



## **Kroc Institute statement regarding the March 7 *El Tiempo* interview with David Cortright**

The Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies at the University of Notre Dame, through the Peace Accords Matrix Program (PAM), is the entity designated in the final Peace Agreement between the government of Colombia and the FARC-EP to provide technical assistance for monitoring and verification of implementation. Responses to a headline published in the March 7, 2020, edition of *El Tiempo* called into question the rigor with which the Kroc Institute fulfills this mandate. Following these events, we wish to clarify the following:

**1. The original title in the *El Tiempo* article, which stated that “40 percent of the peace agreement has been implemented,” was a misinterpretation of the interview with Dr. David Cortright. After viewing the original headline that included this statement, we requested that the editor rectify the error. We appreciate that the title in the digital version of the interview was revised.**

What Cortright, director of PAM, said during his interview (verbatim) was, “We have data that show that 40 percent of the implementation of the agreement **is completed or in the process of being completed**, and there is a good possibility that, in the next 15 years, this percentage [of those commitments that are not yet fully implemented] can be completed.” He did not claim that 40 percent of commitments

have been fully completed already.

As of November 2019, our analysis shows that 25 percent of commitments had been fully implemented, 15 percent of commitments had been intermediately implemented, 34 percent showed minimal implementation progress,



and 26 percent of commitments had not been initiated.

However, the peace agreement does not assume that all commitments begin implementation at the same time, and the progress of some commitments is subject to the initiation and completion of other commitments. Achieving full implementation requires that commitments advance at a good pace and that any lagging commitments, for example those related to gender, receive greater attention to avoid any possible slowdown, as was warned about [in the third report presented by the Kroc Institute in April 2019](#).

## **2. Regarding the methodology for monitoring and verifying implementation:**

It is important to reiterate that the Kroc Institute works independently at the request of the signatory parties of the peace agreement. **The Kroc Institute's role is to offer expertise and technical assistance for monitoring and verification of implementation.** This mandate corresponds to the Commission for Monitoring, Promoting and Verifying the Implementation of the Final Agreement (CSIVI) and, on some specific issues, actors such as the UN Mission and the National Reincorporation Council (CNR), among others.

The Kroc Institute developed a specific methodology to monitor the implementation of the Final Agreement by tracking 578 measurable commitments identified in the text of the agreement. The information produced through this monitoring is available through comprehensive reports to the parties of the agreement, civil society, state entities, members of Congress, the private sector, international organizations, academia and Colombian society in general.

**This methodology was widely discussed for more than a year with the government and with representatives of the FARC through the CSIVI Commission.** This dialogue and contributions from both actors enriched the original proposal, and the current methodology incorporates many of their suggestions. Some suggestions were not accepted because they compromised the independence of the Kroc Institute and put us in a position to make judgements about implementation, which surpassed the mandate given by the parties. The methodology we have developed has allowed us to maintain impartiality and show progress made, as well as identify obstacles or challenges in implementation.

The biggest challenge is finding spaces for dialogue where this knowledge can be used to quickly address concerns and warnings so that the implementing parties can make adjustments when necessary to improve the implementation process. **All parties should focus on generating more dialogue and reflection among all actors to analyze implementation and identify possible solutions to ongoing challenges.**

### **3. Regarding the critique of the Kroc Institute’s quantitative and qualitative analysis and methodology:**

Not assigning specific weights to each commitment in the quantitative coding process has been the subject of methodological discussions and critique since the beginning of the implementation process. The Kroc Institute, mandated to provide only technical assistance, is not in a position to decide how each of the 578 commitments in the peace agreement should be prioritized and weighted, since the agreement itself does not provide any systematic information on what aspects are more important than others. We have based quantitative coding strictly on what appears in the text of the agreement. In order to identify priority commitments to give additional weight in coding, one first has to decide *who* should define what is most important in the implementation process. This task of determining which commitments should be prioritized and given more weight in coding should fall to the signatory parties and Colombian civil society, not the Kroc Institute.

The Kroc Institute has established itself as a facilitator for dialogue among various actors, and provides qualitative analysis that complements quantitative coding. This analysis is informed by regular discussions with over 200 actors and experts in Colombia. Sustained dialogue, largely facilitated by our team members deployed in different territories, has enriched our analysis by taking into account different perspectives on implementation and opening spaces for discussion on the importance of the different commitments in the agreement.

The Kroc Institute’s team has analyzed the sequential logic of implementation: what issues are important to ensure a more effective process within the 15-year timeline established by the Framework Plan for Implementation (PMI), and what issues, if not implemented, could cause negative cascading effects. The Kroc Institute will also address these concerns in its forthcoming fourth comprehensive report.

The project presents periodic in-person reports in formal spaces—the CSIVI, for example—as well as in hundreds of meetings that bring together local, national and international stakeholders. These dialogues help generate greater legitimacy, knowledge and awareness about progress and difficulties in the implementation process. Ultimately, the Kroc Institute seeks to provide implementation stakeholders with empirical and unbiased information so they are equipped to make better decisions that contribute to the building of sustainable peace in Colombia.

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