STATEMENT

by the Spokesperson on the announcement of a set of principles for

discussing issues related to victims in negotiations between the Government

of Colombia and the FARC

"The joint declaration issued on 7 June by the Government of Colombia and the FARC on principles for the discussion on victims represents a major step towards an end to this decades-old conflict. By clearly putting victims at the centre of the negotiation and by recognising shared responsibility for the past, both parties demonstrate their commitment to bring about comprehensive responses to the suffering caused by the conflict. We welcome in particular the decision to create an expert commission on the history of the conflict and its victims as well as the commitment to invite a delegation of victims to present their proposals and expectations at the negotiating table. This should help establish the truth in an impartial manner and pave the way for reconciliation, reparations and credible guarantees of non-repetition. We trust that these bold decisions will help accelerate the pace of the negotiation with a view to securing a comprehensive agreement that will open up new prospects and opportunities to the Colombian people. We reiterate the EU's readiness to support Colombia at this critical juncture in this process and in the implementation of the measures that will be agreed in that context. We also welcome the announcement by the FARC of a truce until the end of June. We encourage the FARC to extend this truce indefinitely as a sign of their commitment to end the conflict and pursue their goals by political means."

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