The final set of peace accords signed on November 24th of last year includes a provision for the creation of a National Reincorporation Council (CNR, by its Spanish acronym). This Spotlight analyzes the role of the CNR, based on the content of Decree 2027, which gave the CNR legal standing at the end of last year. The Council will be responsible for a significant portion of the processes related to the reincorporation of former FARC-EP guerrillas into social, economic, and political life in Colombia. The figure to the left outlines the way in which Decree 2027 frames the reincorporation process. In summary, reincorporation begins by recognizing that the disarmed guerrillas are individuals with distinct experiences who will embed within larger dynamics in the communities and societies into which they intend to reincorporate, and that the likelihood of a smooth transition may be increased by fostering, broadly stated, productive activities and active democratic participation.

The CNR comprises two representatives from the GOC and two former FARC-EP members who will direct CNR activities at the national level from Bogotá. Their first session occurred at the National University campus in Bogotá on December 20, 2016, which is also the academic institution that will be conducting a socioeconomic census of disarming FARC-EP members in the transitional zones in order to determine their vocational and labor profiles as a part of facilitating their reincorporation. The two government representatives, announced on January 16th, 2017 (Decree 61) are Minister of Education Clara Lopez and General Director of the Colombian Agency for Reintegration, Joshua Mitrotti. Representing the FARC-EP are Arturo Alape (alias) and Jairo Quintero (alias).

The CNR has as its mandate tasks ranging from developing the processes for reincorporating the FARC-EP (including developing differential processes and protections for minors exiting the guerrilla group) to data management related to the aforementioned socioeconomic census to be conducted of the disarming guerrillas in the transitional zones in order to determine their vocational and labor profiles as a part of facilitating their reincorporation. The two government representatives, announced on January 16th, 2017 (Decree 61) are Minister of Education Clara Lopez and General Director of the Colombian Agency for Reintegration, Joshua Mitrotti. Representing the FARC-EP are Arturo Alape (alias) and Jairo Quintero (alias).

The CNR will need to work very closely with ECOMÚN, another organization emerging out of the final accords responsible for vetting and supporting collective socioeconomic reintegration projects for former guerrillas. The Council will also coordinate among departmental assemblies, governors, and the designated FARC-EP spokespersons in the legislative branch on themes of the Peace Pedagogy. Ultimately, the CNR will be required to report back on its work to the Commission for Tracking, Impulse, and Verification of the Implementation of the Final Accord.
The governmental decree marking the creation of the CNR notes that the expenses of the Council will be covered by the Special Program for Peace Fund, a legally independent fund created in 1997 by the office of the Presidency to promote reincorporation of ex-combatants from illegal armed groups. However, the demands placed on the CNR in the final set of peace accords are significant, not only in financial scope, but also in logistical, organizational, and political domains as well.

Due to the wide range of thematic coordination and oversight required of the four CNR members and their subordinated Territorial Reincorporation Councils, it will be likely that many sectors and governmental entities will ultimately be linked in some way CNR processes, not least of which are other organizations (e.g., ECOMÚN) emerging from the accords.

The “how” of managing such broad reaching responsibilities remains unclear, but the Council is permitted to invite collectively agreed-upon governmental, social, and international organizations to support their efforts. It will thus be likely that we observe a significant increase in cross-sector involvement in reincorporating the FARC-EP into their civilian roles in the coming months.