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**Human Rights Council - 56th Regular Session – 18 June-12 July**

**Oral statement of the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) on the report by the UN’s High Commissioner for Human Rights on technical cooperation in Colombia**

Thank you, President.

The ICJ agrees with the High Commissioner that despite some significant efforts, impunity for gross human rights violations and serious international humanitarian law violations arising from the armed conflict persists. The ICJ calls on the government to take decisive steps to implement the Truth Commission's recommendations including by making laws and policies adjustments to strengthen criminal investigation for human rights violations and breaches of IHL.

The ICJ is concerned that unwarranted legal proceedings are being conducted to determine whether the military criminal justice system has jurisdiction to investigate human rights violations allegedly committed by State agents in the context of social protests. International human rights standards are clear that military jurisdiction must be confined to trying the military for military offenses. The ICJ calls on the authorities to ensure that the prosecution of Human Rights violations takes place within the ordinary justice system.

The ICJ condemns the spate of violent human rights abuses against human rights defenders and social leaders since the signing of the Peace Agreement. The ICJ urges national, regional, and local authorities to assess the effectiveness of current preventive and protective measures, and to ensure an enabling environment for the exercise of their fundamental freedoms.

High Commissioner, can you elaborate at greater length on your recommendation regarding promoting a reform of the protection model for human rights defenders?

I thank you.

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