

TERRORISM AND TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

Colombia's Gustavo Petro Promises New Approach to Security and Drugs

By Ryan Berg
OE Watch Commentary



Newly inaugurated president, Gustavo Petro

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Colombia's new president, Gustavo Petro, elected in June 2022, has wasted no time outlining the country's new position on the fight against illegal drugs. Petro has proposed a plan of "total peace," an ambitious proposal to disarm around two dozen criminal organizations operating in the country. As part of this proposal, Spanish center-left online daily *Público* reports the Petro administration is willing to suspend the practice of extradition and forgo arrest warrants to encourage criminal groups to participate in a ceasefire. While nearly two dozen groups would be eligible to participate, the Petro administration has especially sought to entice the dissidents of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN), two of the oldest and largest guerrilla groups in the country. Mexican daily *El Financiero* also reported that the Petro administration has floated

a proposal to decriminalize cocaine. For now, Colombia's new government says it will favor crop substitution policies, paying farmers to grow alternatives to the coca plant.

Petro's plan for "total peace," combined with a new posture on narcotics policy, if implemented fully, may help to tamp down violence in Colombia at least temporarily. Similar plans have been tried in Central America and have led to short-term reductions in violence. However, the large size and value of many criminal economies easily attract illicit actors, often leading to the splintering of criminal organizations, as happened with the FARC during earlier negotiations; and creates vacuums normally filled by upstart groups. As such, while Petro's plans may produce new outcomes, it seems more likely that most gains might be merely ephemeral.

Minutes after taking office last month, leftist President Gustavo Petro called for a new approach, saying in his inaugural address that the policies pursued by Bogotá and Washington have fueled violence without reducing consumption.

Source: "Los avances de Colombia para alcanzar la paz total prometida por Gustavo Petro (The advances of Colombia to achieve the total peace promised by Gustavo Petro)," *Público* (a Spanish online daily considered center-left), 17 September 2022. <https://www.publico.es/internacional/avances-colombia-alcanzar-paz-total-prometida-gustavo-petro.html>

Total Peace is not simply the negotiated disarmament of 18,000 men...from the 22 armed groups that have declared that they want to join this policy...Total Peace is to generate an environment to end the war once and for all. It is meant to find solutions to the social conflict generated by inequality, exclusion and lack of opportunities and aim to build social, environmental and economic justice. including them in a draft National Development Plan, which must be presented to Congress by February 7, 2023, as the deadline...For now, Petro has enough votes to move Total Peace forward.

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Continued: Colombia's Gustavo Petro Promises New Approach to Security and Drugs

Source: “Este es el plan de Gustavo Petro, presidente de Colombia, para terminar con guerra vs. la cocaína (This is the plan of Gustavo Petro, president of Colombia, to end the war vs. cocaine),” *El Financiero* (Mexican daily with good regional reporting), 1 September 2022. <https://www.elfinanciero.com.mx/bloomberg/2022/09/01/este-es-el-plan-de-gustavo-petro-presiente-de-colombia-para-terminar-con-guerra-vs-la-cocaina/>

Minutes after taking office last month, leftist President Gustavo Petro called for a new approach, saying in his inaugural address that the policies pursued by Bogotá and Washington have fueled violence without reducing consumption. Every week more details emerge about the change of course...In practice, if Colombia unilaterally decriminalized cocaine, it would violate international agreements and cause a break with the United States and other countries...This pariah status would likely harm the nation's ability to trade and access the global financial system.

PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY: ARMY CAMPAIGN DOCTRINE IN TRANSITION

Kevin McCauley
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This monograph examines current People's Liberation Army (PLA) Army campaign doctrine, with a discussion of PLA theorists' vision of the evolutionary development of warfare to provide context for current doctrine as well as potential future direction. The PLA develops doctrinal joint and service campaign scenarios for possible offensive and defensive operations. PLA campaigns represent the operational level of war between strategic operations and tactical combat. The PLA's current focus on specific campaigns provides insight into Beijing's perception of potential conflict scenarios. The campaign scenarios provide commanders and staff data on command and control, coordination, combat actions, support, and other critical campaign elements for specific operational environments. The description of each campaign's operational environment and combat actions provides valuable support to operational planning and a context for staff and unit training for their specific operational mission. The Army campaigns are executed as components of a joint campaign, or as a primarily independent Army campaign with support from other services.

