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Challenges and Opportunities for Food Security and Food Sovereignty in the Final Peace Agreement between the Colombian National Government and the FARC-EP Guerrilla

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Abstract

After more than five decades of internal conflict, the Colombian government and FARC-EP guerrilla signed a Peace Agreement in 2016. The focus of such agreement was the Integral Rural Reform (IRR) that builds the bases to solve the agrarian question in the country. The objective of the current proposal is to explore the challenges and opportunities of the IRR in the scope of the Colombian food security and food sovereignty. Through a qualitative approach, using indepth interviews with different stakeholder which included Colombian government advisers in the peace negotiation and FARC-EP leaders, the most relevant topics related to the contradictions between the parties were identified and analysed. One of the main findings was the extreme disparity between the concepts of both sides. On one side, the FARC-EP tried to include the concept of food sovereignty as the base of the public policy of rural development, while the Colombian government was claiming for the food security as the way to supply food for Colombian people. The strategy to solve the divergences was the Right to Food, which includes elements of both positions. Related to food security the objective was the improvement of food availability, access, and consumption, especially in rural communities. Regarding food sovereignty, the goal was to include participation strategies in the different phases of agro-food public policies. The challenges for the IRR are notable. These challenges include the Colombian institutional weakness and the decrease of national budgets mainly due to the international oil prices. Nevertheless, the most critical threat to the agreement is the change of government in the current year (2018), because of the opposition the radical right-wing party, which is leading the presidential election. IRR becomes a new attempt to solve the historical debt of the Colombian State with its peasantry. In this sense, the participation of the civil society is decisive to succeed the Peace Agreement, as well as to promote the rural communities efforts to decide on their development process.

Keywords: Colombian National Government, FARC-EP guerrilla, food security, food sovereignty, integral rural reform, peace agreement, right to food