

Administration of Barack Obama, 2016

Statement on the Awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to President Juan Manuel Santos Calderon of Colombia

October 7, 2016

I want to congratulate my friend and partner Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos for being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The Nobel Committee made the right decision in welcoming his tireless efforts to bring a just and lasting peace to Colombia, sending a message that in a world of conflict the pursuit of peace must be supported and encouraged. As Colombia turns away from the longest running war in the Western Hemisphere, this award is a testament to President Santos' unwavering, courageous leadership through years of difficult negotiations. The Colombian people have shown extraordinary resilience over several decades, and they now have a chance to pursue a future defined by the progress that can come from a just and lasting peace.

Going forward, President Santos and the people of Colombia can continue to count on a partner in the United States. The United States was proud to support the negotiations in Havana and to announce a new chapter in our relationship, Peace Colombia, which will continue our bipartisan tradition of support to Colombia by providing a framework to reinforce security gains, reintegrate former combatants into society and extend opportunity and the rule of law.

The democratic vote this week is a reminder that there is still work to be done to realize the future for which President Santos and so many citizens are striving, but it's also a sign that the national dialogue Colombia needs is taking place now and is building on the momentum created by 4 years of difficult negotiations. President Santos and the citizens of Colombia are reshaping their country for the better, and I am pleased the Nobel Committee is recognizing their work as they keep pushing toward peace.

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