla groups would allow the execution of their works.²⁷

Funding based on political sympathy or economic convenience is widely documented in the free statements of former AUC paramilitary leaders before justice and peace judges, as well as in proceedings before the US justice system, especially in the case of banana company²⁸. Likewise, there was participation of national and multinational companies in processes of land dispossession and legalization of dispossession²⁹. An example is Antonio Zúñiga, a palm oil businessman who, according to the courts, teamed up with Vicente Castaño to dispossess the communities of the lower Atrato-Chocó to take their lands and thus expand the cultivation of palm oil; this businessman was also prosecuted by the US courts for his participation in money laundering.³⁰

A case of apparent financial support due to political affinity is that of the emerald businessman José Leónidas Osorio Soto, who collaborated with the AUC financially and logistically by allowing the troops to stay on his farms and providing information on public force patrols in locations close to his properties³¹.

A second mechanism linking businessmen and armed actors would be illicit financial flows; these flows are associated with dynamics of corruption (Transparencia por Colombia, 2024). Also, the facts recorded by the Citizen Corruption Monitor allow us to observe that within the framework of the armed conflict, illicit financial flows have been generated from drug trafficking activities, illegal mining and other criminal income from guerrilla organizations, paramilitaries, successors of paramilitarism and drug traffickers linked to the armed conflict³², which are linked to legal economies through money laundering operations in which businessmen have participated.

²⁷ Radiography of Corruption. Hidalgo e Hidalgo: [The bribe cost them dearly.](#)

²⁸ See: CNN (June 14, 2024). [The bloody story of Chiquita Brands' financing of a Colombian paramilitary group](#) & Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [Living with a few.](#)

²⁹ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [A concert to commit crimes; hey appropriated what belonged to others; That land had an owner; Ill-gotten land; Take it!](#) & [The land was stolen from you and then turned into a dump.](#)

³⁰ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [With the paramilitaries or with palms up.](#)

³¹ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [Paramilitary hotel.](#)

³² There are also cases of money laundering carried out by relevant actors in the public sphere. For example, General (r) Fabio Buitrago, former head of security for former President Álvaro Uribe, is facing trial for the

In the extractive sector, especially in gold mining, corruption networks made up of businessmen, politicians and illegal armed organizations have been involved in the illegal exploitation of gold and the laundering of assets derived from this activity.

A first example is the capture of more than 15 people associated with a network in which Eduardo Otoya (former vice president of Corporate Affairs at Continental Gold and former president of Frontino Gold Mines), Diego Guzmán (former government secretary of Buriticá, Antioquia) and members of successor structures of paramilitarism such as the Oficina de Envigado and the Clan del Golfo participated. A second example is that of the Sambingo River network in the Colombian massif, which dried up after years of illegal extraction of this mineral, in which two former treasurers of the Iscuandé (Nariño) mayor's office, a police officer who supplied information to the network, the company Enmanuel Gold S.A.S and the ELN participated. Finally, a third example is that of Jhon Uber Hernández who, through the companies C.I. Metales, Hermanos Inversiones Ortiz Yépez, Inversiones Guial, Gold and Silver E.U. and the Cooperativa de Mineros Colombiana-COLMICOOP, laundered gold from mines controlled by the FARC in Chocó³³.

These illegal exploitation processes are associated with a value chain that includes the extraction, marketing, smelting and export of gold. This activity is fueled by risks of corruption in gold extraction and complex dynamics of organized crime³⁴ that result in environmental damage and human rights violations both through acts of violence (homicides, threats, forced displacement, among others) and the effects on the right to a healthy environment.

Linked to these processes are money laundering networks structured around financial flows from drug trafficking and other illegal economies. One example is the business network on the Atlantic coast created by Enilse Rosario López Romero (Alias La Gata) and her sons José Julio, Héctor and Jorge Luis Alfonso López, which allegedly allowed the laundering of paramilitary money for at least 20 years, through gambling companies such as Uniapuestas, Aposmar, Aposucre and Unicat, the firm Seguridad 911 and the television and events production company Uniproducciones. This network was also involved in the murders of journalists ordered by mayors³⁵.

Officials from financial sector entities have also participated in these networks, helping to create front companies and move their financial products so as not to be traced by the authorities. These operated mainly in the Caribbean region for the Clan del Golfo, bringing money into the country from Europe, the United States or Central America, through companies such as Zima Karbalal

crime of money laundering and illicit enrichment from money coming from drug trafficking and paramilitary structures. Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [He had that friend hidden away.](#)

³³ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. Buriticá: [Mines of corruption](#). Iscuandé: [He who lives on the river bank, collects much and cries much](#). Chocó: [Washed gold loses its shine](#). Cauca: [Not all that glitters is gold](#).

³⁴ See: WWF Colombia; Transparencia por Colombia & Fundación para la Conservación y el Desarrollo Sostenible (2021). [Transparent governance of natural resources in Colombia](#).

³⁵ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [La Gata Laundry](#) & [Silencing Journalism](#).

S.A.S.³⁶. At a more local level, there are cases associated with supermarkets and grocery stores that supplied food to armed structures while laundering money from these structures³⁷.

3.2.5. Violence against whistleblowers and journalists

Violence against whistleblowers of corruption in the context of the armed conflict was part of a broader purpose of limiting civic space, deconstructing citizen control and dismantling collective action. This can be seen in the reports of the Comisión de la Verdad in relation to the violence exercised by paramilitarism against civil society organizations that brought forward allegations of corruption. Unions such as the Asociación Nacional Sindical de Trabajadores y Servidores Públicos de la Salud, Seguridad Social Integral and Servicios Complementarios de Colombia (ANTHOC) - which denounced the illegal appropriation of health system resources to finance paramilitary groups³⁸- and the Unión Sindical Obrera (USO) - which denounced the use of resources from the state-owned Ecopetrol to finance paramilitarism - were targets of this violence (CEV, 2022a, p. 396) (CEV, 2022e, p. 140).

The student and university professor movement on the Caribbean coast were also victims of this type of violence,³⁹ after denouncing the diversion of resources from the universities of Córdoba, Atlántico and Barranquilla to finance paramilitarism; in this case, the violence was exercised by an alliance between paramilitarism, the Grupos de Acción Unificada por la Libertad (GAULA) and the DAS (CEV, 2022a, p. 396) (CEV, 2022e, p. 130). Likewise, militants from political organizations that made allegations of corruption and co-optation of public entities by paramilitarism were also murdered and forced into exile (CEV, 2022e, p. 238).

Journalism has also been attacked; several journalists who were investigating corruption schemes, human rights violations and IHL were threatened, had their integrity attacked (CEV, 2022d, p. 133) were murdered or had to go into exile (CEV, 2022e, p. 130). As the Comisión de la Verdad, points out, these attacks on the press have been aimed at silencing and controlling messages directed to public opinion in relation to multiple issues of interest to the country, including those associated with corruption and the armed conflict.

³⁶ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [From the Bank to the bench.](#)

³⁷ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [Wash your silver and dress your troops with Consumax.](#)

³⁸ "This is how a member of Anthoc told the Commission, pointing out the victimizations by the José Pablo Díaz Zuluaga Front of the Northern Block of the AUC, in alleged collusion with the Administrative Department of Security (DAS): "To summarize, eleven of our affiliated friends on the coast were murdered and several of them appeared on Noguera's list. That is the origin of the problem. But there was also another issue: two union leaders of Anthoc in Barranquilla were also murdered, precisely because as the paramilitaries took over the resources of the hospitals, made administrative reforms and asked for personnel, they removed all union guarantees and carried out a physical persecution by murdering union leaders." (CEV, 2022c, p. 236).

³⁹ "Sectors of the student movement and various university professors who made accusations of corruption and demanded investment resources, respect for university autonomy and guarantees of association and mobilization arranged by various professors and students of the university, were branded as terrorists and this cost several of them their lives." (CEV, 2022e, p. 129).

Table 7. Silencing

“The attack on journalists and the media has sought to silence and control messages directed at the public, especially those dealing with issues of public order, illegal economies, socio-environmental problems, illegal actions by State agents, political and economic actors, corruption, social protest, political opposition, and irregularities in elections. Censorship and repression have focused on these issues, especially in the territories most affected by the conflict. There, local and regional media, given their proximity to contexts of intense political and armed violence, have suffered particularly.”

(Comisión de la Verdad, 2022c. Suffering war and rebuilding life. Impacts, confrontations, and resistance. The impacts of armed conflict on democracy. p. 251).

A particularly relevant case is that of journalist Jineth Bedoya, who was kidnapped, tortured and raped as a result of her investigative work in La Modelo prison, where she was investigating the links between paramilitaries and drug traffickers⁴⁰. This case demonstrated the complicity of INPEC guards with paramilitary structures to facilitate and cover up the events, and the negligence of the judicial system to investigate and punish the events, as demonstrated by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. This case also reveals the need to conduct specific studies on the double impact on women in the context of the interdependent relationship between corruption and the armed conflict, about which no specific mention was identified in the reports of the Comisión de la Verdad and only two events are recorded in the Citizen Corruption Monitor.

This information gap may be generated, among other things, by the silencing strategies exercised by corrupt and armed actors on women and by social prejudices against women, which limit reporting. Transparencia por Colombia (2021a) has identified fear linked to, among others, threats to their lives and integrity as a limiting factor in reporting by women. Likewise, the fear of the impact on extended families in rural areas, such as those that have been most affected by the armed conflict, is relevant for women to decide whether to file corruption complaints.

3.3. Serious violations of human rights: extrajudicial executions

In International Humanitarian Law, extrajudicial executions are defined as deliberate homicides by public servants protected by the powers of the State that justify the crime. In the Colombian armed conflict, this type of homicide was used to present murdered civilians as alleged members of guerrilla or paramilitary structures, which constituted a form of corruption in which the conferred power and weapons of the State were used and abused to obtain private benefits and to the detriment of the civilian population, with serious violations of human rights.

Table 8. Extrajudicial executions: corruption and armed conflict

“In the cases of extrajudicial executions known as «falsos positivos» the enemy’s logic was used to justify the killing of defenseless people and falsely present them as guerrillas killed in combat, to show results in

⁴⁰ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [More than two decades waiting for justice.](#)

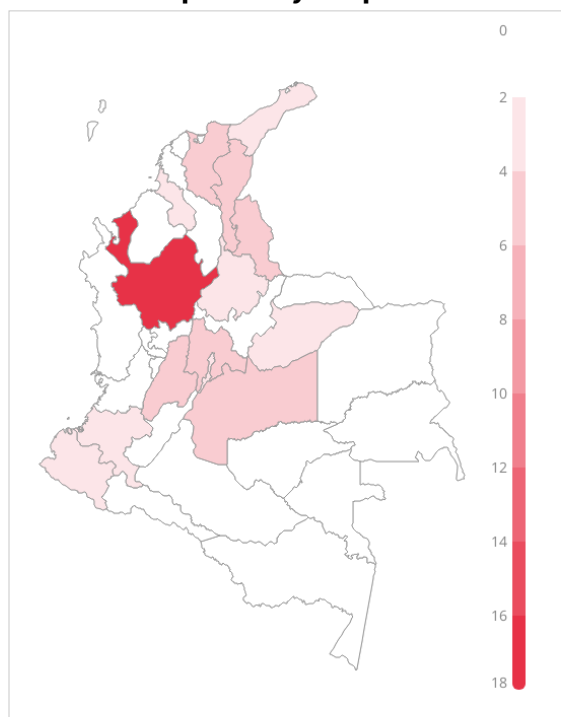
the counterinsurgency fight. The enemy’s discourse was used to cover up corruption and private interests with impunity. The objective in this case was not to “win the war,” but to “appear to win the war.”

(Comisión de la Verdad, 2022a. Findings and recommendations. Security model. p. 397).

Although these types of executions have occurred in Colombia since the 1970s, it was at the end of the first decade of the 2000s that the existence of these practices was brought to public attention by the media under the name of “falsos positivos”. The Citizen Corruption Monitor identifies at least 70 acts of corruption reported by the press between 2016 and 2022 related to extrajudicial executions, which reference more than 1,314 cases of executed people, including minors, pregnant women, people with physical and cognitive disabilities, indigenous people, people in the process of reintegration, among other population groups.

The events identified by the Citizen Corruption Monitor took place in 17 departments and in the capital of the country, with greater intensity in the departments of Antioquia, Cundinamarca and Tolima. In this regard, the department of Antioquia is where most acts of corruption associated with extrajudicial executions have been reported in the press, but it is also the department where most acts of corruption involving the public force are reported, as previously observed.

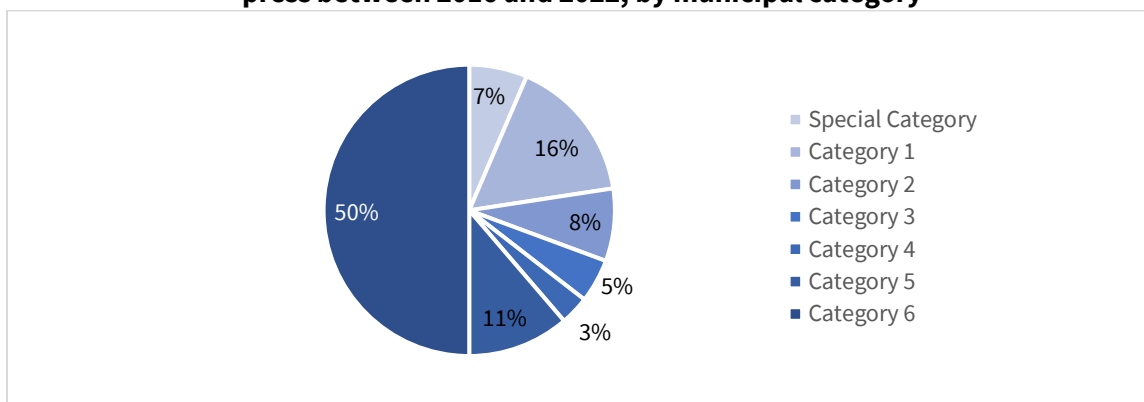
Map 3. Departments with corruption cases associated with extrajudicial executions reported by the press



Source: Prepared by the authors based on Radiography of Corruption (2024).

Although these events occurred in municipalities of all categories, 50% of these events were recorded in municipalities of category 6, of which one third have, on average, poverty levels above 40%. In addition, when reviewing the conditions of freedom of the press in all the municipalities where these events were recorded, it is observed that only one third report sufficient local information, while the other two thirds are in conditions of silence or insufficient local information; from the above it can be concluded that the possibility that the events and cases of extrajudicial executions occurred are higher than those reported by the press.

Chart 5. Corruption incidents associated with extrajudicial executions reported by the press between 2016 and 2022, by municipal category

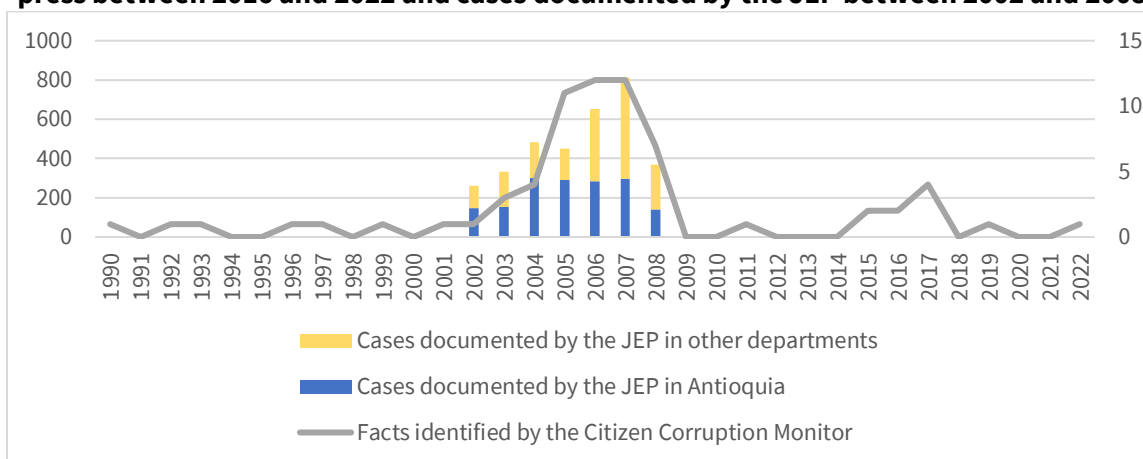


Source: Prepared by the authors based on Radiography of Corruption (2024).

The magnitude of this phenomenon led the Jurisdicción Especial para la Paz (JEP) to open a macro case called "003 Murders and Forced Disappearances presented as combat casualties by State agents", in which, as of May 31, 2024, statements have been received from 789 members of the public force and 3,625 victims have been accredited⁴¹. The cases identified by the JEP show a coincidence with the trend of events recorded by the Citizen Corruption Monitor in the period 2002-2008. During this period, there is an increase in the number of cases documented by the JEP and of events reported by the press, which peaks in 2007 and begins to decline in 2008.

⁴¹ Special Jurisdiction for Peace. [Case 003](#).

Chart 6. Corruption incidents associated with extrajudicial executions reported by the press between 2016 and 2022 and cases documented by the JEP between 2002 and 2008



Fuente: Elaboración propia con base en Radiografía de la Corrupción (2024) y datos JEP (2024)

Since the signing of the 2016 Peace Agreement, new extrajudicial executions have occurred. Two cases have been reported by the press due to their scope: first, the murder and presentation as a combat casualty of a former member of the FARC-EP who was undergoing the process of reincorporation into civilian life; and second, the presentation as combat casualties of 11 people belonging to an indigenous community in the development of a military operation.⁴²

3.4. Corruption trends in territories prioritized for peace

In 2016, prior to the signing of the Peace Agreement, Transparencia por Colombia conducted a study on corruption in peace territories, identifying 187 acts of corruption that occurred or were reported by the media between 2010 and 2016 (Transparencia por Colombia, 2016). Following the signing of the Peace Agreement and until 2022, the Citizen Corruption Monitor has identified 53 acts of corruption in territories prioritized for peace (PDET)⁴³. Below are some characteristics of the identified acts to review similarities and differences in the acts recorded before the signing of the Peace Agreement (2010-2016) and after the signing of the Agreement (2016-2022):

- Between 2010 and 2016, more than 60% of the incidents were concentrated in 7 departments: La Guajira, Valle, Nariño, Chocó, Antioquia, Bolívar, and César. Meanwhile, between 2016 and 2022, nearly 65% of the incidents were recorded in 5 departments: Caquetá, Valle, Nariño, Antioquia, and César. This shows that between 2010 and 2022, the departments of Antioquia,

⁴² Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [An eye for an eye and the country went blind](#) & [Massacre in a bazaar in Puerto Leguizamó, Putumayo](#).

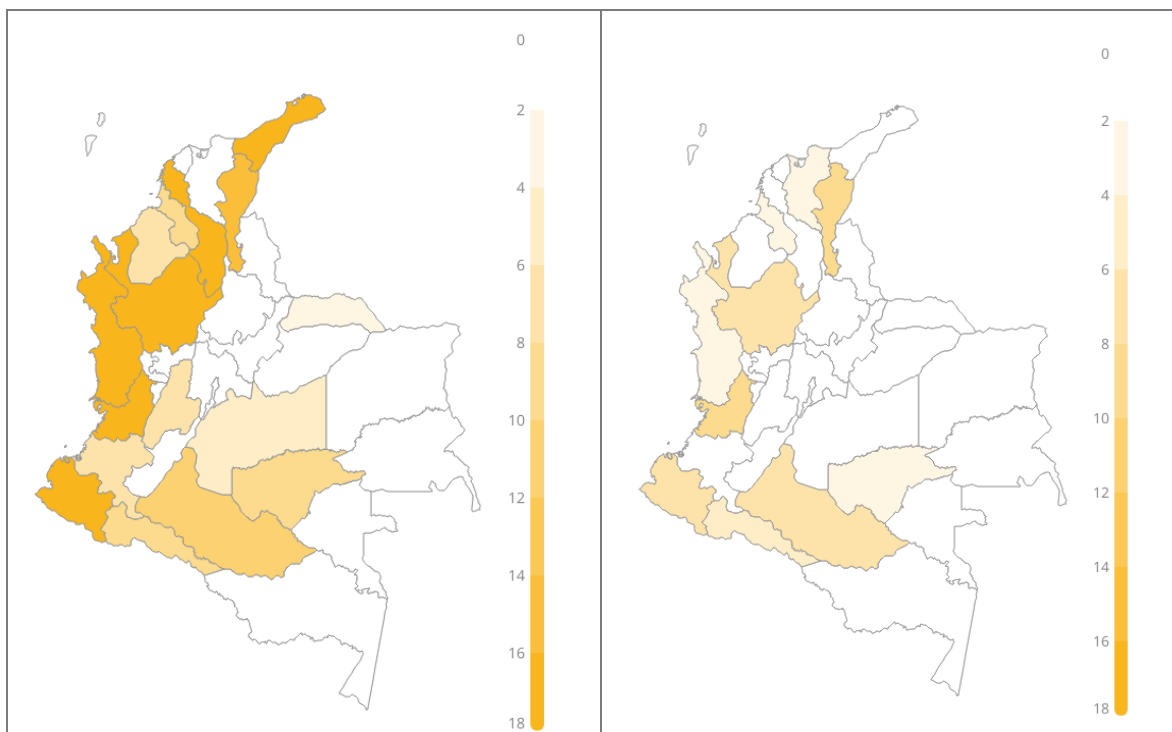
⁴³ These are municipalities prioritized for implementing Programas de Desarrollo con Enfoque Territorial (PDET). Prioritization considered four factors: institutional development, poverty conditions, incidence of armed conflict, and presence of illicit economies.

Valle, Nariño, and César have had the highest incidence of corruption in peaceful territories, as recorded in the Citizen Corruption Monitor.

- Between 2010 and 2016, the most affected municipalities, with 20% of the recorded incidents, were Tumaco (Nariño), San José del Guaviare (Guaviare), Nechí (Antioquia), La Paz (Cesar), Carmen de Bolívar (Bolívar), Arauca (Arauca), El Bagre (Antioquia), and Puerto Asís (Putumayo). Meanwhile, between 2016 and 2022, the most affected municipalities, with 37% of the recorded incidents, were Buenaventura (Valle), Valledupar (Cesar), San José del Guaviare (Guaviare), and Tumaco (Nariño). Thus, it can be seen that municipalities such as Tumaco and San José del Guaviare are municipalities that have maintained a high exposure to acts of corruption before and after the signing of the Peace Agreement.
- When reviewing the conditions of press freedom in the municipalities where these events have been recorded, 43% of the municipalities are in a state of silence⁴⁴ and 4% have insufficient information, therefore, the possibility that there is an underreporting in the press of the set of corruption events that occur in these territories is high.

⁴⁴ The Foundation for Press Freedom (FLIP) conducted a diagnosis of the media ecosystem at the municipal level in Colombia, identifying areas that are silent, that is, "*where there are no media outlets in the municipality or if they exist, they do not cover the entire municipality or do not produce local information*" (FLIP, 2020).

Map 4. Corruption incidents recorded in peace territories between 2010 and 2016 (before the signing of the Peace Agreement) and between 2016 and 2022 (after the signing of the Peace Agreement)

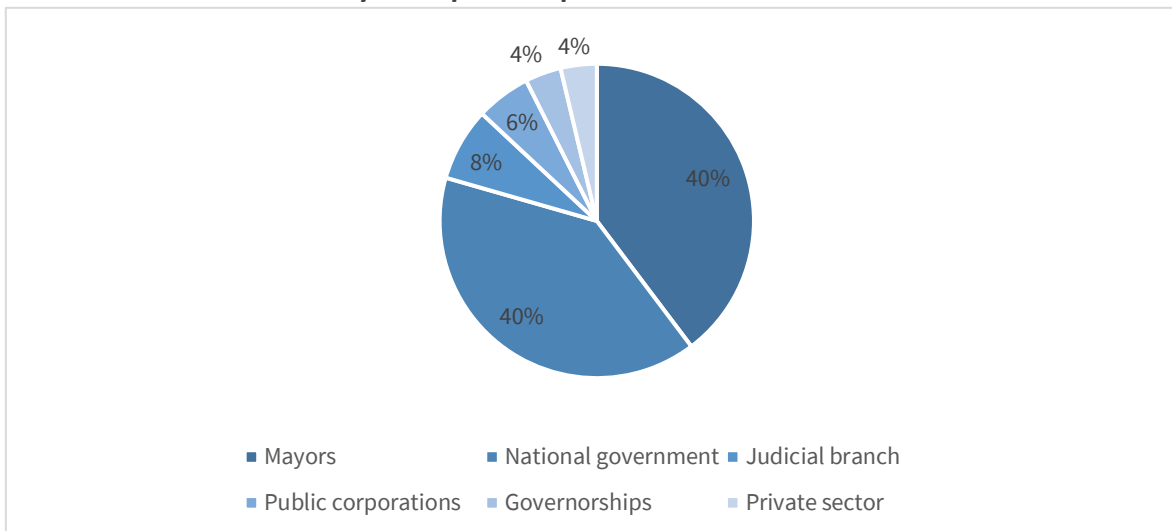


Source: Prepared by the authors based on Corruption in Territories of Peace (2016) and Radiography of Corruption (2024).

- In these territories, after the signing of the Peace Agreement, corruption incidents involve in the same proportion the mayors and their affiliated entities, and the national government entities that are present in these territories as affected entities⁴⁵. This indicates that in addition to institutional fragility in the entities at the local level, there are vulnerabilities in the territorial action deployed from the central level.

⁴⁵ The Affected Entity refers to the organization that experiences the repercussions of the act of corruption, compromising confidence in the institutionality, resources, legitimacy, efficiency, and effectiveness of both public and private entities (Transparencia por Colombia, 2021b).

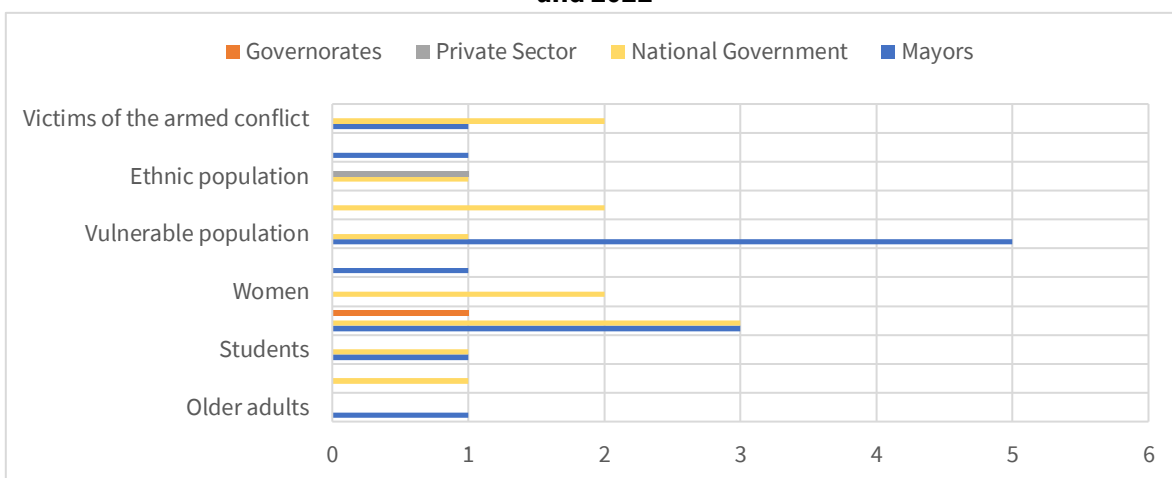
Chart 8. Entities affected by corruption in peace territories between 2016 and 2022



Source: Prepared by the authors based on Radiography of Corruption (2024).

- In relation to the type of people affected by these events⁴⁶, in those where their identification is possible, it is observed that the events that have the greatest impact on the municipalities are related to the impact on socioeconomically vulnerable populations; while the populations most affected by events related to the national government are mainly children and adolescents.

Chart 8. Affected population in relation to affected entity in peace territories between 2016 and 2022



Source: Prepared by the authors based on Radiography of Corruption (2024).

⁴⁶ Affected people are the population group or sector that directly experiences the consequences of an act of corruption (Transparencia por Colombia, 2024).

4. Peacebuilding and the fight against corruption: the need to coordinate agendas

This section explores how the different scopes given to peacebuilding relate to the anti-corruption agenda. To this end, the following are presented: 1) the relationship between the three conceptions of peace and three expressions of their relationship with the anti-corruption agenda in Colombia; 2) the 2016 Peace Agreement as a novel instrument in Colombia to articulate the peacebuilding and anti-corruption agendas; and 3) new corruption markets and emerging corruption dynamics.

4.1. Three scopes of peacebuilding and three expressions of its relationship with the anti-corruption agenda in Colombia

Corruption can create obstacles to peace-building processes, whether they are minimalist, intermediate, or maximalist in scope, since in the short term it affects the goal of eliminating physical violence, in the medium term it affects the overcoming of other forms of violence and in the long term it limits the regulation of conflicts with criteria of social justice and citizen participation. Le Billon (2008) proposes the following consequences of corruption in peacebuilding scenarios: a) renewal of the conflict; b) negative impact on public income; c) exploitation of the State by former criminals; d) misappropriation of reconstruction resources; e) impairment of the independence of the police and the justice system; f) recruitment of former combatants in other armed structures; g) ineffective investment of resources; h) contracts favourable to foreign companies.

This can be observed more specifically for the Colombian case, in relation to the three ways in which armed conflict and corruption have been related, which shows that the peace-building and anti-corruption agendas must go hand in hand to address the systemic scope of both phenomena. In addition, this is supported by anti-corruption approaches that affirm that it is necessary to have an indirect approach to fighting this phenomenon, stating that "corruption is not fought by fighting corruption" (Kauffman, 2017), and that social and political reforms are necessary that can generate control of corruption as a by-product (Jackson, 2020), that is, in this case, **reforms necessary to build peace are also reforms that allow fighting corruption.**

a) Advance minimalist peace to position the fight against corruption on the agenda

As noted above, when the intensity of the conflict decreased with the 2016 Peace Agreement, attention shifted to corruption, which previously might have been overshadowed by the urgency of addressing violence. This suggests that progress in eliminating physical violence (minimalist peace) can contribute to placing the problem of corruption on the public agenda. Likewise, if the problem of corruption is not addressed, there is a risk that corruption may lead to a relapse into violence or a renewal of conflict (for example, with the rearmament of combatants and their entry into new armed or organized crime structures) (Le Billon, 2008) and thus to a weakening of the fight against corruption as a matter of public interest.

b) Promote intermediate peace to break the vicious circle between corruption and armed conflict

It was previously stated that corruption in Colombia has simultaneously been a cause of armed conflict, a driving force for its persistence and prolongation, and a consequence of the deterioration of the conflict, that is, the generation of a vicious circle or spiral of causes and consequences. Therefore, the actions proposed within the framework of intermediate conceptions of peace, aimed at promoting development, are relevant to address the causes of the armed conflict and break the vicious circle.

As Le Billon(2008) points out, in conflict resolution contexts, corruption has negative effects on the generation of public revenues and allows resources to be allocated to projects that are not effective or necessary under the guise of promoting development. Similarly, development is affected by numerous irregularities in public procurement, particularly in contracts for productive projects arising from peace agreements (Launay, 2019).

Furthermore, taking into account that peace-building processes have as one of their purposes the guarantee of human rights, corruption can generate obstacles to this objective (Launay, 2019), which implies that the human rights of the population, especially the most vulnerable and affected by the armed conflict, are not respected by public and private actors, nor protected and fulfilled by the State (Peters, 2018).

c) Build maximalist peace to prevent the capture and co-opted reconfiguration of the State

The previous section explored the elements and manifestations of the capture and co-opted reconfiguration of the State as a way in which corruption and armed conflict in Colombia have been linked. The complexity and systemic nature of the problem was made evident, which is why a maximalist peace-building agenda, which in addition to addressing the causes of the conflict, addresses its consequences in a structural manner and promotes civil society initiatives, as well as the protection of civic space, can be a long-term bet to prevent attempts at capture and co-opted reconfiguration of the State.

On the other hand, corruption can affect the legitimacy of peace-building efforts and, in the long term, the effectiveness of the State in these processes (Scharbatke-Church & Cheyanne, 2009); this is aggravated by weak institutions and government structures, low capacity to transform cultural practices and massive inflow of money from international cooperation without control mechanisms (Chene, 2012).

As a corollary, democracy is weakened because a viable government and a stable economy are not allowed to consolidate, supporting, and implementing peace-building processes (Vučetić, 2016). In addition, public income is captured by armed or private actors who capture resources for peace and, consequently, trust in the State is affected (Launay, 2019). Furthermore, corruption limits the capacities of the judicial system and encourages impunity, weakening the rule of law and the basic principle of equality before the law (Transparency International, 2023). Faced with this scenario, citizens stop reporting acts of corruption that they identify in the projects and plans executed within the framework of peace-building, which implies the loss of legitimacy of the State (Sama, 2021).

Ultimately, the legitimacy of the State and the consolidation of democracy in Colombia depend largely on the capacity of society to resist and overcome attempts at capture and co-opted reconfiguration of the State, which requires a common agenda for peace building and the fight against corruption.

4.2. The 2016 Peace Agreement as an instrument to link the peacebuilding and anti-corruption agendas

In Colombia, there have been multiple processes aimed at advancing peacebuilding, which have had different scopes. It can even be said that within the same process of dialogue and negotiation, minimalist, intermediate and maximalist measures have been agreed upon. This is the case of the 2016 Peace Agreement, in which there are many provisions with different time horizons and scopes.

Table 2. Peacebuilding measures contemplated in the 2016 Peace Agreement

Type of peace building	Peacebuilding measures contemplated in the Peace Agreement
Minimalist / Negative peace	Point 3. Ceasefire and hostilities. Economic, political and social reintegration
Intermediate / Positive peace	Point 1. Comprehensive Rural Reform differentiated by territory Point 4. Treatment of illicit crops Point 5. Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition
Maximalist	Point 2. Rights and guarantees for political and citizen participation and their organizational forms

Source: Prepared by the authors based on Mora (2019).

As previously noted, corruption can affect peacebuilding measures, whether they are minimalist, intermediate, or maximalist in nature, with short, medium, and long-term effects. Understanding that corruption could undermine the implementation of the Peace Agreement, the signatory parties included some measures aimed at preventing negative effects of corruption on implementation, and some others aimed at impacting expressions of corruption associated with the agreed points. Thus, the Peace Agreement constitutes a novel instrument in Colombia to bring together the agendas of peacebuilding and the fight against corruption. Below are specific measures that the Peace Agreement included to advance in overcoming the conflict through an anti-corruption agenda.

The first point of the Peace Agreement, aimed at closing the gaps between the countryside and the city and thus achieving greater convergence and equity between regions, included the creation and updating of the rural land registry and property tax as an aspect to achieve transparency in land ownership. Its implementation would have positive effects on overcoming the causes and consequences of the conflict associated with rural property, as well as improvements in the collection and transparency of municipal public budgets, that is, it would

have the potential to impact on reducing conflict, reparation for victims, territorial development, and the fight against corruption⁴⁷.

Table 3. Anti-corruption and transparency promotion measures in the “Comprehensive Rural Reform” section of the Peace Agreement

1. Comprehensive Rural Reform	Medidas acordadas
<p>1.1. Access and use</p> <p><u>1.1.9. Formation and updating of the rural cadastre and property tax</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive and multipurpose General Cadastral Information System. • Technical, administrative, and financial support to municipalities for the formation, updating and maintenance of the rural cadastre. • Guarantee of broad and effective citizen participation that ensures the transparency of cadastral information. • System for municipalities to effectively liquidate, collect and collect property tax, in the development of cadastral updating and within the framework of their autonomy.

Source: Prepared by the authors based on Peace Agreement (2016).

Recognizing the political nature of the armed conflict, the Peace Agreement included in its second point measures aimed at generating a democratic opening that addresses issues related to electoral participation and the need for political reform, as well as elements associated with guaranteeing citizen participation through other mechanisms, including citizen control and oversight. The implementation of these measures would contribute to preventing attempts to capture and co-opt the State and to generating enabling conditions in the civic space for the fight against corruption⁴⁸.

Table 4. Anti-corruption and transparency promotion measures in the “Democratic opening to build peace” section of the Peace Agreement

2. Democratic opening to build peace	Measures agreed
<p>2.2. Democratic mechanisms for participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan to support the creation and promotion of citizen oversight and transparency observatories. • Information mechanisms as part of an accountability system for the Agreement.

⁴⁷ Transparencia por Colombia (2020) developed a [Corruption Risk Map in the implementation of the Peace Agreement](#), with emphasis on points 1 and 4 of the Agreement, identifying 11 corruption risk factors in three key dimensions of the fight against corruption: visibility, institutionality, and control and sanction.

⁴⁸ Restrepo Hung & Martínez (2015) deepen the analysis on the necessary adjustments to the political-electoral system and political participation to achieve territorial peace, highlighting the need for guarantees for the participation and political representation of third forces and new groups resulting from the Peace Agreement; adjustments to the political-electoral system to increase representativeness, credibility, legitimacy, and governability; and guarantees for the political participation of citizens through direct participation mechanisms in the municipal and departmental development management cycle.

Table 5. Anti-corruption and transparency promotion measures in the section “Bilateral and Definitive Ceasefire and Cessation of Hostilities and the Laying Down of Arms” of the Peace Agreement

3. Bilateral and Definitive Ceasefire and Cessation of Hostilities and the Laying Down of Arms	Measures agreed
3.1. Bilateral and definitive ceasefire and hostilities <u>3.1.3. Monitoring and verification</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring and Verification Mechanism for the ceasefire and cessation of hostilities and the laying down of arms.
3.4. Security guarantees and the fight against paramilitary successor organizations <u>3.4.11 Measures to prevent and combat corruption</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verification of the suitability of public servants for the full exercise of public employment. Certification of the integrity and performance of public servants. Guarantees to maintain surveillance and monitoring of the economic assets of public servants and control over their income, so that it is consistent with their salaries and legal activities. Legislative reforms to impose sanctions on political parties or movements whose candidates or those elected to public corporations or uninominal election positions have been convicted of links to criminal organizations.

Source: Prepared by the authors based on Peace Agreement (2016).

The fourth point of the Peace Agreement is related both to the point on comprehensive rural reform and to some measures to combat paramilitary successor organizations established in the point on ceasefire and hostilities. Significant in this point are the measures agreed to deal with corruption associated with drug trafficking, especially those aimed at identifying their networks and value chains of illicit economy and money laundering associated with their financial flows. Likewise, institutional strengthening and international cooperation measures are included to advance these tasks and others associated with the extinction of domain.

This is relevant considering that during armed conflicts illicit economies emerge that can prolong their existence in the processes of transition and peace building (Vučetić, 2016), fostering political and administrative corruption through alliances with high-ranking government officials and political parties to continue their criminal activities. These economies dispute the territorial control of the State, to the extent that the areas that remain under the control of criminal groups cannot be integrated into peace-building initiatives, limiting institutional action.

Table 6. Anti-corruption and transparency promotion measures in the section “Solution to the problem of illicit drugs” of the Peace Agreement

4. Solution to the problem of illicit drugs	Measures agreed
<p>4.3. Solution to the phenomenon of narcotics production and marketing</p> <p><u>4.3.1. Effective judicialization</u></p> <p><u>4.3.2. Strategy against assets involved in drug trafficking and money laundering</u></p> <p><u>4.3.4. Anti-corruption strategy</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of a comprehensive strategy to combat corruption associated with drug trafficking. • Creation of inter-institutional groups to carry out structural investigations that have mechanisms to recognize and understand the local, regional, national, and transnational dynamics of crime. • Strengthening and expanding regional and international cooperation to identify the networks, marketing systems and routes of criminal organizations dedicated to drug trafficking. • Identification of the drug trafficking value chain. • Regulatory adjustments and qualification and strengthening of institutional capacities for the detection, control, and reporting of illicit financial operations. • Qualification, strengthening, redesign and creation of investigation, financial control, and money laundering bodies. • National campaign that promotes values and warns about new forms of money laundering, to exercise control and oversight against corruption associated with money laundering, to prevent the population and institutions from being used for money laundering. • New strategy to ensure the effective implementation of asset forfeiture. • Regulatory and institutional adjustments for the transparent and efficient administration of assets in the process of extinction.

Source: Prepared by the authors based on Peace Agreement (2016).

Finally, the sixth point of the Peace Agreement, which stipulated measures on how to carry out the implementation of the entire Agreement, included two main relevant aspects. On the one hand, measures for access to information and control of corruption risks, including monitoring maps, accountability mechanisms, risk matrices, and strengthening of internal control and oversight bodies. On the other hand, an implementation schedule was established, including priority aspects to be implemented in the first year after the signing of the Agreement; within these aspects, it was contemplated to process early regulations for the fight against corruption and the strengthening of citizen control and oversight, which shows the interest of the parties to bring the anti-corruption and peace-building agendas closer together. However, this did not happen.

Table 7. Anti-corruption and transparency promotion measures in the section “Implementation, verification and ratification” of the Peace Agreement

6. Implementation, Verification and ratification	Measures agreed
<p>6.1. Implementation and verification mechanisms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactive tracking maps. • Mechanisms for periodic accountability. • Tools of new information technologies.

<p><u>6.1.5. Integrated Information System and transparency measures for the Implementation</u></p> <p>6.1. Implementation and verification mechanisms</p> <p><u>6.1.10. Regulatory implementation schedule during the first 12 months after the signing of the Final Agreement</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corruption risk matrices, and mitigation, awareness, and prevention strategies for bad practices, clientelism and corruption. • Strengthening internal control mechanisms. • Special support from the control bodies. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law and/or regulations for the adoption of measures to combat corruption. • Rules for the creation, promotion and strengthening of citizen control and oversight mechanisms and transparency observatories.
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Source: Prepared by the authors based on Peace Agreement (2019).

Some of these measures have made progress in their implementation, others are lagging, and several have not yet begun to be implemented⁵⁰. Despite this, the Peace Agreement continues to be an instrument with pending measures that can strengthen the fight against corruption in the country. Likewise, as previously noted, the fight against corruption can be carried out indirectly and, in this sense, most of the agreed measures, not only those directly related to transparency and anti-corruption issues, can potentially contribute to reducing conditions that facilitate corruption. In short, implementing the 2016 Peace Agreement is a relevant mechanism to combat corruption.

Finally, bringing the peacebuilding and anti-corruption agendas closer together also implies taking advantage of the lessons learned and advances of each agenda to strengthen the other. National and international learning in transitional and restorative justice in contexts of serious human rights violations such as those generated by armed conflicts can contribute to the development of the anti-corruption agenda from the perspective of repairing the damage it causes⁵¹. Key elements of transitional justice, in this sense, are the prosecution of those responsible, the search for truth and reparation of damages⁵², the latter including measures of restitution, compensation, satisfaction, rehabilitation, and guarantees of non-repetition. In this regard, the Peace Agreement includes a specific point associated with transitional justice, the implementation of which can lead to multiple lessons in this regard.

⁵⁰ The progress of the implementation indicators can be consulted in the Sistema Integrado de Información para el Posconflicto (SIIPO). Available at: <https://siipo.dnp.gov.co/inicio>

⁵¹ The damage caused by corruption is a phenomenon that produces loss, decrease or impairment, understood in its individual, collective, and social dimension, and is generated by a specific event that causes a violation of human rights. (Transparencia por Colombia, 2022b).

⁵² Repairing the damage caused by corruption involves guaranteeing the rights violated by an act of corruption, transforming the situation or scenario of corruption that gave rise to the violation; it involves adopting material and immaterial measures that lead to compensation for the damage, to restore, indemnify, satisfy and rehabilitate, as well as to promote political, economic, social and cultural transformation (Transparencia por Colombia, 2022b).

From another perspective, and taking into account that victims of the armed conflict can simultaneously be victims of corruption, it can be stated that it is possible to simultaneously advance in the reparation of the damage caused by the armed conflict and the reparation of the damage caused by corruption, since, as previously identified, the relationship between armed conflict and corruption is structural, so the reparation of these damages also requires structural action. In this regard, it is relevant that in Colombia, both the victims of the armed conflict have been recognized in Law 1448 of 2011, and the victims of acts of corruption in Law 2195 of 2022, as well as the jurisprudence and doctrine derived from the Inter-American Human Rights System in relation to human rights violations generated by armed conflicts and acts of corruption⁵³.

4.3. New corruption markets and emerging corruption dynamics

Attempts at peacebuilding do not necessarily bring with them new forms of corruption, the phenomenon continues to be carried out by traditional actors of corruption, but it can find other scenarios of abuse of power that could be defined as a new market for corruption (Restrepo M. , 2018), which is built from the arrival of new resources, new actors and new processes in public management (for example, the misappropriation of resources intended for infrastructure projects for peacebuilding can be generated).

In this regard, it is necessary to reiterate that multiple peace processes have been developed in Colombia, as well as initiatives aimed at overcoming the conflict, in which new corruption markets have been opened, recording emerging corruption dynamics associated with peace.:

- In the process carried out with the AUC, which was legally made possible by the Justice and Peace Law, support programs were included for the reinsertion of ex-combatants into civilian life. However, this process was affected by corruption through events associated with the diversion of resources intended for productive projects, leakage of information about judicial proceedings, and payments by judicial officials to those appearing before the courts to advance proceedings or maintain the benefits derived from the law⁵⁴.
- The implementation of the Victims and Land Restitution Law (Law 1448 of 2011), as a mechanism to provide reparation to people and communities affected by the armed conflict, has also been exposed to corruption through acts such as the fraudulent inclusion of people in the registry of victims to access reparation resources, irregular payments by private parties and public officials to advance registration procedures in the registry, irregularities in the payment of compensation (including payments to deceased persons), humanitarian assistance and aid, the application of urban housing subsidies, and corruption in the

⁵³ The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has recognized that corruption affects human rights directly when the act of corruption constitutes human rights violations, that is, when there is non-compliance with the State's obligations in terms of human rights; and indirectly, referring to the different manifestations of the phenomenon of corruption that can affect the enjoyment and exercise of rights (Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, 2019).

⁵⁴ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. Unclear accounts, very thick chocolate; [Dangerous games with information; No protection or assistance](#) & [No Justice or Peace](#).

contracting and execution of works intended to provide reparation to victims⁵⁵. In this way, cases of re-victimization of people who had already been previously affected by the armed conflict have occurred.

- During the negotiation stage of the 2016 Peace Agreement, corruption occurred in the security and defense sectors that affected the negotiations. Operation Andromeda was carried out within the Ejército Nacional, which included illegally obtaining national security information from the email accounts of members of the negotiating teams of the National Government and the FARC-EP⁵⁶.
- Following the signing of the Peace Agreement and the creation of the Jurisdicción Especial para la Paz, there have been attempts to illegally enter this jurisdiction by persons convicted of crimes associated with drug trafficking, to access the benefits and reduced sentences and alternatives offered by transitional justice, as well as operations to hinder and interrupt the development of judicial proceedings. Departmental security secretaries, prosecutors and judges have been involved in these attempts.⁵⁷
- Within the framework of the implementation of the Peace Agreement, since 2022, possible acts of corruption have been recorded associated with the irregular awarding of contracts for productive projects and new institutions created by the Peace Agreement through the formation of networks between public officials, congressmen and contractors; as well as irregularities in the presentation, approval and execution of public investment projects associated with the Peace Agreement and financed with resources from the General Royalties System through the OCAD Paz, in events involving mayors, contractors, officials of the national government and control bodies.⁵⁸
- In the context of the corruption scandal associated with the Disaster Risk Management Unit⁵⁹, one of the main parties involved has indicated that resources from that entity were allegedly directed to the ELN via public contracts and with the intermediation of a representative to the Chamber for the Special Transitory Peace Districts (CITREP), which is a special seat created within the framework of the 2016 Peace Agreement to give representation in the Congress of the Republic to territories excluded and affected by the internal armed conflict. According to

⁵⁵ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [Defending my pocket; Those are not victims; Votes condemned & Victims were mocked.](#)

⁵⁶ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [Andrómeda: Fully into the Army.](#)

⁵⁷ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [The betrayal of the century; Disguise justice; Former JEP prosecutor sentenced to 8 years for criminal network](#) & [Even if they dress him up as a guerrilla, he remains a drug trafficker.](#)

⁵⁸ Radiography of Corruption 2016-2022. [The post-Agreement “agreements”;](#) [They pocketed the money for peace; A story of corruption and abuse of power;](#) [Sign the signature for the signature](#) & [Between audios and accusations against the Mayor of La Paz.](#)

⁵⁹ See: Transparencia por Colombia (2024). [Monitoring the UNGRD scandal and its implications.](#)

what was said by the person involved, the objective of this direction of public resources to the ELN would be to keep this organization at the negotiating table for Total Peace.

Table 9. They pocketed the money for peace

Between 2020 and 2022, a revealing investigative report by the media outlet Blu Radio exposed an intricate corruption network operating within the framework of the OCAD-Paz (Collegiate Administration Body). This network involved high-level officials, congressmen, local leaders, and contractors who plotted illicit maneuvers with the purpose of diverting approximately 12% of the resources approved by the OCAD-Paz for their personal benefit. The central point of this corruption network seemed to be the National Planning Director. Investigations indicate that the director led a plot that included officials from the National Planning Department, the Comptroller General of the Republic, congressmen, governors, mayors, and contractors. Through bribery, influence peddling and manipulation of evaluations, those involved ensured that the projects were awarded to companies and contractors directly related to them. After being awarded projects, contractors would exorbitantly increase costs and submit invoices for services that were never carried out. Despite denials by those involved, this story continues to raise questions about the management of resources allocated to peace projects.”

(Citizen Corruption Monitor, 2022).

To prevent the creation of new corruption markets in the implementation of the Peace Agreement, Transparency for Colombia has identified some elements that may affect the process, as well as needs for their mitigation.:

- Transparencia por Colombia (2020) identified Corruption Risks in the implementation of the Peace Agreement, especially in the points associated with comprehensive rural reform and the solution to the problem of illicit drugs. The risk factors identified were:
 - Lack of Active Transparency regarding public information on budgets, contracts and resources for the implementation of points 1 and 4.
 - Limitations in the functioning of the Sistema Integrado de Información para el Posconflicto (SIIPO) as an Implementation Information System.
 - Responses to requests for public information on implementation resources are insufficient or incomplete.
 - Impossibility of comprehensive citizen monitoring of resources allocated to implementation.
 - Lack of objectivity, transparency, and efficiency of contractual and budgetary processes for implementation resources.
 - Planning, execution, and monitoring instruments for resources are insufficient.
 - Institutional capacity for implementation at the territorial level is weak and limited.
 - Obstacles to exercising citizen control over implementation.
 - Increase in systematic violence in the territories targeted for implementation.
 - The institutional capacity of the control bodies at the territorial level is limited and the work of the monitoring bodies of the Peace Agreement is facing discredit.
 - The accountability process for implementation is precarious.

- Delving deeper into the corruption risks associated with public procurement for the implementation of the Peace Agreement, Transparencia por Colombia (2023d) has raised alerts on elements that may have a negative impact on the installation of capacities, the exercise of internal control, institutional control and citizen control and, again, on the materialization of public actions to overcome conditions of institutional weakness, the reduction of the incidence of conflict, and the overcoming of poverty and regional inequality. Some of these elements with a negative impact are:
 - Under-registration and deficiencies in the quality of contractual information.
 - Weak budget transparency and predominance of direct contracting and special regimes.
 - Predominance of contracting professional services at the territorial level.
- Regarding the projects financed with royalty resources to implement the Peace Agreement, Transparencia por Colombia (2023a) has pointed out dynamics that can facilitate the materialization of corruption risks and hinder the development sought with the implementation of these projects in the PDET municipalities:
 - High disparities in approval rates between PDET municipalities.
 - Limitations on the exercise of citizen control.
 - Complexities in the assignment of executors and contractors.
 - Limitations on access to contractual information.
 - Presence of contractors financing political campaigns.
- The opening of these new corruption markets is facilitated by restrictions on civic space. To address this situation, support is required for citizen control processes for the implementation of the Peace Agreement (Transparencia por Colombia, 2022a), including:
 - Strengthening the guarantee of the right of access to information on norms, mechanisms, and digital tools.
 - Strengthening local institutions based on the relationship between officials and contractors and citizens.
 - Improving institutional arrangements for implementation, resource governance, and transparency in contractual and budgetary processes and procedures.
 - Guarantees for citizen control through accountability processes, human rights guarantee, coordination with control bodies and protection for whistleblowers of corruption.

Finally, the actions to implement the Peace Agreement can also contribute to the fight against corruption indirectly, for example, by improving institutional capacities and reducing conditions of inequality and structural inequity, considering that the most vulnerable populations are those that most frequently face corruption.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Transparencia por Colombia (2023b) has studied the link between corruption and inequality, highlighting that: 1) the most vulnerable population frequently faces corruption; 2) corruption exacerbates conditions of

5. Recommendations for articulating the peace-building and anti-corruption agendas

1. Articulate in the National Strategy to Fight Corruption the instruments to fight corruption and transparency derived from the Peace Agreement

The 2016 Peace Agreement is a novel instrument and a necessary starting point for building a common agenda for peace and the fight against corruption. The implementation of many of the measures that have this potential is still to be developed, which is why a determined effort is required by the entities responsible for their implementation to move forward in this direction.

The National Strategy to Fight Corruption included in Law 2295 of 2023 may include many of the measures agreed upon in the Peace Agreement related to strengthening citizen control and oversight, transparency observatories, single reporting channels at the territorial level, integrity in public service, money laundering, technological tools for access to information and the fight against corruption, the fight against corruption generated by drug trafficking, among others. In addition, the mechanisms for articulation between the National Strategy to Fight Corruption of Law 2295 of 2023 and the national strategy to fight corruption associated with drug trafficking in point 4 of the Peace Agreement should be explicit.

2. Promote the implementation of point 1 of the Peace Agreement from a perspective of transparency and prevention of corruption

The Agustín Codazzi Geographic Institute, in charge of developing the cadastre with a multipurpose approach derived from the Peace Agreement, must consider a rigorous analysis of the risks of corruption in its implementation, as well as transparency mechanisms in the production, management, use and publicity of cadastral information.

The processes of formalization of rural property, access to land in targeted areas, and purchase of land for the constitution of land funds derived from the Peace Agreement - processes carried out by the National Land Agency - must be carried out without opacity, guaranteeing access to information for interested citizens and reducing to a minimum the discretion in decision-making. The latter must be based on clear processes and procedures, with technical criteria that decisively contribute to the purpose of agrarian reform of Total Peace and the comprehensive rural reform of the Peace Agreement from a focus on transparency and prevention of corruption.

inequality and is linked to the violation of human rights of vulnerable groups; and 3) corruption can deepen structural inequality in the country.

The above taking into account the centrality of the land problem in the development of the armed conflict, the links between corruption and conflict at the territorial level, and the necessary participation of vulnerable groups (including victims of the armed conflict and corruption) in the implementation of point 1 of the Peace Agreement.

3. Advance the implementation of point 2 of the Peace Agreement, especially the electoral transparency measures at the local level

Considering the lessons learned regarding illegal financing of politics by illegal armed actors, and the implications of this in processes of capture and co-opted reconfiguration of the State, it is necessary to promote the implementation of the measures contemplated in the Peace Agreement to guarantee integrity in electoral processes at the local level, in order to limit the possibilities of intervention by new and old armed actors and illegal economies.

Likewise, the identification of emerging corruption risks in institutional designs for participation in the territories prioritized for the implementation of the Peace Agreement must be advanced. In the case of electoral participation, it is necessary for the electoral authorities and the investigation and control bodies to identify the risks of corruption, co-optation and capture of the seats created for the Special Transitional Peace Districts (CITREP), so that these do not become a vehicle for mobilizing the interests of armed actors who are present in these territories.

4. Articulate at the territorial level the initiatives for managing corruption risks and those for managing money laundering and terrorist financing risks in point 6 of the Peace Agreement

The instruments used at the territorial level of government to manage corruption risks must consider their articulation with the prevention and detection of money laundering and terrorist financing operations, considering that at the local level, organized crime structures drive illicit financial flows with a great impact both on the integrity of public management and on the reproduction of the armed conflict. To do so, it is necessary to: 1) advance in implementing points 3, 4 and 6 of the Peace Agreement regarding the integrity of public service at the territorial level, solution to the problem of illicit drugs, and mechanisms for investigating money laundering; 2) provide comprehensive support to local authorities; and 3) articulate at the local level the action of territorial governments, the national government and financial intelligence, control, and investigation agencies.

5. Deepen the fight against corruption in the defense sector..

The Ministry of National Defense and the armed forces are developing strategies to strengthen the fight against corruption. In particular, it should be noted that the sector's anti-corruption index is the monitoring instrument in the National Development Plan. However, it is necessary to advance in the publication and monitoring of the results of this index. On the other hand, it is necessary to strengthen coordination between the different instruments for preventing

corruption and reporting alleged acts of corruption, while strengthening the fight against corruption by analyzing the impact it has on human rights and operational results.

6. Protect civic space and strengthen reporting of corruption

Whistleblowers, citizen observers, journalists and citizens in general face great security risks when they are in territories with the presence or influence of organized armed actors. It is therefore necessary to strengthen efforts to protect civic space as a priority in the municipalities where these actors are present, taking into account, among other things, that in these territories social leaders act in various fields and sectors, so the protection of social groups and people who exercise leadership in issues associated with peacebuilding, is also the protection of groups and people who carry out citizen control and file complaints for possible corruption.

It is also necessary to move forward with the creation of a single channel for reporting possible acts of corruption at the territorial level, which was contemplated in the Peace Agreement. This channel would allow the investigative and control bodies to simultaneously receive complaints, make progress on the aspects that are within their competence and exchange valuable information during the investigations.

7. Advance the processes of Total Peace based on agendas that include the fight against corruption

Agendas for dialogue and negotiation with other armed actors, aimed at building peace, must consider the progress made in 2016 regarding accountability, transparency, and the fight against corruption, and seek new mechanisms in these areas with emphasis on: 1) the territorial dynamics of the armed conflict; and 2) the specificities of the operation of corruption networks and organized crime at the local level. This should be done from a realistic perspective, which considers the time for negotiation with each armed organization, the territories of influence of these organizations, and the reality of the survival of armed actors that will make possible the implementation of new peace agreements, as was the case with the 2016 Peace Agreement, in a context of continuing manifestations of violence.

These processes must be protected from any corrupt dynamic that could put their integrity at risk. It is unacceptable that, to achieve Total Peace, institutional capture operations and the direction of public contracting in favor of armed actors outside the law are carried out, as allegedly occurred in relation to the ELN, according to what was indicated by one of those involved in the process carried out in the Supreme Court of Justice.

8. Assess the effectiveness and efficiency of territorial public investments for peace and draw lessons for the advancement of Total Peace

The volume of resources invested in the implementation of the Peace Agreement and in other peace actions such as those derived from the Justice and Peace Law and the Law on Victims

and Land Restitution, demands that assessments be made of the effectiveness and efficiency in achieving the stated objectives. In relation to the Peace Agreement, for example, an assessment should be made of the change in the conditions of vulnerability of the municipalities that were prioritized for the implementation of the PDETs, the closing of gaps based on the sectoral plans of the comprehensive rural reform, the changes in political participation and representation in the CITREPs, among others.

This assessment will allow us to identify lessons learned for new territorial interventions that have been proposed within the framework of Total Peace, such as the so-called “models” or “peace ecosystems,” which must take into consideration corruption risks in critical areas such as budgeting and public procurement.

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