



THE APPRENTICE'S MISRULE:

AUTHORITARIANISM, WAR AND PANDEMIC

Report on the second year of government of Iván Duque

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The Implementation of the *Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace*.

IN A CRITICAL STATE, BUT IN DISPUTE

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Two years into Iván Duque Márquez's four-year term (7th of August 2018), the features and application of his policy to implement the *Final Agreement to End the Armed Conflict and Build a Stable and Lasting Peace* (hereinafter Final Agreement) have become clearer. Given the impossibility of tearing it up, the government was forced to come up with its own implementation policy: the stabilisation policy *Peace with Legality*. The said policy, in addition to avoiding all mention of the phrase Final Agreement to..., is based on a crude simplification and distortion of its contents in order to try and align it to the aims of government actions in the current period.

The Final Agreement is an anomaly to the Duque government and it has had to reluctantly deal with it. It has been doing this through a policy that could well be characterised as a *simulacrum of implementation*, which disregards the comprehensive nature of this process, which means doing so with the required synchronisation and concomitance regarding its contents, particularly in the area of comprehensive rural reform (CRR), democratic aperture and political participation, solving the problem of illicit drugs, the comprehensive system for truth, justice, reparations and non repetition, security guarantees for those who exercise political and social opposition and full reincorporation. In short, a "policy of simulation" that seeks to disregard or reduce to a minimum the reforming, democratising goals and social transformation of the Final Agreement, with the aim of imposing a version of "controlled implementation" that avoids any impact or fissure in the country's regime of class domination.

Following the initial impetus of implementation under the Santos government, characterised by breaches and changes to the Agreement, under Duque the process has reached a critical precarious state. So far under this government, there has not been a single normative development that shows any commitment from the government to implementation. On the contrary, in addition to the paralysis already mentioned, the (frustrated) attempts to block the putting into effect of norms that already exist are well known:

such as the presidential objections to the statutory law of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (SJP); or the repeated declarations by high ranking government functionaries to introduce “modifications” to the Agreement and also the continuous attacks from government benches by the Democratic Centre.

Furthermore, the available information indicates that we are faced with a policy of defunding. This can be seen by comparing the funds initially mandated by the Framework Plan for Implementation and the Financial Medium Term Framework for 2018, with those that current the government has apparently stipulated; furthermore, there is the lack of activity to date by the “budgetary tracker for peace”, an instrument created by Article 230 of the same law that issued the National Development Plan (Law 1955 of 2019) to effectively monitor the implementation funds.

The numerous provisions for Comprehensive Rural Reform (CRR) have been filed away. There are no known cases of a

single peasant, or landless peasant or one with insufficient land who has received a solitary hectare of land, free of charge, from the Land Bank. Neither has the formalisation of property by small and medium scale peasants made any measurable progress. The multipurpose cadastre has been gutted of its original content, the agrarian jurisdiction has no legal framework yet and of the 16 national CRR plans, only 6 have been adopted.

The Duque government has presented the Development Programmes with a Territorial-Based Focus (DPTF) as the great act of implementation. However, the government’s DPTF are not those of the Final Agreement; they are more like the best expression of their simulation policy. There are no known public documents on the 16 DPTF that would allow one to technically identify the purposes, objectives, goals, priorities, programmes and projects of each one (there is only a “road map” for the Catatumbo DPTF) nor the underlying conception of territory. Only “DPTF public works” can be identified, which are essentially the usual obligations of the state, in general, and of the government in particular; those which due to constitutional and legal mandates had to be complied with before the signing of the Final Agreement.

The “government DPTF” are more aligned with the Strategic Zones for Comprehensive Intervention (ZEII) or “Future Zones”. These are in line with a view of the territory inscribed in the doctrine of “national security” and “internal enemy” in which problems are conceived of as “public or-

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der” ones that are to be resolved through militarisation processes and civic-military actions. In short, they are part of counter-insurgency aims, in the broad sense, and the consolidation (and capture) of territories, with the aim of promoting through a strategic perspective new geographical settings for capitalist accumulation. On this point, the political instrumentalisation of the DPTF to favour a security and territorial production policy in line with the transnational right wing and imperialism is obvious. It should not be forgotten that the special forces of the Security Assistance Brigade, under operational control of the US Southern Command are operating in the “Future Zones” super-imposed on the DPTF territories.

The reforms concerning democratic aperture and political participation have not experienced any development under the Duque government; it is a task that has been postponed and could gain some impetus if there were a favourable court decision in the lawsuit on the 16 special territorial constituencies for peace, which would of course go against the government's wishes.

After the initial progress made with the National Comprehensive Programme for the Substitution of Crops Used for Illicit Purposes (NCPS), the Duque government has put it on hold; it has met its commitments to the 99,097 families enrolled in the programme, in a delayed and partial manner, but it has not provided the conditions for the design and setting up of alternative plans by the communities. Instead, it has warned of a return to aerial spraying with glyphosate, preparation for which is underway.

Full reincorporation is another area in which the government claims its commitment to implementation can be seen. It

is true that they have accepted the basic individual economic subsidies set out in the Final Agreement and they have continued to make the payments. However, the goals of the collective reincorporation have not been met and are being delayed. The government favours measures and actions geared towards the “individualisation” of the process; there has been no political will to give land to former FARC combatants so as they can develop their own productive projects; the majority of them, support themselves due to the work of the men and women who deposited arms and partial support from the international community, but they lack any long term sustainability and are a far cry from the aim of providing conditions for the “normalisation” of life. In addition to the repeated attempts of the government to vilify the FARC party in the Congress of the Republic, the biggest impact on the dynamic of reincorporation is caused by the incapacity of the state, particularly the government to guarantee the life of those, who in good faith trusting in the principle of *pacta sunt servanda*, laid down their arms. By the 20th of July 2020 the number of those murdered had reached 219; to that must be added the 44 murders of relatives, threats, disappearances and numerous cases of the forced displacement of former guerrillas and their families in various parts of the country e.g. Santa Lucía de Ituango, and La Blanquita in Frontino, Antioquia; Argelia and Buenos Aires in Cauca, Algeciras in Huila and El Diamante in el Meta, amongst others.

This dramatic picture coincides with the political violence felt in territories around the country, one of whose manifestations is the murder of social leaders. It was hoped that the Final Agreement would, when put into effect, create new conditions for the social formation of territory in a way that would contribute to

overcoming political violence: comprehensive implementation with a territorial approach, community participation and security guarantees. On these last points, a relatively robust system was proposed which already has been regulated but the basic elements have not been implemented.

The state's response to the new territorial dynamics following the FARC-EP's deposition of arms has not been precisely what is in the Final Agreement. Rather, under the Duque government, they have imposed a divergent territorial policy which emphasises the use of violence. They have not provided "security guarantees". Paradoxically, political violence is greater where there is an increasing presence of the security forces. The features of the violence in the territories, the murder of social leaders and the extermination of former members of the FARC-EP indicate that we are not looking at a series of isolated incidents that can be explained by forms of non-political violence; these are incidents that can only be understood in the light of the existence of a coordinated complex criminal structures with a centralised body, of an essentially counter-insurgent and paramilitary nature (despite their local dispersed nature) and have as a common aim the violent preservation of the current order. There is no evidence of decisive government action against these structures, due partly, to the negationism regarding the paramilitaries.

Significant progress has been made in terms of the organisation and deployment and functioning of the institutions that make up the Comprehensive System for Truth, Justice, Reparations and Non-Recurrence (which does not fall under the government's remit). However, there are serious limitations. These stem from both the narrow funding and the original

design whose purpose was altered: regarding its commitment to the victims of the conflict, it was geared towards focusing on the responsibilities and obligations of the FARC-EP and its political successor, whilst at the same time reducing those of state agents and civilian third parties seeking to condemn the armed rebellion and exonerate the current social order and its agents. The commitment to the victims of the conflict is now no more than rhetoric and demagoguery.

Added to the precarious and critical state of the implementation is the Covid-19 pandemic. This threatens to turn the Final Agreement into another one of its victims. In addition to the authoritarianism that goes with states of exception is the transfer of priorities in public policy and funding to other aspects of economic and social life; this may become another pretext for not fulfilling the agreement.

If the implementation is not in a more critical and precarious state this is due in part to the fact that the trajectory is not exclusively decided by government. The signing of the Final Agreement did not mean the end of the conflict but rather its continuance through exclusively political means; in that sense it opened up an intense dispute for its implementation. In the midst of this situation, it has to be said that the Final Agreement has a greater acceptance and social legitimacy. This was seen in the strike of November 21st and in the

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In a post-pandemic setting Colombian society will have in the Final Agreement and its full implementation gains of undeniable importance to face the problems inherent to the current social order, manifested and sharpened in a dramatic fashion in recent months. Such gains are to be found closely interrelated with the aim of a complete peace. It is imperative for peace building in Colombia that a perspective for a political solution become a reality amongst the rebel organisations that are still in arms and to facilitate paths for the surrender of criminal structures linked to the so called illicit economies.





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

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



Con el apoyo de:

