

June 16th, 2022

Subject: APG Statement on the 2022 Colombian Presidential Elections

The Americas Policy Group (APG) is a national network that brings together over 20 international development NGOs, human rights and faith-based organizations, labour unions, solidarity groups, and research institutions. It has more than 30 years of experience of working for human rights and justice in Latin America, including Colombia.

The APG expresses its solidarity with the Colombian people in their struggle for a free, peaceful, and transparent democratic process in the upcoming second round of the presidential elections scheduled for June 19, 2022. We are deeply concerned about the following reports received from our local partners:

- Prior to the first round, international election observers were prevented from entering the country. International election accompaniment and observation are a regular practice worldwide in order to ensure fair and transparent elections.
- A large presence of armed actors, including several paramilitary groups, appear to have prevented significant numbers of Colombian nationals' from voting on May 29, 2022. We are concerned that a similar scenario may repeat itself during the second round of the elections.
- The RNEC, the body responsible for the technical and operational running of the election did not ensure an appropriate internal or external audit of the elections software. Concerns have been raised about specific irregularities regarding the diverse software being used in the electoral process and irregularities in the final vote count for the Congressional elections and the first round of the Presidential elections.
- The removal of elected representatives, including Daniel Quintero, mayor of Medellin, by the Attorney General's office undermines confidence in the electoral process.

Finally, we note that the elections have been taking place in a context not conducive to the full participation of the Colombian population given the continued assassinations, attacks, and intimidation of human rights defenders, as well as death threats against political candidates. Since the beginning of 2022, seventy-nine Colombian social leaders and human rights defenders have been assassinated, according to Colombian NGO [Indepaz](#).

We support the right of Colombians to exercise their democratic right to vote in the upcoming presidential elections in a context that is transparent and free from violence, intimidation, and political and military interference. We denounce any forced displacement of communities and intimidation that could impede Colombians from exercising their right to vote. We urge the Colombian authorities to ensure that the upcoming second round of elections takes place unhindered and contributes to long-term efforts to build a just and lasting peace.



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