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El proceso de paz en Colombia

Artículos

3. The small farmer inclusion in the economic development of Colombia (ILDIKÓ SZEGEDY-MASZÁK y CESAR ATTILIO FERRARI)

## 3 The small farmer inclusion in the economic development of Colombia<sup>\*)</sup>

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**ABSTRACT:** Colombian rural development is the core of Chapter 1 of the Peace Agreement between the Colombian Government and the FARC. The negotiators of the Agreement, albeit from different perspectives, recognized the urgent need to promote the Colombian rural development to overcome its traditional backwardness and thus, handle better, economic and social conflicts in these rural areas. In this regard, the Government of President Santos has been developing «Colombia Sows», the public comprehensive policy to enhance agricultural production. However, it looks that it would not meet expectations. Moreover, there is still the implementation of several of the policies required to achieve rural development and the inclusion of small rural producers.

**KEYWORDS:** agriculture; rural economic and social situation; small farmers; production scales; Colombian Peace Agreement; *Colombia Siembra* (Colombia Sows) public policy.

### LA INCLUSIÓN DE LOS PEQUEÑOS PRODUCTORES AGRÍCOLAS EN EL DESARROLLO ECONÓMICO COLOMBIANO

**RESUMEN:** El desarrollo rural colombiano es el tema del capítulo 1 del acuerdo de paz entre el Gobierno colombiano y las FARC. Los negociadores del acuerdo, aunque desde diferentes perspectivas, reconocieron la necesidad urgente de promover el desarrollo rural colombiano para superar su tradicional atraso y manejar así, de mejor manera, los conflictos económicos y sociales en las zonas rurales. Al respecto, el Gobierno de presidente Santos ha venido desarrollando Colombia Siembra, la política pública integral para mejorar la producción agrícola. No obstante, Colombia Siembra no cumpliría con las expectativas. Más aún, falta la implementación de varias de las políticas públicas requeridas para lograr ese desarrollo rural y la inclusión de los pequeños productores rurales.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** agricultura; situación económica y social rural; pequeños productores agropecuarios; escalas de producción; acuerdos de paz de Colombia, política pública Colombia Siembra.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

For almost four years, the Colombian Government presided by President Juan Manuel Santos had been carrying on a peace negotiation with the largest guerrilla group, the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC). The Government and the FARC finally arrived to a historical Peace Agreement that finished almost fifty years of an internal armed conflict that killed more than 200,000 persons and displaced almost 7 million.

The Peace Agreement has been widely applauded internationally. Nationally, it divided Colombians almost by half between those that supported the Agreement and those that strongly opposed it. The opposition movement started since the very beginning of the peace negotiations and was led by ex-president Alvaro Uribe.

The Government decided to validate the Agreement politically through a referendum although it was not legally obliged. The referendum took place on October 6, 2016. The Government expected to have enough popular support for the peace deal. However, the «No» won the referendum with 50.21% of the votes. The result obliged the Government to re-open the negotiations with the FARC to include several observations of the opposition.<sup>1)</sup>

The Peace Agreement was finally signed in the Colon Theatre, in Bogota, on November 24, 2016.<sup>2)</sup> The Colombian Congress validated the new Peace Agreement 6 days later. On December 2016, the Constitutional Court approved a fast track mechanism to approve by Congress the laws and constitutional reforms required to implement the Peace Agreement.<sup>3)</sup> The Constitutional Court accepted the Congress validation of the

Agreement on March 10, 2017. As expected, all these were strongly questioned by the opposition (Mackenzie, 2016) <sup>4</sup>.

Chapter 1 of the Peace Agreement is titled «Towards a New Rural Colombia: Comprehensive Rural Reform (CRR)»<sup>5</sup>. The purpose of CRR is to provide the basis for the structural transformation of rural areas, and to create a welfare situation for the rural population. The unresolved fundamental discrepancy between Government and FARC can be observed in the Preamble of Chapter 1. The Government emphasized that rural transformation must contribute to reversing the effects of the conflict and change the conditions that facilitated the persistence of violence. On the contrary, according to FARC, CRR should contribute to solving the historical causes of the conflict, such as the unresolved ownership over land and particularly land concentration, the exclusion of the farmers and the backwardness of rural communities. Nevertheless, the final Peace Agreement, as explained below, did not include a comprehensive Agrarian Reform (Szegegy-Maszák, under edition).

The Agreement introduces a definition of Comprehensive Rural Development, which reestablishes the balance between family farming and large scale farming/agro-industry. Since its early development, the negotiations with the FARC were highly criticized for leaving doubts about the possible co-existence of different production forms, especially the continuing development of large-scale production (Santaella, 2017).

That Comprehensive Rural Development concept clearly states that rural development depends on: a) proper balance between the various existing forms of production – family farming, agro-industry, tourism, large-scale commercial agriculture; b) competitiveness, necessity to promote and encourage investment with business approach and productive aims; c) promotion and development of equitable conditions, production chains to connect small scale production with other production models - vertical or horizontal and in different scales (Principles of Chapter 1). Production chains between small, medium and large producers are further promoted in the also newly added definition of associations in Point 1.3.3.6 of Chapter 1 of the Peace Agreement (Szegegy-Maszák, under edition).

Before the Agricultural Census of 2014, the Colombian governments had been implementing agricultural policies without available comprehensive statistical data for more than 40 years. The lack of statistical data is a double-edge sword: a) it evades in-depth political debate, which can serve to capture the State by particular interests; b) it impedes sectoral development leaving all actors worse off. To resolve this situation, as further analyzed below, the Colombian Government appointed in 2013 a special group of experts to prepare specialized studies to serve as base of rural/agricultural public policies for the coming 20 years. It was named Mission for the Transformation of Rural Colombia-Rural Mission (*Misión para la Transformación del Campo Colombiano-Misión Rural*) <sup>6</sup>.

The recommendations of the Mission should have helped to improve agricultural policies in Colombia whose implementation throughout the last decades have not resulted in significant developments of the agricultural sector and of the small farmer inclusion. Part of the problems is related to the lack of debate on agricultural policy with the democratic participation of all actors, especially small farmers (Szegegy-Maszák, 2015, 2017).

Currently, the Colombian State intends to generate internal changes in the sector through the implementation of the Peace Agreement. For that purpose it has developed as its main public policy *Colombia Siembra* (Colombia Sows)<sup>7</sup>. However, the policy seems to lack clarity, especially on small farmer inclusion.

This article, without a pretension of completeness, starts with a review of the current rural situation and of the agricultural production in Colombia. Next, an analysis of the current agricultural public policies, in particular *Colombia Siembra*, is provided in order to suggest, finally, complementary public policy elements from the economic and legal points of view to increase the wellbeing of the rural Colombian population and of the small Colombian farmers, the poorest of the Colombians.

## II. CURRENT RURAL SITUATION AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN COLOMBIA

Until World War II, the productive structure in Latin America was predominantly based on the exploitation of raw materials. That structure returned again in the 1990s as a result of the abandonment of the ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) paradigm and replacing it with the paradigm expressed in the so-called Washington Consensus.

According to data from the World Development Indicators, between 1990 and 2014, as shown in Table 1, all large Latin American countries experienced a continuous process of reducing the proportional size of its manufacturing sector in total GDP (gross domestic product) and the expansion of the mining and hydrocarbon sectors and the service sector. In the Colombian case, this expansion meant that the primary mining and like sectors increased its participation from 17.3% to 25.2% of GDP and the service sector from 45.4% to 55.1%. On the other hand, the manufacturing industry decreased from 20.6% to 13% of GDP (Ferrari, 2016b).

Table 1

GDP Structure Y2014 (%GDP)							
	Argentina	Brazil	Chile	Colombia	Mexico	Peru	China
Agriculture	8.2	5.6	3.3	6.7	2.5	7.4	9.4
Manufacturing	14.6	10.9	12.4	13.0	17.7	14.9	30.8
Mining, electricity, water, gas and construction	14.3	12.5	22.8	25.2	16.1	21.9	12.9
Services, etc.	63.0	71.0	61.5	55.1	62.7	55.8	46.9
GDP Structure 1990 (%GDP)							
	Argentina	Brazil	Chile	Colombia	Mexico	Peru	China
Agriculture	8.1	7.8	8.7	16.7	7.8	8.9	26.7
Manufacturing	26.8	25.3	19.6	20.6	20.8	18.5	32.5
Mining, electricity, water, gas and construction	9.2	10.8	21.9	17.3	7.6	10.1	8.4
Services, etc.	55.9	56.0	45.4	45.4	62.7	62.4	32.4

Note: Information of Peru is from 1991 and 2012; of Brazil 1991 and of China 2013 respectively

Source: World Development Indicators, World Bank.

The Agriculture Sector has a historically decreasing participation in World GDP: between 1995 and 2014 world agriculture value added as percentage of GDP decreased from 8% to 3.9%<sup>8</sup>. In Colombia, between 1990 and 2014, it declined from 16.7% to 6.7%<sup>9</sup>.

However, agriculture continues to be an important sector for Colombia accounting for 17% of employment. Nevertheless, the above

mentioned modification in the production structure results in additional unemployment related problems. The new production structure does not generate enough employment because the dominant raw material producing sectors, particularly mining and hydrocarbons, are capital intensive rather than labor intensive sectors.

Table 2, with information from the World Labor Organization, shows how the mining and quarrying sectors, representing a significant part of the productive structure in Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru in the year of the statistic, and even now, hired only 1.4, 0.9, 0.4 and 1% of the total employment of the economy, respectively. Whereas, other real sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing were responsible for a considerable amount of employment. Thus, it is the raw material dependent productive structure that ends up generating a high structural unemployment (Ferrari, 2017).

Table 2

	Argentina		Brazil		Chile		Colombia		México		Perú	
	2006	%	2007	%	2002	%	2008	%	2008	%	2008	%
Total	10,040.5	100.0%	9,078.6	100.0%	5,085.9	100.0%	17,425.7	100.0%	43,866.7	100.0%	9,445.5	100.0%
A Agriculture, Hunting and Forestry	72.9	0.7%	16,207.2	17.9%	476.3	9.4%	3,054.5	17.5%	5,628.9	12.8%	710.7	7.5%
B Fishing	9.0	0.1%	371.7	0.4%	69.3	1.4%			129.6	0.3%	59.0	0.6%
C Mining and Quarrying	39.8	0.4%	378.5	0.4%	70.6	1.4%	149.1	0.9%	183.2	0.4%	98.8	1.0%
D Manufacturing	1,410.7	14.0%	13,105.1	14.4%	618.4	12.2%	2,335.6	13.4%	7,228.1	16.5%	1,316.6	13.9%
E Electricity, Gas and Water Supply	44.1	0.4%	362.7	0.4%	32.9	0.6%	78.7	0.5%	206.2	0.5%	35.8	0.4%
F Construction	884.7	8.8%	6,107.0	6.7%	399.7	7.9%	878.5	5.0%	3,641.2	8.3%	512.0	5.4%
G Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles	2,018.6	20.1%	16,308.9	18.0%	991.8	19.5%	4,605.3	26.4%	9,974.4	22.7%	2,101.4	22.2%
H Hotels and Restaurants	380.8	3.8%	3,350.9	3.7%	138.9	2.7%			2,836.7	6.5%	730.2	7.7%
I Transport, Storage and Communications	644.0	6.4%	4,374.0	4.8%	375.8	7.4%	1,467.4	8.4%	2,034.4	4.6%	907.0	9.6%
J Financial Intermediation	189.4	1.9%	1,181.4	1.3%	95.4	1.9%	219.6	1.3%	405.8	0.9%	92.3	1.0%
K Real Estate, Renting and Business Activities	809.8	8.1%	5,499.3	6.1%	469.2	9.2%	1,146.8	6.6%	2,189.2	5.0%	486.4	5.1%
L Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	768.7	7.7%	4,504.2	5.0%	232.7	4.6%			2,172.0	5.0%	423.2	4.5%
M Education	806.8	8.0%	5,052.3	5.6%	338.2	6.7%			2,326.0	5.3%	641.5	6.8%
N Health and Social Work	590.2	5.9%	3,327.1	3.7%	221.9	4.4%	3,463.3	19.9%	1,252.8	2.9%	270.5	2.9%
O Other Community, Social and Personal Services	546.7	5.4%	3,711.3	4.1%	241.9	4.8%			1,469.4	3.3%	634.5	6.7%
P Households with Employed Persons	797.0	7.9%	6,731.7	7.4%	310.4	6.1%			1,851.8	4.2%	423.4	4.5%
Q Extra-Territorial Organizations and Bodies	2.2	0.0%	3.4	0.0%	2.3	0.0%			3.8	0.0%	2.2	0.0%
X Not classifiable by economic activity	25.0	0.2%	209.4	0.2%	0.3	0.0%	26.9	0.2%	333.0	0.8%		0.0%

Source: ILO

Only seven countries in the world are using less than half of its agricultural capacity: Bolivia, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, Sudan, Angola and Congo. In Colombia armed conflict and high informality shielded the land from mayor foreign investment (FAO 2016)<sup>10</sup>. On the other hand, the 2014 Colombian Agricultural Census clearly demonstrated that there is a dominant use of land for livestock, but not only limited to bigger size Agricultural Production Unit (APU). Of the total area corresponding to agricultural use (43,0 million hectares), 80.0% had uses of pastures and stubble, 19.7% of agricultural activity and 0.3% of agricultural infrastructure. Of the APUs of less than 5 hectares, 56.8% used the land for livestock, 36.5% for cultivating plants and 6.8% for natural forests; while the APU of over 1,000 hectares, 42.2% dedicated to livestock, 29.8% used for crops and 28.0% for natural forests (DANE, 2016, p. 29). It results in an immense sub-utilization of agricultural land for crops and over-utilization for livestock. Furthermore, cropped areas are dominated by agro-industrial use.

The Agricultural Census of 2014 also highlighted the concentration of property of land since the 1970s. APUs over 500 hectares (0.4% of total properties) corresponded to 77.3% of the rural area; for its part APU of less than 5 hectares accounted for 70.4% of total properties and occupied only 2.0% of the rural area. Moreover, the proportion of area kept in APUs of more than 1000 hectares almost tripled from the previous censuses (1960, 1970) (DANE, 2016, p. 25).

As a dramatic contradiction, currently, only 36.4% of rural households have access to land, 75.6% of those who have access to land have less than 5 hectares. Of those with access to land 59% suffer informal ownership (DNP, 2014, p. 337). Forced displacement and dispossession of lands have devastating magnitudes in Colombia. It affects 6 million hectares. Official figures indicate that the displaced population surpasses 3 million people and involves more than 700,000 households, of which during the past 25 years, 450,000 lost their land by forced displacement and dispossession (Barribi, Spijkers, 2011, p. 14)<sup>11</sup>.

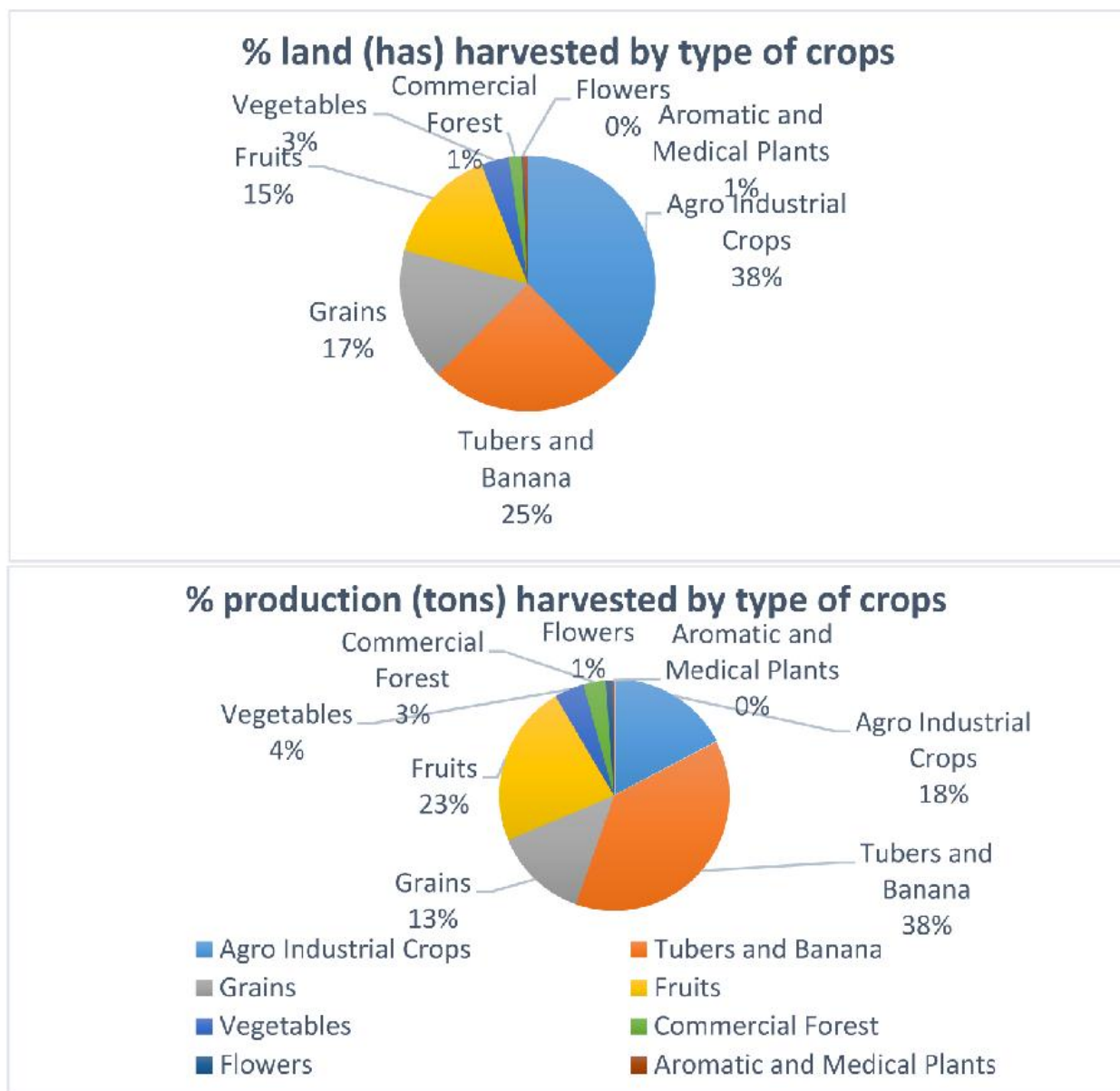
The 87% of APUs are associated to family farming, with greater intensity in the departments of Boyacá (98%), Cauca (96%), Nariño (94%), Huila (92%) and Cundinamarca (90%) (Garay, Barberi and Cardona, 2010, p. 178). Small producers play essential role in the agriculture in Colombia. Family farming constitutes 12% of households; represents the majority of households in the agricultural sector, provides 90% of agricultural workforce, harvests half of the area sown and owns 12-40% of livestock. Moreover, 70% of food is produced by small farmers in Colombia. However, the majority of rural households (65%) live in conditions of poverty or in extreme poverty (33%) (Barribi and Spijkers, 2011, p. 13). 70% of food consumed in Colombia comes from small scale farming, but only 5% of family farm production comes from organizations or associations of small farmers.

Sowing of agro-industrial crops is prevalent in Colombia: in 2014, 60.9% of APUs and 57.3% of the cropped area corresponded to sowings of agro-industrial crops (oil palm), tubers and banana. As shown in Chart 1, of the total agricultural area harvested 37.7% corresponded to agro-industrial crops that concentrated 17.3% of agricultural production; second was the group of tubers and banana with 24.8% of the harvested area and 38.1% of agricultural production. Of the total harvested agricultural area of agro-industrial crops 29.8% corresponded to coffee that concentrated 13.2% of the production; second, palm oil with 14.1% of area harvested and 17.3% of the production; other agro-industrial production concentrated 26.4% of area harvested but only 5% of agro-industrial production<sup>12</sup>.

As reflected in Table 3, large scale production of agro-industrial crops is especially notorious for certain crops such as oil palm (481,737 has / 20,040 APUs) and sugar cane (239,794 has / 12,389 APUs). Nevertheless, large scale production exists also for other agricultural food crops such as banana for exports (49,943 has / 1,513 APUs), rice (515,871 has / 41,963 APUs) and forests (584,803 has / 83,325 APUs); and in smaller extent for potato (214,059 has / 39,279 APUs) and yellow corn (239,794 has / 109,037 APUs)<sup>13</sup>.

Chart 1

Agro-industrial crops by type harvested (% of land (has), % of production (tons) Y2014



Source: Authors based on Censo Nacional Agropecuario Decima entrega de resultados 2014 (DANE, 2016b, p. 5)

Table 3

Agricultural crops by type harvested (size of land (has) and number of Agricultural Production Unit (APU)) Y2014		
Crop	Size of land (has)	No of APU
Coffee	902,424	385,871
Other agro-industrial crops	763,169	N/A
African Palm	481,737	20,040
Panela cane	329,594	N/A
Sugar cane	239,794	12,389
Cacao	199,549	88,567
Rubber	42,108	N/A
Cotton	29,035	N/A
Tabaco	19,057	N/A
Sub-total agro-industrial crops	3,006,467	860,147
Rice	515,871	41,963
Yellow corn	438,881	109,037

White corn	287,681	81,631
Other cereals	130,047	28,915
Sub-total cereals	1,372,480	261,546
Plantain	915,987	319,155
Yucca	443,930	178,529
Other roots and tubers	338,366	102,692
Potato	214,059	39,279
Sub-total plantain and tubers	1,912,342	639,655
Other fruits (lulo, fig, cranberries, strawberries, etc.)	632,589	176,690
Banana	165,398	N/A
Citrus fruits	160,408	63,795
Pineapple	132,419	N/A
Avocado	98,268	N/A
Banana for exports	49,943	1,513
Papaya	21,615	N/A
Sub-total fruits	1,260,641	393,442
Forests	584,803	83,325
Vegetables and legumes	361,321	189,639
Flowers and foliage	13,110	7,229

Source: Authors based on Censo Nacional Agropecuario, resultados 2014 (DANE, 2016a, pp. 15-40.)

According to the results of the study of the Rural Mission, as reflected in Table 4, 30% of the population and 60% of the municipalities are located in rural areas in Colombia. In addition, it is very likely that an important proportion of the population displaced by the armed conflict will also be relocated in rural areas, insofar as their great majority is of farmer origin (Departamento Nacional de Planeación, 2015).

Table 4

Results of Classification of Rurality Y 2014					
Category	Number of municipalities	Population in municipal seats	Rest of population	Rural population	Total population
Cities and urban agglomerates	117	28.529.930	2.088.360	2.088.360	30.618.290
Intermediate Cities	314	4.644.221	3.337.839	3.337.839	7.982.060
Rural	373	2.291.912	3.110.823	5.402.735	5.402.735
Rural Dispersed	318	893.205	2.765.497	3.658.702	3.658.702
General total	1.122	36.359.268	11.302.519	14.487.636	47.661.787
Percentage of population		76.3%	23.7%	30.4%	

Source: Rural Mission

On the other hand, the rural population suffers the most deficiencies. As the final report of the Rural Mission shows, 49.9% of the rural population is poor, increasing as high as 53.5% of the population in rural dispersed areas, while in the cities 21.7% of the population is poor and the national average result is 30.6% (Table 5).

Table 5

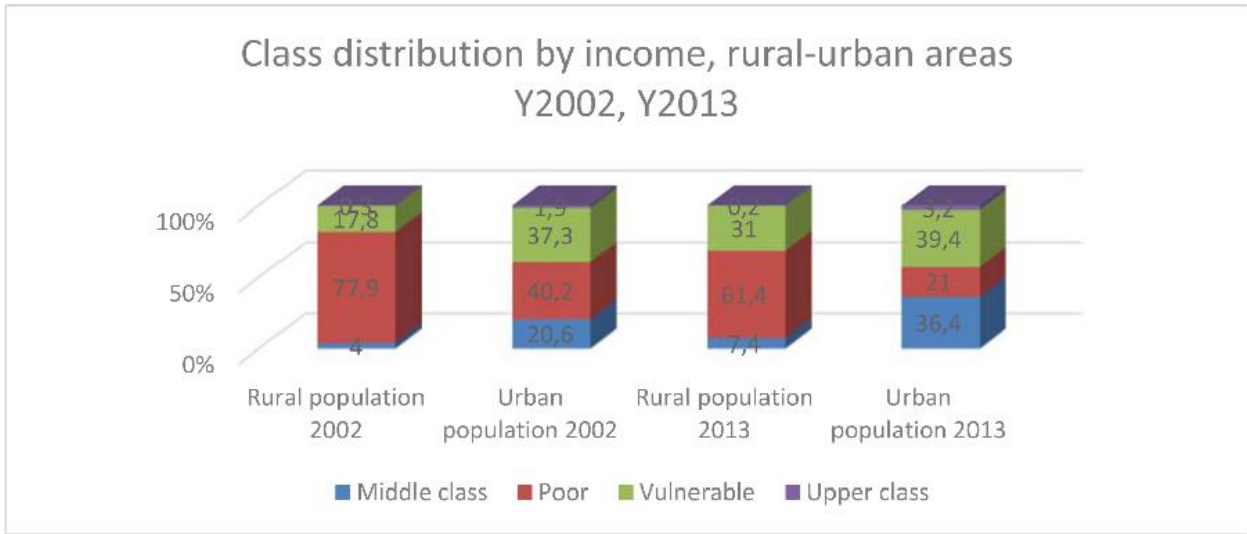
Rural-Urban poverty Y2014			
Category	Income Poverty	Extreme Poverty	Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)
Cities and urban agglomerates	21.7%	4.5%	20.8%
Intermediate Cities	41.0%	13.3%	36.7%
Rural	49.9%	19.0%	42.7%
Rural Dispersed	53.5%	24.1%	47.8%
National	30.6%	9.06%	28.0%

Source: Rural Mission

Furthermore, according to data from the Rural Mission there is a deep stagnation of the social mobility in rural society (Ferrari, 2016a). Where the middle-class population, as of income, is scarce (4% in 2002 and 7.4% in 2013), while in the urban society, in the same period, middle class population is more numerous, and its proportion is importantly increasing (20.6% in 2002 and 36.4% in 2013). During the same period, there was a minor poverty level reduction in rural society (77.9% in 2002 and 61.4% in 2013) as compared to urban areas (40.2% in 2002 and 21% in 2013), and in rural areas the proportion of vulnerable population increased more (17.8% in 2002 and 31% in 2013) (Graphic 1).

Graphic 1





Source: Rural Mission

In addition to social and structural problems of land tenancy, agricultural production lacks technological development. According to the Agricultural Census of 2014, only 20% of all crops are covered by efficient irrigation, and only 9.9% of rural properties had access to any kind of technical assistance. Rural Mission also analyzed access to different components of rural assets for production (by type and in combination) such as land, technical assistance, credit, and irrigation on property. The results are even more worrisome as 63.6% of rural homes lack all of these assets, only 20.8% count with at least one asset and a mere 1.7% of rural homes have all four assets (Graphic 2).

Graphic 2

Percentage of rural homes with Access to assets and accumulation of assets of agricultural production in Y2011



Source: Rural Mission

There is also a major lack of adequate secondary and tertiary roads in Colombia. As shown in Table 6, between 2002 and 2015 the length of the web of tertiary roads doubled (from 72,801 km to 142,284 km) and there were significant constructions in the secondary road web (from 34,918 km to 45,137 km). This web is tiny and almost all of these roads are under precarious conditions, even those closed to Bogota, Medellin or Cali, the largest Colombian cities, compared to the necessities to transport agricultural products from productive areas to markets, especially as road transport is the predominant form of transportation in Colombia (Ferrari, 2016a).

According to the analysis of Andrés Botero, Colombia's tertiary network consists of about 140,000 km, of which 24% are trails and 70% is affirmed field. In contrast, only 6% of roads in mention –some 8,400 km– is paved. As a result of the above, the average travel time from any property located in rural areas is 5.37 hours. Reducing the duration of the transport of agricultural production to municipal heads, where collection centers are located, is, therefore, essential to improve the productivity of the countryside (Botero, 2017).

Table 6

Length in kilometers (km) of primary, secondary and tertiary roads in Colombia 2002-2015				
Year	Primary roads	Secondary roads	Tertiary roads	Total roads
2002	16,531	27,918	72,801	117,250
2003	16,528	34,918	65,893	117,339
2004	16,677	34,918	72,906	124,501
2005	16,750	34,918	72,906	124,574
2006	16,771	34,918	72,906	124,595
2007	16,676	34,918	72,906	124,500
2008	16,676	34,918	100,338	151,932
2009	16,786	34,918	100,338	117,234
2010	17,143	38,335	135,679	191,137
2011	16,898	42,954	141,945	201,797
2012	17,118	43,327	141,945	202,390
2013	17,037	44,399	141,955	203,392
2014	17,434	45,137	142,284	204,855
2015	19,306	45,137	142,284	206,727

Source: Ministerio de Transporte (2016).

Finally, OECD published the striking data about Colombia's Producer Support Estimate (PSE) for 2013, which indicates that almost one fifth of gross receipts of agricultural producers is generated by support policies (OECD, 2015, p. 197). Colombia in 2013 had a total value of agricultural production (at farm gate) of \$52.331.879 million with Producer Support Estimate (PSE) amounting to \$11.010.188 million, in percentage terms 19.8% (only 0.3% lower than in the European Union). Nevertheless, more than 70% of the PSE (\$7,749,141 million) occurred in the form of Market Price Support (MPS). MPS is calculated based on the gap between domestic and international prices and it is the result of protective trade and domestic measures, as well as infrastructure deficiencies<sup>14)</sup>.

MPS in Colombia does not provide effective transfer of supports to producers, while it is financed by consumers through higher prices creating an extra burden for the latter. On the other hand, of all PSE only 10% was spent in the form of Budgetary Support, which gets at least indirectly to the producers. In any case, subsidies, which provided direct redistribution to producers, were not implemented in any form. All the above describes a distorted agricultural market in Colombia.

As described in an United Nations Development Program report (UNDP, 2011), in Colombia backward and modern agricultural structures, and agricultural structures in transition exist simultaneously, therefore, there are variations in the relationship between land and conflict as well as land and political power. The Report also argued that the control by few landowners and illegal armed forces of the best quality lands in Colombia restricts democracy and the liberty of the rural population, and further strengthens migration towards urban centers (UNDP, 2011, pp. 182-183).

As further analyzed, there is an agrarian conflict as well as an armed conflict in Colombia. The agrarian conflict is linked to the land conflict, while the armed conflict is a territorial conflict. On the other hand, the two conflicts become related as the land is converted into the instrument of war and dispute for the territory (UNDP, 2011, p. 186). Even more so, as the armed conflict of the 1990s expanded it resulted in a contra-agrarian reform, forced displacement and land abandonment (UNDP, 2011, p. 240). Finally, the Report also revealed that political status quo (continuity in power by the same political actors) resulted in less welfare development. On the other hand, where political status quo was present, levels of violence were lower. Nonetheless, violence did not substantially influence the political persistence in Colombia neither (UNDP, 2011, pp. 262-265).

### III. COLOMBIAN POLICIES TOWARDS RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND «COLOMBIA SIEMBRA»

In March 2017 the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Ministry of Interior Affairs filed before the Senate, as part of the fast track process, the first two of the four Laws to implement the commitments of Chapter 1 of the Peace Agreement on Comprehensive Rural Reform.

The first initiative seeks to improve the provision of rural technical assistance services; it creates coordination between municipalities, departments and the central government<sup>15)</sup>. The second regulates access to irrigation and drainage systems; it contemplates the legalization of already established irrigation systems, resolving the lack of clarity regarding property and management<sup>16)</sup>. The other two regulatory projects on agriculture to be discussed through fast track are 1) rural housing; and 2) granting of rural credits. At the end of November 2017, the first two projects are still under discussion, while the last two have not even been presented to the Congress.

Furthermore, it is clear by now, that the Government will not present through fast track the most important and very probably the most controversial regulatory project on Comprehensive Rural Reform (*Reforma Rural Integral*) (Szegedy-Maszák, under edition). The Colombian Congress is deeply divided regarding the implementation of the Peace Agreement, especially on the participation of the FARC in the political arena and on the transitional justice. The political division between Government and opposition almost paralyzes the development of almost all fast track projects, including the implementation of the Comprehensive Rural Reform<sup>17)</sup>.

Despite the lack of these important laws, there are public policies already under implementation aiming the inclusion of small producers in rural development projects. Concepts such as food sovereignty and small farmer economy have been introduced into Colombian rural public policies.

As part of the Comprehensive Land Policy and Land Restitution Program in the 2011-2016 period, claimers submitted 100,158 applications of land properties that had been allegedly abandoned or dispossessed, which resulted in 195,929 hectares with restitution order. Massive Formalization Zones were also established to support the formalization of private property titles. In 2016 a total of 2,836 property titles were established<sup>18)</sup>.

Within the Rural Social Interest Housing Program since 2010 more than \$1.2 billion was invested and more than 100,000 housing subsidies were granted. The program focused benefits to victims of the armed conflict and households involved in poverty reduction programs. In 2016 a total of 18,470 housing solutions were completed and delivered in 453 municipalities.

Through the Rural Education Programs access to higher education was stimulated supporting the training of technical and business skills

with 100% financing of the value of the enrollment at technical, technological and/or professional studies in agricultural sciences, with the participation of 120 young people between 2014 and 2016<sup>19)</sup>.

Regarding the construction of transportation infrastructure for the benefit of rural areas, namely roads of third category, very little have been achieved until nowadays. On June 4, 2017, President Juan Manuel Santos signed the first conventions of the plan 51 x 50, to invest \$50,000 million for the construction of 50 kilometers of tertiary roads in 51 municipalities, in 15 departments. These municipalities had the largest impact of the armed conflict. According to the Government, the purpose of the investment is to improve the conditions of mobility in each of the regions and to stimulate their development<sup>20)</sup>. Although the announcement is politically significant, it is still a very small effort as the investment is related to a total of 2,550 kilometers, a very small proportion of the 140,000 kilometers of the total web of tertiary roads.

Nevertheless, all these initiatives seem to be very small and/or incomplete in regard to the needs of the construction of peace in Colombia, although they seem to be oriented in the correct way. Unfortunately, the same applies to the flagship agricultural production enhancement policy of the Santos Government, *Colombia Siembra*.

*Colombia Siembra* was announced as the most comprehensive rural public policy of the last 40 years in Colombia, and surely it is so. It was designed to generate a long-term agricultural supply, taking advantage of the potential of production chains such as cocoa, oil palm, avocado hass, mango tomy and keitt, passionflower (grenadine, passion fruit and gulupa) and cape gooseberries with potential at the international market; as well as cereals such as rice, corn, soybeans, barley, fish and seafood, cattle and forestry.

In the last 25 years Colombia has not planted more than 500,000 hectares in a four-year period. With investments of \$ 1.6 billion and an additional \$ 24 billion through agricultural credit between 2015 and 2018, *Colombia Siembra* seeks to reduce by 50% the 10 million tons of food imports, and to increase by 1 million hectares the area planted, from 7,131,500 to 8,131,500 has (Table 7).

Table 7

Indicator	Baseline 2014	Goal 2018	Growth 2014-2018
New areas sowed (ha)	7,131,500	8,131,500	18.30%
Agricultural GDP (% growth)	2.30%	6.20%	4.5% (Annual)
Rural employment	2,690,111	2,954,185	10%
Poverty by income (%)	41.6%	35.1%	-4.3%

Source: FINAGRO<sup>21)</sup>

*Colombia Siembra* aims to boost the development of the sector, allowing an average annual growth of 4.5% between 2016 and 2018, which represents a 1.7% higher rate than that presented in the last 25 years. In this way, the purpose is to move from a sector growth of 2.3% (2014) to 6.2% (2018), and to generate 264 thousand rural jobs, 10% more than the current figure, going from 2,690,111 to 2,954,185 jobs (Table 7). Regarding exports, it is expected to provide an increase of 4% each year through the diversification of products and markets<sup>22)</sup>.

For this purpose, public policy intervention was extended from 10 to 32 departments; alliances with producer associations were enhanced from 6 to 26, and 42 credit lines were created for specific crops with payment periods coinciding with those of planting and harvest<sup>23)</sup>.

*Colombia Siembra* has four pillars. The first is the creation of agricultural zoning maps by municipality that should promote the most appropriate land use. The second pillar is technical assistance and training; producer associations are to provide technical assistance in good agricultural practices, and rural entrepreneurship schools are going to be promoted. The third pillar consists of subsidies aimed at covering part of the cost of agricultural insurance and that of price and exchange rate hedges. The last pillar is interest rate subsidies on loans, and the granting of the Rural Capitalization Incentive (ICR) to irrigation, mechanization and storage infrastructure (Perfetti del Corral, 2016): ICR is to give an impulse to the associative schemes together with small producers, providing them with the most favorable conditions.

As of agricultural insurance, the premium subsidy is maintained with a minimum of 60% up to 80% for small producers. The Special Credit Line (LEC) creates two financing schemes: *Colombia Siembra* and general credits. In 2016, LEC budget increased from \$30 billion to \$70 billion for the purpose of leveraging \$8 billion in loans with the minimum interest rate for small producers and associative schemes (Table 8)<sup>24)</sup>.

Table 8

FINAGRO Agricultural Credit interest rates 2016		
Type of producer	Colombia Siembra	General
Small producer	FTD a.e.	FTD + 1% a.e.
Medium producer	FTD + 1% a.e.	FTD + 2% a.e.
Associative schemes	FTD a.e.	FTD + 1% a.e.
Large producer	FTD + 2% a.e.	Not available

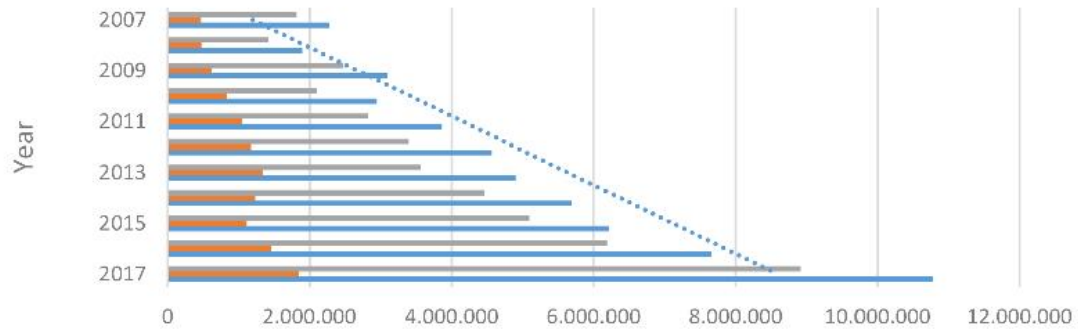
FTD= Fixed Term Deposit; a.e.= annual effective  
Source: FINAGRO

As shown in Graphic 3, there is a growing participation of small producers in agricultural credit schemes. Nevertheless, despite all recent efforts by the Colombian Government, the gap between small and other producers is still immense. In 2016, the Colombian financial system disbursed loans to the agricultural sector (through FINAGRO) for an amount of \$10.3 billion, a figure that barely covers 27% of the annual costs of even the livestock sector. The most worrying aspect of this financing system is that of the \$10.3 billion disbursed, 82% was concentrated in 12 of the 32 departments; 80%, in large and medium-sized producers, and 96% of the loans were placed by only ten of the 44 financial intermediaries that exist in the country (Dangond, 2017).

Graphic 3

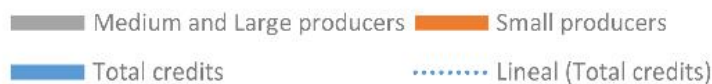


## Agricultural credits by type of producer YY 2007-2017



	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
■ Medium and Large producers	8.919.963	6.193.648	5.097.170	4.455.220	3.566.650	3.392.126	2.812.451	2.109.843	2.475.514	1.424.118	181.649
■ Small producers	1.853.563	1.458.625	1.112.231	1.233.451	1.336.009	1.175.125	1.051.109	833.672	618.303	473.999	468.635
■ Total credits	10.773.526	7.652.273	6.209.401	5.688.671	4.902.659	4.567.251	3.863.560	2.943.515	3.093.817	1.898.117	2.285.132

Credits



Source: Authors based on FINAGRO statistics<sup>25)</sup>

According to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, by April 2017 *Colombia Siembra* achieved 43% of its goals. A total of more than 434,000 hectares were planted between 2015 and 2016. The most representative crops of this expansion were rice, corn, oil palm, fruit and cocoa. Growth has been strongly supported by record credit disbursements to the agro-industrial sector (Presidencia de la República de Colombia, 2017). During the first semester of 2017 agricultural GDP growth was 6.1 %; and unemployment rate was 4.9%, lowest in the last 16 years<sup>26)</sup>.

Nevertheless, *Colombia Siembra* has been criticized by several analysts. For example, according to Juan José Perfetti, although the registered growth indicates a remarkable performance of some of the product groups, it is not possible to infer from the figures whether the *Colombia Siembra* is really as successful as it is affirmed. With statistical data without sufficient disaggregation, it is impossible to establish whether other factors, such as producer prices and the exchange rate, were more determinants than government action (Perfetti del Corral, 2017).

Perfetti already criticized *Colombia Siembra* for its lack of innovation, stating that despite the recommendations of the OECD and the Rural Mission to privilege public goods, *Colombia Siembra* is based on granting subsidies; whereas it would be more beneficial for the sector if the Government provides more public goods to facilitate the development and marketing of crops and to improve the operation of agricultural markets (Perfetti del Corral, 2016, 2017).

There are even stronger critics of *Colombia Siembra*. Dario Fajardo specifically criticizes the Government for abandoning the construction of secondary and tertiary roads that are vital for production and peace<sup>27)</sup>. Additionally, he emphasizes that the central problem of agricultural public policies is the lack of access to markets and the competition that imports have meant in recent years (Medina, 2015).

Rudolf Hommes expressed structural concerns already in 2015. He stated that the effort of the Colombian Government to restore food sovereignty should not mean that the most inefficient forms of local production should not be eliminated, or that consumers have to subsidize producers. According to Hommes, vegetables, lentils, beans and peas, and most of the fruits are of small farmer production and would contribute to improve the popular diet and farmer income, if they can be produced competitively in Colombia. Near the main cities, a small farmer economy is sustainable and profitable because there is demand for food, transport does not weigh as much, and prices are competitive, even with export potential. Nevertheless, in order for *Colombia Siembra* to incorporate small producers successfully, it would be necessary to make land available to them for rent or property in their regions (Hommes, 2015).

The most worrisome example of serious failures in the implementation of *Colombia Siembra* is the case of rice overproduction. In November 2016 the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development celebrated the success of rice producers<sup>28)</sup>: «We are sowing what we need to sow, when and where to sow. With rice, for example, at this moment we are self-sufficient. This has never happened before. We are the first among the CAN countries and the second in Latin America»<sup>29)</sup>. However, already in August 2016, Rafael Mejía López, President of the Farmers' Society of Colombia (SAC) warned the Government that «we do not have to cultivate for the sake of cultivating, we have to do it according to the demand, adapt this to the land available in the country, study the suitable lands and guarantee that there are the necessary resources such as water, transport and efficient logistic processes, among others, so that agriculture is a profitable business and does not generate losses and waste» (Saavedra Crespo, 2016).

It was in August 2017 that the failure of *Colombia Siembra* for the rice producers became apparent. Stimulated by the *Colombia Siembra* Program, rice growers substantially increased the cultivated areas. But by the time of the peak of harvest (70% is harvested between August and September 2017), low domestic prices ruined producers. Due to this situation, Jorge Enrique Bedoya Vizcaya, President of SAC, urged the Government to design public policies that aim to encourage production towards what the market demands and not simply to seek an increase in areas and food offers: «*Colombia Siembra* lacked *Colombia Vende* (Colombia Sells), so that farmers first know what the market demands and so they can make production decisions, seeking vertical integration and closeness to the consumer, so that they are not in the

hands of intermediaries». Sectors such as potato, palm oil, milk, corn, soybeans, barley, beans and peas producers faced similar situation<sup>30)31)</sup>.

Finally, this situation only worsens with the fact that Government in the National Budget for 2018 reduces investment in the agricultural sector from \$ 2.3 trillion to \$ 1.5 trillion, which means a fall of 34.6% and represents \$800 billion less. SAC President Jorge Enrique Bedoya, pointed out that this sharp drop leaves the sector unsatisfied, «it seems unfortunate that there is a 34.6% reduction in rural investment, because at the end of the day the agricultural sector of our country is the hope for the post-conflict, resulting inconsistent with the importance that the Government gives to the sector in this framework»<sup>32)</sup>.

#### IV. FINAL REMARKS

*Colombia Siembra* through generating an unprecedented growth in cropped areas was to promote food sovereignty, small farmer inclusion, supply chain strengthening, technological development as well as increase in exports. Nevertheless, its impact in practice was reduced to extend sowing. Sowing is not equal to agricultural production, whereas agricultural production is not the same as small farmer inclusion.

Unfortunately, it seems that *Colombia Siembra* would be one of those rural production related public policies that was not able to comply with the expectations. Of course, to attain that it is not an easy job, neither its objective can be obtained rapidly, as the President Santos has stated recently<sup>33)</sup>.

On the other hand, it is time to realize that the only way to generate and maintain peace in the Colombian countryside is to ensure that the rural population earns an income that allows them to live in dignity. Otherwise, the temptation to engage in illicit cultivation or other criminal activity will be permanent and even escalating. This means that it is, ineluctably, and an urgent necessity to make the agricultural sector and other rural activities profitable (Ferrari, 2017).

As Ferrari states, there are two alternatives for rural workers to obtain income. The first is to be employed in companies operating in rural areas. However, these rural wages will always be lower relative to other wage-earning economic activities in the urban environment because unskilled urban wages are based on average farmer income plus an additional cost of urbanization, which are services not accounted and paid for in the rural environment.

The other alternative is to become self-employed in small or medium sized properties. Unfortunately, leaving alone small land owners, without credit, technical assistance, roads to take their products to the markets, or organization, implies generating or maintaining a situation in which they end up receiving a residual of the price paid by the consumer for the goods that they themselves produce at the bottom of the agricultural production chain. That residual price corresponds to what is left after paying profits and costs of production to the merchants, transporters, processors and transformers of said agricultural goods. The solution to this latter problem is to involve small farmers in the profits of companies or cooperatives in charge of the tasks that complete their initial effort along the agricultural production chain (Ferrari, 2017).

It would not be the first time in the world: in the Province of Trento in Northern Italy, the most prosperous of the country, small farmers are co-owners of cooperatives that process, transport and trade their products; worthwhile to consider to replicate. The Trentino Federation of Cooperation brings together 223,700 cooperative members, of a total population of 500,000 organized in 545 cooperatives; specializing in activities related to credit, agriculture, commerce and others (electricity, tourism, transport, etc.) with an annual income of 3.67 billion euros. In the Trento province, the share of cooperatives in the agricultural market is around 90%, while in the credit sector this share is about 60% (OECD, 2014).

That is to say, for small farmers to reach a decent income it is necessary: 1) to make the agricultural sector profitable; 2) guarantee the access to land and water, which is a problem of political nature; 3) provide small farmers with credit, technical assistance and roads; 4) promote their organization to integrate them to the rest of the agricultural productive chain.

Solving the lack of second and tertiary level roads is a fundamental question that requires a massive state investment in the rural environment, as private sector cannot be required to assume the provision of basic public services. Would it imply the existence of a «Marshall Plan»? Surely.

It is also required to formulate, design and execute investment projects for the transformation, transportation and commercialization of agricultural goods such as: slaughterhouses; meat plants; warehouses; machinery for packaging fruits and vegetables; small power, drinking water and sanitation plants; inns and rural hotels. All of them require financing. But adequate credit is also required to promote agricultural activity (Ferrari, 2017).

In Peru, it was surely the Agrarian Reform between 1970 and 1980 that changed the economic, social and political structure of the country. The years after the Peruvian agrarian reform witnessed back warding agricultural production, without capital, credit and organization, and frustrated farmers, with land but without productive capacity and without income. The situation changed in the early 1990s when the Government permitted the sale and purchase of the reformed properties and new entrepreneurs began to invest in the agricultural sector and in its related services to make it profitable and productive. This raised the price of land, made it subject to credit, and encouraged entrepreneurs and small farmers to associate in search of greater production and exports. At present, the Peruvian coast enjoys full employment and the land is used to its maximum capacity. But perhaps the most important achievement of the Peruvian Agrarian Reform was the transformation of the Peruvian society, politics and economy. It is worth to raise the question; in Colombia could it be the Peace Agreement that might generate these processes? (Ferrari, 2017).

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## FOOTNOTES

1

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2

A detailed analysis on the political debate between the Government of President Santos and the political opposition is included in Szegedy-Maszák, Ildikó (under edition).

3

With the fast track, the Congress has a faster way to approve or reject the Peace Agreement implementation legislative projects or constitutional amendments presented by the Government. It is expected to reduce times of legislative process by half until the end of 2017. ¿Qué significa «fast track» para la aprobación del acuerdo de paz? (2016).

4

Uribismo amplió a 68 las 'capitulaciones' en contra del proceso de paz con las FARC (2014). *El Espectador*, October 20, 2016. Retrieved from <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/politica/uribismo-amplio-68-capitulaciones-contra-del-proceso-de-articulo-523533>

5

The Colombian Government published a comprehensive analysis of the modifications of the original Cartagena version of the Agreement in Equipo Paz Gobierno (2016).

6

Mission for the Transformation of Rural Colombian – Rural Mission ( *Misión para la Transformación del Campo Colombiano – Misión Rural* ) is an

initiative of the Department of National Planning ( *Departamento de Planeación Nacional* ) of the Colombian Government to prepare specialized studies to serve as base of rural/agricultural public policies for the coming 20 years. Retrieved from

<https://www.dnp.gov.co/programas/agricultura/Paginas/mision-para-la-transformacion-del-campo-colombiano.aspx>

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7

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8

Between 1995 and 2014 industry value added percentage of GDP also decreased in world average from 33.5% to 27.7%, whereas in Colombia between 1995 and 2015 industrial production increased from 31.7% to 34%. Nevertheless, industrial value added in Colombia has been declining sharply since 2013, although still maintaining higher results than the Latin-American and Caribbean average of 30% (in 2014). Retrieved from <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.AGR.TOTL.ZS?locations=CO>

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9

The sharpest decline in Colombia has occurred between 1999 and 2000 when agricultural value added as % of GDP decreased from 14% to 8.9%. In Latin-America and the Caribbean tendencies were different in the same period, as agricultural value added % of GDP decreased in lesser amount from 6.7% in 1995 to 5.5% in 2014.

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10

As analyzed by the country representative of FAO, Rafael Zavala Gómez del Campo in *El 70 % de alimentos en Colombia vienen de pequeños productores*: FAO (2016).

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11

The most affected regions include *Sur de la Guajira, Norte de Cesar, Montes de María, Urabá, Catatumbo, Magdalena Medio, Antioquia, Nariño, Putumayo, Cauca, Casanare, Arauca* and *Meta* .

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12

Agro-industrial crops are defined as coffee, cocoa, sugarcane, rubber, sisal, higuera, olive, palm and other agro-industrial crops. *Caldas, Risaralda, Huila, Santander* and *Valle del Cauca* are the departments with greater part of the land dedicated to sowings of agro-industrial crops. (DANE, 2016, p. 12).

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13

There is no disaggregated statistical data available for the following crops: panela cane, rubber, cotton, tobacco, other agro-industrial crops, banana, pineapple, avocado and papaya (DANE, 2016a, pp. 15-40.). Most of these crops tend to be produced in large-scale format.

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14

MPS policies include a) trade measures: import tariffs, import quotas, tariff quotas, SPS regime, export subsidies, export taxes, and quantitative restrictions on exports; b) domestic measures: administered pricing, market interventions, and public stockholding (OECD, 2015, p. 195).

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15

Radican en el Congreso el primero de cinco proyectos sobre agro (2017).

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16

MinAgricultura radica vía Fast Track proyecto de adecuación de tierras (2017).

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17

Innovación agropecuaria sigue empantanada en Senado (2017).

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18



Informe de Rendición de Cuentas del Ministerio de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural 2016-2017.

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19

Informe de Rendición de Cuentas del Ministerio de Agricultura y Desarrollo Rural 2016-2017.

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20

En marcha convenios para construir vías terciarias en regiones afectadas por el conflicto (2017).

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21

Todo lo que debe saber sobre Colombia Siembra (2015).

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22

MinAgricultura invertirá \$1.6 billones para desarrollar Colombia Siembra (2015).

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23

Colombia Siembra logró un campo más productivo (2016).

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24

Incentivos para créditos del plan Colombia Siembra (2016).

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25

Retrieved from <https://www.finagro.com.co/estad%C3%ADsticas/estad%C3%ADsticas>

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26

GDP growth of the sector during the second quarter of 2017 was 4.4 %. Although coffee declined (-14.3%), crops other than grains increased 12.5%. This responded to an increase of 23.8% in transitory crops and 10.8 % in permanent crops (Perfetti del Corral, 2017).

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27

Plan «Colombia Siembra» no es concreto (2015).

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28

Rice crops were the most planted within the 185,000 hectares in the *Colombia Siembra* Program in the first half of 2016: rice with 82,000 new has, oil palm with 26,800 has, cocoa with 10,17 6has, forestry with 21,850 has, yellow corn with 10,000 has, fruit with 6,910 has, soybean with 6,610 has, white corn with 5,000 has and cassava, bananas, vegetables and beans with 10,000 has (Saavedra Crespo, 2016).

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29

Colombia Siembra logró un campo más productivo (2016).

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30

A Colombia Siembra le hizo falta Colombia Vende: SAC (2017); Productores de cebada en Boyacá son víctimas del fracaso de «Colombia Siembra» (2017); Domínguez (2017).

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31

Environmentalists also called attention to the environmental risks of the excessive expansion of agricultural production, especially rice. Extractive rice production wipes out wetlands, gallery forests, bush forests and all their biodiversity. Although the almost 140,000 hectares (a record) planted in 2016 in *Llanos* department is a sign of the immense agricultural potential of this Southern Western part of Colombia, they are also a potential risk of environmental degradation (Baptiste, Brigitte, 2017)

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[Macroeconomía](http://www.dataifx.com/noticias/para-2018-gobierno-redujo-presupuesto-de-inversi%C3%B3n-para-sector-agropecuario-en-346), Editor\_Dataifx, 31 July, 2017, Retrieved from <http://www.dataifx.com/noticias/para-2018-gobierno-redujo-presupuesto-de-inversi%C3%B3n-para-sector-agropecuario-en-346>

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«Building peace is not easy. It does not happen overnight. It is a task that requires perseverance and work hand in hand with local authorities, the community, entrepreneurs». This unusual message was expressed by President Santos, in the midst of the coca crisis in Tumaco, Nariño; where 6 civilians died. An overflowing growth of illicit crops was registered from 96,000 hectares to a total of 146,000 between 2015 and 2016, an increase that pushes back 16 years of positive results in the fight against illegal drug production in Colombia. According to the most recent reports, the increase is concentrated in only three departments, specifically Nariño, Putumayo and Norte de Santander (Quintero, 2017).

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