Peace in Colombia Renegotiated

After 52 years and one of the longest running civil conflicts in Latin America, the Colombian Government, and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) have ratified a revised peace agreement after years of negotiation. Per reports, the civil conflict in Colombia has resulted in 220,000 fatalities, 25,000 Colombians rejected the first peace agreement on October 2, 2016 after President Juan Manuel Santos called for a referendum to allow the people of Colombia to either accept or reject the terms of the agreement. BBC news reported that 50.2% of voters rejected the peace accord in the national referendum, while 49.8% voted yes to its implementation. Despite the result, a cease fire was upheld and this was an encouraging sign by the United Nations, who were actively involved in the discussions. The opposing sides also promised to continue their efforts in amending the terms of the agreement, taking into consideration the opinion and views expressed by Colombians during the referendum.
Peace in Colombia Renegotiated cont...

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Following further negotiations, the Colombian government and FARC members signed a revised agreement on 24 November 2016. It was then subsequently ratified by the Colombian Congress on the 30 November 2016. Read more

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“If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner.” ~ Nelson Mandela

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Impact of Industrial Crops Expansion on Household Food Security, Biodiversity and GHGs Emission in Ethiopia
By Silesie Degefa, PhD Candidate at UNU-IAS

Recently Ethiopia become the focal point of foreign land investment. About 94% of foreign land investments focus on the production of food for export, primarily to Asian markets. More than 87 companies from 25 different countries are operating on 3.7 million hectares of land between 2007 and 2012. The land leased to investors for Industrial Crop production constitutes 3% of the total land size of the country. Industrial crops for biofuel projects represent only 6% of the foreign land investment, but the industry is on the rise. The major industrial crops widely grown in Ethiopia are coffee, sugarcane, chat (stimulant plant), tobacco, castor oil seed, cotton, tea, jatropha, etc. In this setting, smallholder farmers traditionally grow coffee, chat, and tobacco, whereas, estate and private companies grow the remaining crops. The government has entered contract with farmers to supply sugarcane in some places and displaced farmers to grow sugarcane in others. Read more

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The Marrakech Outcome Briefed
By Orennake Tozin

The 22nd Conference of the Parties, doped COP 22, to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), took place on African soil- Marrakech, Morocco- November 7-18, 2016. This marked another significant turning point in assuring the global community tackles the greatest of man’s challenges. Although Donald Trump’s victory as U.S. President-elect raised doubts about the future of climate agreements before the conference, the aftermath was contrary.

In a high-spirited Marrakech Proclamation, representatives affirmed that the “extraordinary momentum on climate change worldwide... is irreversible.” This was shown by the adoption of great initiatives, such as the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) Partnership and the Capacity-Building Initiative for Transparency signed to enable countries from the Global south to realize the global agreement goals. Read more
Disaster Risk Assessment in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Importance of Societal Vulnerability Sphere

By James Arthur

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) per the World Risk Index by UNU-EHS is the 2nd most vulnerable country in Europe after Albania, and the 3rd most fragile state after Russia and Ukraine per the United States Think-tank Fund for Peace. After the 1995 Dayton Peace Accords that led to the end of the Bosnian War, over two decades later the country remains fragile socially, economically, and politically. The remnants of war are still very visible and present an issue of complexity for progress. The BiH Mine Action Center determined there were 120,000 mines and unexploded ordinances still to be found and cleared as of 2016. The nation has been seeking peace and progress since the worst war on European soil following WW2. However, this post-war nation has been left in a vulnerable and stagnate state that also faces additional challenges with climate change and exposure to natural hazards. Disasters across the country continue to hinder the livelihoods of many post-war communities on their path to recovery and rehabilitation year after year. This small mountainous European nation on the outskirts of the EU is exposed to earthquakes, landslides, droughts, heatwaves, wildfires, extreme weather events, and the most frequent and increasing challenge of flooding. The 2014 flood and landslide disaster was remarked as the worst devastation the country has faced since the war by President Bakir Izetbegović.

UNU-EHS Students visit Lisa, Norway

Last September, UNU-EHS staff and students took a long bus ride from their home base in Bonn, Germany to Lista, Norway. Here, they participated in a five-day coordinated response exercise, responding to a Category 3 hurricane. The exercise, Triplex, was one of the largest of its kind, coordinated by the International Humanitarian Partnership (IHP), bringing together over 500 people, including professionals, role players and host country support, to assess and coordinate the response. What’s so unique about Triplex

Read more

UNU-IAS students take a selfie upon arrival at JEOL Headquarters

Mori san, JFUNU Secretary General and IAS Student Mianne enjoying the Mt. Takao Echo Lift

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