

CAPAZ - Deutsch Kolumbianisches Friedensinstitut / Willy Brandt School of Public Policy

ToRs

Project Group Meetings: Tuesdays, 12-2pm.

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Capstone: State Armed Actors and Transitional Justice

1. Motivation

The international community considers Colombia's transitional justice one of the world's most comprehensive. It was born after the historic peace agreement, at the end of 2016, between the government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) is one of the three institutions that make up the Colombian Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition. Since functioning in 2018, the TRC has had the challenge of covering five decades of atrocities and human rights violations committed during the country's armed conflict by highlighting its causes and exposing its painful impact across different communities and people. After more than three years of work, the (TRC) revealed its final report. One of their main recommendations is the importance that the state armed forces acknowledge its contribution to the conflict, including the cooperation between members of the army and paramilitary groups as well as the extrajudicial executions of civilians by the military, a scandal popularly known as the '[false positives](#)'. But the military and the defence sector, supported by right-wing political parties, have insisted on a different narrative. They argue that isolated military members committed these crimes (the bad apple theory), and their actions do not involve the institutions' logic and doctrine, which contradicts the report. The signature of the TRC was: "Without truth, reconciliation is not possible. Without reconciliation, the risk of repetition remains real". Colombia, contrary to most of the world's peace agreements, did not have a Security Sector Reform. During the following years of the peace agreement, social unrest was brutally suppressed by the security sector and today, under a new government, SSR is imminent. However, little has been said in the country and even internationally about the links, challenges and learning lessons from other contexts about the security sector reform, transitional justice, reconciliation and prevention of future cycles of violence after peace agreements are signed.

2. Project focus

The German Colombian Peace Institute – CAPAZ, aim to accompany the new Government of Colombia with the security sector reform initiatives and their relationship with the fulfilment of the peace agreement, particularly the reparation of victims and guarantees of non-repetition. The project group will work on the following tasks:

- 1) A literature review of pertinent studies on the role of the state force's participation in transitional justice mechanisms in post-conflict scenarios and what matters. The review is to detail state of the art in terms of what we know about the nexus between state forces, transition justice, reconciliation and perpetuation of violence; provide an overview of the pertinent scholarly and policy debate on the security sector and transitional justice after peace agreements from **various disciplinary angles**; and define the nexus properly, which is part of the goal of carrying out the review

2) A public policy document with recommendations for CAPAZ, as an advisor and the Colombian Government. This document, along with the literature review, could be potentially published on the CAPAZ platform if it passes the reviewer process.

3. The client

[The German Colombian Peace Institute – CAPAZ](#), a Centre of Excellence in Research and Teaching, is a cooperation platform operating in Germany and Colombia and financed by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), with funds provided by the German Federal Foreign Office. The Institute stimulates the exchange of experiences and knowledge on peacebuilding through the creation of networks between universities, research centres, civil society organisations, and governmental entities that act in the territorial arena. CAPAZ supports research, teaching, and advisory activities that create new approaches to understanding peace and conflict, transmit knowledge to society, and provide responses to the multiple challenges of a society in transition.

Dr. Stefan Peters, the Academic Director CAPAZ and Chair of Peace Studies at the Justus Liebig University Giessen (Germany) will be in one of our first session. At this meeting, Dr. Peters will share in more detail about CAPAZ's mission in Colombia and the expectations and possibilities of the partnership with the Willy Brandt School. We will also discuss the logistics and methodology together during the semester, as well as answering questions from students.

CAPAZ [Brochure](#)

4. Implementation

Brandt School faculty will mentor the project and ensure academic quality. The German Colombian Peace Institute – CAPAZ will assist in providing targeted support, e.g. on pertinent documents and data. They will also be available for feedback and occasional check-ins during the research process. In case the project needs to be amended throughout the implementation period, the ToRs can be adjusted.

Deliverables include *a sur place* presentation on the main findings; a policy report detailing the latter and providing recommendations; and possible spin-off products both sides agree on.

Both literature review document and policy report will be ready for delivery by Friday the 11th of February 2023. A date for the presentation will be agreed upon separately with the client.