CULTURE TO SHAPE THE INTERNATIONAL IMAGE OF COLOMBIA

A Study of Public Diplomacy Strategies in Colombia's Foreign Policy

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The Hague, January 2019

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INTRODUCTION

International news networks often call the former President of Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018), a peace dove after he was able to successfully negotiate a peace deal between the state and the leftist-guerrilla the FARC in 2016. BBC have even noted the transition from 'hawk to a dove' implying that this leader had not always been as pacific as he had been in the past years (BBC.co.uk, 2018). However, it remains to be seen the degree to which this transition from a violent and corrupt country —as a result of legacies dating back over 50 years and the drug trafficking business that boomed in Colombia—, to a peaceful and modern country has been made. Furthermore, whether these efforts have also been made to improve Colombia's image and reputation internationally. In the context of an ever more globalized world, smaller and emerging powers have to compete on the international arena in order to achieve their foreign policy goals. Scholars have argued that countries no longer compete by pursuing power through hard measures such as military threats and economic sanctions. Rather, there has been an increased importance in the use of soft power measures to achieve foreign policy goals.

One of such measures is public diplomacy. This thesis will conduct an analysis of the public diplomacy strategies used during the administration of the former Colombian president Juan Manuel Santos. This will be done by analysing the foreign policy goals established during this administration and studying the corresponding public diplomacy strategies. This focus is motivated by the limited discussion surrounding emerging powers such as Colombia and their public diplomacy strategies. The main body of literature on public diplomacy covers primarily the pioneers of this subject mainly U.S. and European states. However, in the case of many developing countries, in Latin America and Africa in particular, there is minimal if any discussion on how these states use public diplomacy in their foreign policies. This thesis is aimed at not only providing insight on how a Latin American state uses this tool in its foreign policy strategies, but also, to argue that while Western and developed states are often thought of as the ones who possess greater soft power and public diplomacy strategies, smaller less developed states can also use these tactics to serve their national interests. Therefore, the following research question is raised: *What has been the public diplomacy strategy used by Colombia during the rule of President Juan Manuel Santos?*

This thesis is structured as follows: chapter 1, entitled Public Diplomacy's Theoretical Background, discusses some of the definitions used for public diplomacy; the main disciplines that have written about; and provides two communication frameworks which

will be applied in chapter 3 during the analysis. Chapter 2, The Crippling Legacy of Armed Violence in Colombia, is centred on the decades of violence that has formed the breeding grounds for the formation of guerrillas, drug traffickers, and paramilitary organizations; and on the involvement of the state in these periods of violence. Furthermore, some quantitative data is used to illustrate some of the impact the violence has had on the Colombian society and some of the results of Plan Colombia. Chapter 3, Promoting a New Colombia Abroad, provides an overview of Juan Manuel Santos' political career, the core analysis is based on a combination of national policy and foreign policy goals. In the conclusion of this thesis, the most important findings of the three chapters will be presented and used in order to answer the research question. In addition, some possible avenues for further research in the case of Colombia's public diplomacy strategies are mentioned.

In terms of the method used in this thesis, it consists out of analysing of primary and secondary bibliographic references. The corpus of these references are policy plans and foreign policy strategy documents from the Santos administration.

CHAPTER 1
Public Diplomacy's Theoretical Background

1.1 Introduction

Public diplomacy was a term coined by Edmond Guillon in 1965 (Cull, 19). This term was used during that period to describe the process through which international agents try to achieve foreign policy goals by engaging with foreign publics (Cull, 31). However, since that time, this term has gained more popularity amongst scholars due to its increased use as a strategic foreign policy tool by both scholars and diplomats. In this chapter, some of the definitions of public diplomacy and the new public diplomacy will be discussed. In addition, it will review the scholarly debates surrounding public diplomacy. Finally, this chapter describes Zaharna's communication frameworks to analyse public diplomacy initiatives used in foreign policy strategies.

1.2 Defining Public Diplomacy and the New Public Diplomacy

As mentioned above, public diplomacy is a relatively new concept in the international relations lexicon. However, this concept has taken on a more complex meaning and has shifted away from being the name for propaganda activities used during the Cold War by both the U.S and the former Soviet Union to win hearts and minds for their ideological cause. First, it is important to distinguish public diplomacy from diplomacy. As Jan Melissen puts it, diplomacy is about the relationship between representatives of states or international actors. On the other hand, public diplomacy is about targeting the general public in foreign societies such as non-official groups, organizations and individuals (Melissen, 5). Nancy Snow manages to put this distinction in a simpler manner: while traditional diplomacy is government-to-government relations on one hand, public diplomacy can be considered as governments talking to global publics (Snow, 6). According to Snow, traditional public diplomacy consists out of the following activities: efforts to inform, influence and engage those publics in support of national objectives and foreign policies.

When scholars discuss public diplomacy, they often cite Hans Tuch's definition of public diplomacy which is "a government's process of communicating with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation's ideas and ideals, its institutions and

culture, as well as its national goals and policies" (Tuch, 3). Other early conceptualizations of public diplomacy can be summarized as follows: Public diplomacy describes the efforts of the government of one state to communicate foreign peoples in order to affect their thinking and the thinking of their governments (Gilboa, 57). Fullerton and Kendrick elaborate on the notion of governments trying to influence foreign publics. The public diplomacy tactics governments need to use to achieve influence in foreign publics include: cultural and educational exchanges, foreign aid and development and international broadcasting (Fullerton and Kendrick, 1333). However, Gilboa has argued, these types of definitions have proven to be incomplete and problematic.

Despite the vague nature of public diplomacy, some authors argue for a re-evaluation of this term and its activities in order to reflect the current international relations system where the main players have expanded from governments of states to include NGO's such as large corporations, religious organizations, ideological groupings and even individuals. Three revolutions resulting from the increased level of globalization and interconnectedness of all aspects in the world pose new challenges to public diplomacy. These revolutions happened in mass communication, politics and international relations; they have changed the nature of public diplomacy in the post-9/11 and post-Cold War era according to Gilboa. First, the revolution in communication technologies caused the innovations of the Internet and global news networks, for example CNN International, BBC World and the more recent Al Jazeera. As a result, both the internet and the international broadcasting networks have become the main fountain of information about global affairs. This has also increased the opportunities for everyone – governments, NGO's, companies, and individuals to express and exchange their ideas about world affairs. In addition, it has made foreign audiences more critical about global affairs. Politically, many societies have shifted from autocracies to democracies. This in turn has increased mass participation in political processes. The final revolution that has been considered as the cause of the current challenges that public diplomacy practitioners and scholars face has occurred in international relations. The goals and means of foreign policy have changed, placing the priority on having a favourable image and a favourable reputation around the world. States have been cultivating their image and reputation through attraction and persuasion rather than pursuing the acquisition of territory, access and raw materials through the use of military and economic tactics (Gilboa, 56).

These revolutions have caused information to flow more freely worldwide and have included larger parts of the population in the decision-making process, consequently, states have had to invest their resources to not only broadcast a favourable image to their audiences. They also are required to communicate with them to receive both feedback and to understand what a favourable image would be in order to boost their reputation abroad

and achieve their foreign policy goals. Snow argues that in recent times, public diplomacy has evolved to include how government and private individuals and groups directly and indirectly influence public attitudes and opinions of publics that have direct influence on a different government's foreign policy decisions (Snow, 6). In addition, governments and their respective diplomats need to compete for the attention of their target audience with the communication efforts of NGOs such as corporations, that also impact the perception of the international audience towards their own policies and the policies of governments.

The term 'New Public Diplomacy', has been offered as the adjusted version of public diplomacy that better reflects which is defined as a new form of public diplomacy has that includes multi-directional communications between the government and its audience. Furthermore, there is an increased emphasis on exchange, dialogue and mutuality in new public diplomacy. Cull adds to this notion of new public diplomacy another term. According to this author 'public diplomacy 2.0' is also part of the public diplomacy lexicon and refers to the way online media can be used in public diplomacy strategies. Public diplomacy 2.0 has three key characteristics: (1) the capacity of technology to facilitate relationship building around social networks and online communities; (2) public diplomacy 2.0 relies on user-generated content such as feedback, blog posts, online videos and mashups; (3) there is an underlying sense of technology as being based on "horizontally arranged networks of exchange rather than vertically arranged networks of distribution down which information cascaded in the 1.0 era" (Cull, 125). Cull does not specify whether the so-called 1.0 era refers to public diplomacy or the new public diplomacy, or if he incorporates both terms into one era.

However, as one starts to go through the list of variations on public diplomacy, the problem Gilboa pointed out above becomes clearer. It is as if public diplomacy can be used to refer to all forms of communication from governments to foreign public's communication, to multidirectional communication between governments, NGO's and individuals. At the same time public diplomacy fails to be a complete form of communication on its' own. Despite this issue, scholars continue to analyse foreign policy strategies that employ public diplomacy because of its continued relevance in current debates. Going forward, it can be said that public diplomacy refers to strategies employed by governments, NGO's and private actors to engage with foreign audiences to achieve their policy objectives. The ambiguous nature of public diplomacy has been addressed by different social science disciplines; these will be discussed in section 1.3 below.

1.3 Public Diplomacy's Disciplinary Background

There are four principal disciplines within social sciences that have contributed to formation of the body of literature surrounding public diplomacy. The first disciplinary background comes from international relations theories. According to Gilboa, the increased importance of activities such as communication, education and persuasion as techniques of foreign policy, caused a decreased importance of the use of military force by states to achieve their foreign relations goals. As a result, foreign policy strategies incorporate three main components: Force, Diplomacy and Communication (Gilboa, 60). Out of these three components, he focuses on communication as being a "much more decisive factor" in current foreign policy strategies (Gilboa, 61). When one considers the shift in the field of public diplomacy, this focus on multi-directional communication can be attributed to the impact of the "revolutions" mentioned above in the international landscape. Gilboa sheds the light on Nye's contribution to the field, which is the source of the distinction between hard power, soft power and smart power in international relations theory.

By considering public diplomacy from an international relations theory perspective, Joseph Nye and Nancy Snow link public diplomacy to power. Power has traditionally been defined as the ability to alter the behaviour of others to get what you want (Gilboa, 61). To be specific, public diplomacy is considered as a tool of the term Nye dubbed as "soft power". According to Nye, soft power is the ability to affect another to achieve the results one wants through attraction instead of using other methods such as coercion or payment (Nye, 94). This ability to shape the preferences of others through the power of attraction is related to intangible assets such as attractive personalities, culture, political values and institutions, policies that are seen as legitimate or having moral authority (Nye, 95). However, soft power is more than being able to shape the preferences of others, it is also the ability to entice and attract. Furthermore, according to Nye the resources that produce soft power often come from the values an organization or country has in its culture, the examples it sets by its internal practices and policies and by the way it treats its relations with others (Nye, 95). Following this reasoning, public diplomacy is a tool for governments to use in order to mobilize their soft power assets to communicate with and attract the publics of other countries, rather than merely their governments. In doing so, public diplomacy attempts to attract by focusing the attention of the target audience to the potential resources through a series of activities such as broadcasting, subsidizing cultural exports, arranging exchanges and so forth.

However, if the basis of the country's attraction assets (it's values, culture, policies) are not attractive, public diplomacy strategies that promote and broadcasts these assets might not

produce soft power and could cause the opposite effect on the preferences of the target audience (Nye, 95). On the issue of attractiveness of a country's values, policies, culture, Snow explains that they can measure their soft power advantage based on the following dimensions (Snow, 4):

(1) when culture and ideas match prevailing global norms;
(2) when a nation has greater access to multiple communication channels that can influence how issues are framed in global news media; and
(3) when a country's credibility is enhanced by domestic and international behaviour.

The second discipline that contributes to the public diplomacy discussion according to Gilboa is the field of communication. In this field, the importance is placed on the media and influencing public opinion. On this matter of World Opinion, Wyne argues that with the decrease in broadcasting costs, both governments and NGO's have greater ability to promote messages favourable to their appearance world-wide. On the other hand, the general population around the world has also gained more access to this flow of information. As a result, the international audience is better able to choose and shape news, increasing the number of players in the "court of global public opinion" (Wyne, 40). According to him, world opinion should be considered in foreign policy. While states should not entirely base their foreign policy on foreign opinions, he finds that "it would also be foolish to ignore the impact foreign opinion can have on a country's reputation" (Wyne, 41). Following this motivation, world opinion has the potential to have significant foreign policy consequences that could affect policy areas such as the military, economic policies, and politics. Furthermore, Wyne agrees with Nye that there is an increase in the importance of soft power, and a diminishing importance of the use of military force in foreign policy. He draws attention to what he calls the fourth form of power, namely perceptual power. This form of power, according to Wyne appreciates the influence of world opinion. According to Wyne, perceptions are based on: information, falsehoods, distortions, people's biases and herd behaviour. Perceptual power is the most important power because it is shared among the largest number of actors, it is dynamic and shifts on the basis of daily events and it can crucially impact military policy, economic policy and politics (Wyne, 47). On a similar strain of thought Wang also recognizes the importance of having a positive reputation abroad in order to achieve foreign policy goals. According to Wang, the collective judgements of a country's image and character are used to both explain and predict that country's future behaviour. An indicator of a nation's reputation is the world opinion of the country (Wang, 91).

Another social science field that has chimed in to the discussion on public diplomacy is that of Public Relations. In this area, scholars have emphasized the similarity between public diplomacy and public relations in terms of the activities of image promotion and reputation management (Gilboa, 65). For instance, Signitzer and Coombs have argued that public diplomacy and public relations pursue similar objectives and use similar tools (137). In their feat to see which public relations models can be related to public diplomacy, they discovered that while the two fields pursue similar goals through similar means, the exact concepts and ideas that are transferrable from one area to the next have yet to be fully presented and tested (Signitzer and Coombs, 146). White and Radic also found similarities between public diplomacy and public relations. They argued that public diplomacy is the public relations of a country. By considering public diplomacy as a "strategic dialogic communication and relationship-building process" they have found that they both facilitate information exchange, both help to build positive perceptions and foster good will amongst actors (White and Radic, 459).

The final discipline that has been closely related to public diplomacy is that of branding or as Simon Anholt has called it, "nation branding". Nation branding means applying corporate branding techniques to countries (cfr. org, 2007). This is done in order to create what Anholt calls a competitive identity. Competitive Identity or CI is a model to increase a country's competitiveness in the globalized world (Anholt, 5). Gilboa simplifies this notion by arguing that these branding activities are focused on selling nations and places (Gilboa, 67). He found that there are similarities between public diplomacy and branding, however he also noted their differences. The similarities between public diplomacy and branding are image and symbols management, relationship building, and the use of mass media. The differences according to Gilboa were to be found in the goals and outcomes. In the case of branding, the goals and outcomes were related to increased sales while for public diplomacy the goals and outcomes were related to foreign policy. Additional differences could be found in the means used by the respective fields, the type of communication strategies the type of management, the language and the culture (Gilboa, 68). While Public Relations works in domestic situations and makes use of clichés, public diplomacy cannot be reduced to slogans and images (Gilboa, 68). Melissen also distinguishes public diplomacy from branding and nation branding. The two main differences between the fields according to Melissen are:

> (1) Branding has a higher level of ambition than public diplomacy. While the diplomats recognize and accept the limitations of public diplomacy, because public diplomacy campaigns assume that they are not the decisive factor in determining foreign perceptions. Branding projects employ a more holistic approach (Melissen, 23).

(2) Branding can reflect a country's aspiration and accentuate its identity, but it cannot change social realities. Rather than promoting an identity, public diplomacy seeks to primarily promote smooth international reputations (Melissen, 24).

A critical analyst of foreign policy and diplomacy, Paul Sharp, has raised a valid question in his chapter on public diplomacy "Dumb Public Diplomacy". Namely, while the authors cited above concentrated on the degree to which public diplomacy might be related to the social sciences disciplines, he raised the question about the "public" in public diplomacy. According to Sharp, this notion is also worth discussing when it comes to who are the target audiences in public diplomacy strategies. He raises the question of whether we should select a target audience or public, or if states should include the entire public (Sharp, 267). This goes against previous authors who always based their arguments on the assumption there is a target audience and that countries have pre-determined this factor before deploying their public diplomacy strategy. Therefore, moving forward, while in this thesis the target audience will not be analysed in depth, it will be interesting to see what the choices are from a strategic point and to consider who does and who does not belong the 'public' side of public diplomacy. It would seem that the audience or the public would have to be linked to the policy goals that are meant to be achieved through public diplomacy. However, in this thesis it would be interesting to see whether the strategy that is used targets the entire world population as its public or if there are specific publics in specific countries that are targeted.

1.4 Zaharna's Communication Frameworks to Analyse the Initiatives of Public Diplomacy Strategies

Because of the emphasis placed on the communication aspect of public diplomacy strategies in the literature surrounding public diplomacy, this thesis would like to analyse the strategy in the case study in chapter 3 from this perspective. While authors have argued that little effort has been made to provide a systemic method for analysis of public diplomacy strategies, Zaharna has proposed to use communication models and assumptions in order to conduct such analysis. Zaharna studied the communication assumptions and dynamics underlying how political entities try to communicate with international publics. He noted two perspectives of communication. On one hand, there is the view that communication is a linear process of transferring information with the goal of persuasion control. On the other hand, there is the view of communication as a social process that builds relationships and fosters harmony (Zaharna, 86). He also presents two communication frameworks to categorize and analyse the spectrum of public diplomacy initiatives used in public diplomacy campaigns.

First, there is the information framework, which focuses on designing and dissemination of messages to achieve political objectives. In this framework, information is gathered and used in an effort to promote policies, advance political interests, enhance images, or engage publics to achieve the goals of an individual political sponsor" (Zaharna, 87). The information framework is based on the following features (see Zaharna, 88):

1. Messaging strategies: Determining the message and disseminating the message.
2. Control: Political sponsors are able to determine the goal, message, time frame, channels and target audience. They are also able to control the planning, implementation and the evaluation of the initiative. Political sponsors also try to control the integrity and consistency of the message over different platforms.
3. The interaction between the political sponsor and the public is limited. The public plays a passive role in the message and has no control over the planning and implementation of the message.
4. The use of various communication channels to disseminate information (i.e.: interpersonal communication; audio/visual communication; print and broadcast mass media; electronic media). The most important media in this case are broadcasting and electronic mass media because they are most efficient.
5. Goal-oriented/ Designed to achieve specific objectives: They try to measure the success of an initiative based on the set objectives. This is often done by quantifying information output and audience reach. To measure the impact of the information output, public opinion polls assess changes in the audience's knowledge.

The second framework is the relational framework, which focuses on relationship-building and the creation of social structures to advance political objectives (Zaharna, 86). The initiatives that are used to build relationships in the relational framework are: education and cultural exchange programs, cultural institutes and cultural relations, these are all examples of initiatives that use culture to build relationships (Zaharna, 86). The relational framework assumes that communication favours the notion of "fellowship" in ritual communication, the high-context focus away from messages, and the collectivist/interdependent concern for social cohesion and harmony discussed earlier. As has been noted above, public diplomacy initiatives focus on identifying, building and maintaining smooth international relationships. In the relational framework, relationships are the primordial feature (Zaharna, 91). Relational initiatives try to find commonalities and / or mutual interests between publics and ways to connect those publics through some form of direct interpersonal communication. This framework asks the questions "What relationships are important?" and "How can those relationships be established or strengthened?" (Zaharna, 91). The main features of the relational framework are (See Zaharna, 92):

1. They focus on relationship-building strategies rather than messaging strategies.
2. They pursue coordination instead of control. Sponsors collaborate with their counterparts to design, implement, monitor and define an initiative.
3. The public is an active participant/ stakeholder in relational initiatives because they stress participation over presentation.
4. They focus on creating interactive communication channels and then enhancing or expanding those channels.
5. Relational initiatives focus on continuity and sustainability.

The initiatives in the relational framework are divided among three tiers or levels by Zaharna (See Zaharna 93-96):

- First Tier Relationship-Building Initiatives: Exchange programs and visits. These programs and visits are elementary because they are done over a shorter time frame; they require a lower level of coordination and participation. The main limitation of these initiatives is that they focus on relationship-building at the individual level.
- Second Tier Relationship- Building Initiatives: These activities have a higher level of public participation, longer time frame, more partnership coordination and public diplomacy skillsets than the first tier. Some of the examples of these initiatives are: Establishing Cultural and Language Institutes; Development aid projects; Twinning Arrangements, Relationship-building campaigns; Non-political Networking Schemes.
- Third Tier Relationship-Building Initiatives: Policy Networking Strategy and Coalition Building. This tier or relationship-building initiatives involves policy networking strategies that include coalition building with other countries and non-state actors to achieve policy objectives.

When one considers the theoretical background of public diplomacy and its later strains (new public diplomacy, public diplomacy 2.0 etc.), it would seem that the strategies would resemble mostly the relational framework of communication Zaharna discussed. However, because the case study in the analysis of Chapter three has not had a lot of discussion surrounding public diplomacy strategies, it is worth noting whether in this case can be categorized within one of the communication frameworks or both, or not at all.

CHAPTER 2
The Crippling Legacy of Violence and Armed Conflict in Colombia

2.1 Introduction

Colombia has had a particularly violent past, as some authors have argued since the start of the period known as *La violencia*, The Violence. This history of violence was caused by social, economic, political and territorial fragmentation of Colombia. In turn, this violence has also perpetuated further fragmentation of Colombian society. This chapter focuses on the decades of violence in Colombia's recent history to assess the main actors and developments that have affected the nature of armed conflict in Colombia for over 50 years. In doing so, the aim is to gain better understanding of how the various waves of violence starting from the 20th century until the administration of the former President Alvaro Uribe Velez in 2002-2006 and 2006-2010, affected the nations' economy, politics and society. In addition, this chapter is aimed at noticing the influence the greater international context has had on the ebbs and flows of conflict within Colombia.

2.2 From La Violencia to the Formation of the Frente Nacional

The period of 1948-1965 in Colombia's history is commonly known as *La violencia* (the violence). This period got this name because of the extremely ferocious nature of the killings, maiming and dismembering that took place (Bailey, 562). The conflict was a result of a combination of factors such as ideological and territorial disputes. According to Zackrison, these factors combined during *La violencia* and produced a form of terrorism that was unique in Latin America (5). While there is some dispute over the origin of the conflict, they ascribe the starting point in 1948. The traditional Conservative Party (*Conservadores*), won the election for the presidential office after 16 years of Liberal (*Liberales*) rule. As the Liberals stepped off, the victorious conservatives were met with violence in different parts of the country. It is important to note that in general the Conseradores represented bureaucrats, high level military officers, large land owners and those who would best benefit from maintaining a socio-economic structure that would benefit the wealthy at the cost of the poor. Contrastingly, the Liberales represented business owners, indigenous communities and poor farm workers who sought to change the socio-economic structure and improve their (banrepcultural.org, 2017). The wave of

violence reached a higher level of political radicalization with the murder of the liberal leader Jorge Eliecer Gaitán on April 9th, 1948. Jorge was well known in the Colombian community for his strife against the ruling elite, his investigations of the massacres that took place in the banana plantations of the American company United Fruit Company. Furthermore, he was one of the leaders of the leftist political party Union Nacional de Izquierda Revolucionaria (UNIR) and was highly esteemed by the peoples because he fought for the interests of the poor, in particular of the farmers who were underrepresented at the time (telesur.net, 2018). His murder sparked mass protests that are now known as *El Bogotazo.* This occurrence received the name of Bogotazo because the concentration of the damages and confrontations that occured in Bogota. The strong protests, and the aggressive manner in which the police forces tried to suppress the protests resulted in the death or disappearance of roughly 3.000 people as well as over 140 buildings ruined in cities of Colombia(telesur.net,2018).

During 1950s the violence was most evident amongst people affiliated with the two opposing political parties who constantly attacked each other's properties (¡bastaya!,112). Roughly 200.000 people lost their lives as a result of the bi-partisan conflict during the period of 1948-1966. The majority of the losses took place during 1948-1953, the most intense years when it comes to the level of violence (¡bastaya!, 113). The 'departamentos' — administrative departments or provinces that Colombia has been divided into—, that were the most affected by the violence were: Antiguo Caldas (24,6%), Tolima (17.2%), Antioquia (14,5%), north of Santander (11,6%), Santander (10,7%), Valle del Cauca (7,3%) (¡bastaya!, 115). Furthermore, the rural landowners lost roughly 393.648 plots of land. The territories affected the most were: Valle del Cauca, Tolima, Cundinamarca, Norte de Santander and Antiguo Caldas (¡bastaya!, 115) (see Figure 1). These territories were scattered among different parts of Colombia and represented mainly rural areas. Furthermore, they represent the areas where the liberal, poor farm owner and workers were based. Consequently, it was seen as a betrayal of the state and conservatives against the liberals because they forcibly took land from the poor (ElTiempo.com, 2010).

By 1958, the traditional Conservative and Liberal parties decided to join forces and establish the *Frente Nacional* (National Front). This was an agreement between Alberto Lleras Camargo, Liberal, and Laureano Gómez, Conservative, who were the leaders of the traditional parties in Colombia at the time. They intended to share the office by having the parties take 4 year turns ruling the country for a period of 16 years. In doing so, they wanted to put an end to the bi-partisan conflict (¡bastaya!, 115). The National Front lasted from 1958 until 1974. However, in forming the National Front, the traditional parties managed to exclude groups with differing political ideologies from the democratic process.

Consequently, this period played a major factor in the rise of guerrilla groups who were sympathised with by publics in rural areas that did not see eye to eye with the government.

Figure 1. Political Map of Colombia

Source: nationsonline.org, Klaus. "Map of Colombia - Nations Online Project."
Nationsonline.org. N. p., 2018. Web. 6 Nov. 2018.

Colombia's political system had several defects and the National Front did not improve on them. Politics in Colombia was characterised by clientelism. During the years of the National Front, candidacies and public jobs were handed out to family members of the traditional parties. In addition to these political flaws, structural flaws such as high rates of inequality and poverty particularly in the rural areas of the country further exacerbated the

levels of discontent with the government. Furthermore, the state also lacked the ability to provide proper basic services to Colombians who lived in rural areas (Henderson, 14).

In 1960, President Lleras Camargo proposed a set of agrarian reforms and projects to provide basic services to communities in rural areas. These policies were known as the Law of Agrarian Reform (*Ley de Reforma Agraria*) and the National Rehabilitation Plan (*Plan Nacional de Rehabilitación*) (¡bastaya!, 119). These projects included the re-opening of roads, the provision of medical aid and the construction of schools in rural areas (¡bastaya!, 119). However, these programs were too few and far between precisely in the regions that needed it the most in the aftermath of *La violencia*. According to Offstein, corruption, limited funds and the slow pace of land reforms caused more frustrations in the groups that these reforms were meant to help. In addition, unemployment kept rising, the lack of low - income housing and basic services in urban areas further challenged the government's efforts to successfully bring about reforms and development (Offstein, 103). These factors would form the context within which groups with alternative ideologies began organizing and forming guerrilla-like movements.

Parallel to these developments, Henderson argues that the period of 1965-1975 proved to be a positive decade for Colombia's reputation (12). He noted the closer bilateral ties between Colombia and the United States. To Henderson, the return of what seemed like political peace as well as Colombia's apparent ability to maintain macro-economic management and solid economic growth through the 'La violencia' years made Colombia (Henderson, 12). The United States was interested in Colombia to monitor the development of the guerrilla groups with communist ideologies in the context of the ongoing Cold War. They provided military training to Colombian officers in the U.S. Army School of the Americas in Panama. This training was used by the Colombian army to attack communist settlements in rural areas of the country. An additional outcome of this attack was the displacement of its inhabitants to the mountain parts in the south-eastern region of the country (Henderson,12).

During the late 1960s through mid-1970s there were several indicators that economic conditions would improve for Colombia. The international price of coffee, the main commodity the country exported kept rising steadily and reached an all-time high mid-70s. In addition, local politicians took the steps to start exploiting coal deposits near the Caribbean coast. At the same time contracts were being signed for petroleum and natural gas exploration in eastern Llanos (Henderson, 12). However, by the end of the National Front, in the period of transitional government from 1974 to 1978, the Colombian economy began to slow down (See Figure 2 below). Indeed, in the period of mid to late 70's Colombia's GDP growth rate dropped from 7.7% in 1971 to 2.25% in 1975, after a brief

period of growth, the GDP growth rate dropped again in 1977 to 4.14%. The social conditions reversing again in urban areas and the public discontent became more evident. In this context, the guerrilla-group M-19 was formed. However, was not the first guerrilla that was formed, those will be elaborated upon in section 2.3 below. It is worth noting that were different from the other groups in rural areas because they primarily operated in urbanized zones (¡bastaya!, 131). Paradoxically, while the conditions were worsening in the urban areas, rural life had been improving as a result of the policies implemented under the Andrés Pastrana government (1998-2002). The reforms he introduced, known as the Programa de Desarrollo Rural Integral, DRI. The DRI replaced the land distribution policies with a policy based on productivity and commercialization to strengthen the economy of the most integrated rural regions (¡bastaya!, 132). This in turn opened the agricultural sector up to the international market.

Figure 2. Colombia GDP Growth Rate 1961-2010 (Annual %)
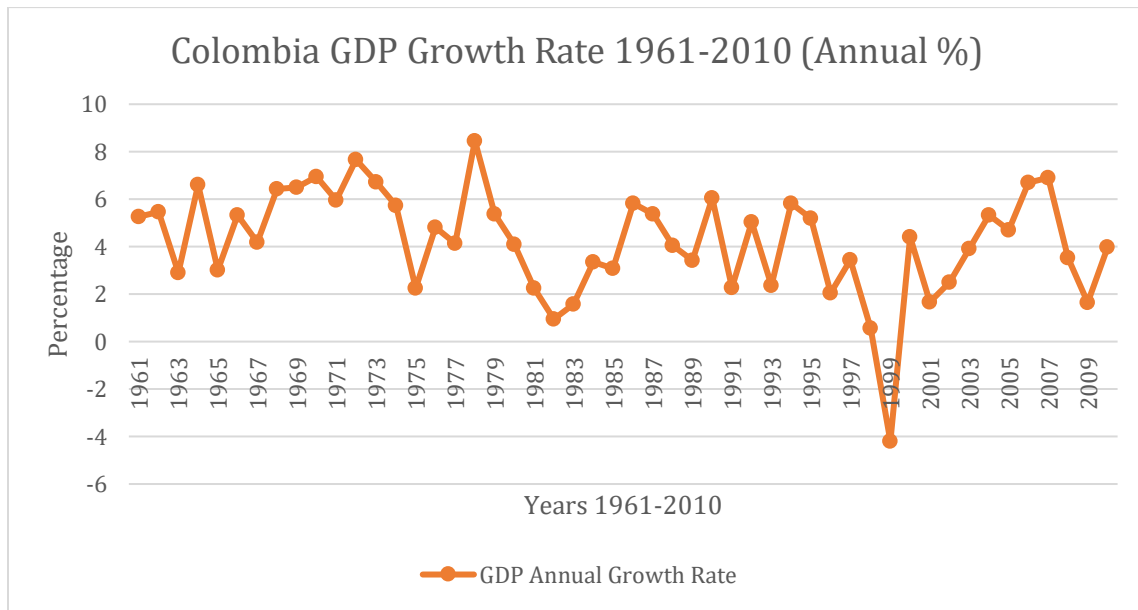
2.3 The Formation of Guerrillas

The guerrilla groups that would later pose a large threat to the state, can find their roots in the results of *La violencia* and the conditions described above during the period of the National Front. During the period of 1950 – 1958, violence became more organized through the formation of self-defence militias and bandit groups. These groups fought because of the

partisan disputes, but they also fought because of family vendettas, local disagreements over land and water rights and the control over coffee crops (Offstein, 102).

Furthermore, During the period of the late 60s to the late 70s, several guerrilla groups continued the strife against the state. These groups represented different political ideologies and were organized among several territories of Colombia. The *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias Colombianas* (Armed Revolutionary Forces of Colombia), commonly known as the FARC would become one of the strongest guerrilla movements. This group formed out of loosely organized groups mentioned above. However, the formal formation of the FARC occurs in 1964 with the appearance of the group in several *departamentos* in Colombia. Their first fronts were established along the Magdalena River, through the North eastern Antioquia and Córdoba and into the frontier area surrounding the Gulf of Urabá (see Figure 1 for visual reference). They selected these regions because they were lightly populated, they did not have a strong government presence and lacked social services. These conditions were used in their favour to convince the locals to support them and the Communist Party's program. Consequently, the FARC gave a voice to the unheard poor living in rural areas (Henderson, 124). This Guerrilla group had strong links with the Colombian Communist Party (*Partido Comunista Colombiano*, the PCC for its acronym) (Offstein, 103). The PCC provided economic support and ideological orientation to this group while the guerrilla carried out actions in the field such as establishing new fronts in rural zones.

Two other guerrillas that find their origins in the period of violence described above are the *Ejército de Liberación Nacional* (National Liberation Army), also known as the ELN; and the *Ejército Popular de Liberación* (Popular Liberation Army), EPL. These guerrillas also drew their recruits from the remaining bandits and organized groups from the period of *La violencia* (Offstein,104). The ELN consisted out of groups involved in *La violencia* as well as politically disenchanted students and recent college graduates in the provinces of Santander. The ELN was ideologically pursuing a Cuban-style revolution in Colombia. This ambition was in contrast to the ideals of the FARC who were influenced by the PCC which were being influenced by the Soviet-Union. The ELN received money and supplies from Cuba which aided in their formation (Offstein, 105). On the other hand, the EPL, which came a bit later after the formation of the ELN and the FARC was formed by a group of Maoist-oriented people (Offstein, 105).

The guerrilla groups seem to operate in different territories in Colombia. The ELN was present in the north-eastern areas of Colombia and the EPL was active in areas north of the FARC (Offstein, 104). At this point in the history of the guerrillas, what they all had in common was that they were fighting to end banditry in rural regions and to improve

agricultural working conditions and wages of the poor (Offstein, 105). Consequently, because the state had not been able to achieve this on its own, these guerrilla groups gained popularity and legitimacy in these rural regions. To fund their strife, these guerrillas would rely on the support of the rural communities as well as their extortion. During the 1960s the guerrillas were subject to national and international changes that weakened their organizations.

The national armed forces began carrying out more effective counter-insurgency measures as a result of Plan Lazo, established in 1962. This plan consisted out of the restructuring of the military forces and giving them new training with a focus on counter-guerrilla tactics. The second part of Plan Lazo was community development, through the use of military resources in public projects and social programs. These community development efforts were aimed at improving the living conditions of the poor living both in rural and urban areas. The result of these programs was the reduction of the amount of people who would be open to be recruited by guerrillas (Offstein, 106). This caused the loss of political momentum which sparked the formation of the guerrillas. By 1975, the presence of guerrilla groups did not cause too many problems for the Colombian government because they had so little numbers, they lived in remote jungle areas (Henderson, 15).

2.4 Paramilitary Self-defence Groups

Paramilitary groups, or self-defence militias were created as a result of the expansion of guerrillas during the late 1970s and the national government's incapacity to properly protect its citizens from the crimes the guerrillas were committing. The Colombians living in rural areas had to suffer extortions and kidnappings of the guerrillas. Therefore, they began arming themselves and organizing themselves to defend their land and their families from the guerrillas. At first, the paramilitary groups had a legal status and they were trained and partially armed by the national military. The first groups were established in Middle Magdalena region, the eastern Antioquia and Córdoba. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the paramilitary groups also aided Colombia's military in dealing with anti-establishment groups. When President Julio César Turbay (1978-1982) sent military forces to destroy marijuana crops in plantations along the northern Caribbean coast in 1978, he depleted the forces needed in the middle Magdalena region. The poorly staffed battalions that remained were not able to effectively carry out counter-insurgency missions against the guerrillas in those regions. As a result, in January 1981, the self defence group of Henry Pérez was formally installed (Henderson, 125).

Between 1996-1997 several paramilitary groups joined forces and formed the *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* (United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia), AUC. The AUC was led by Carlos Castaño Gil. This individual was one of the first in Colombia to create a paramilitary group. Born in Antioquia, his family began organizing themselves into a self-defence group after his father was captured by the FARC and died while in their captive in 1989. As a result, the family created the group called the Peasants and Self-Defence Forces of Córdoba and Uraba (trialinternational.org, 2016). However, as the guerrilla's grew in strength and numbers, so did the paramilitary groups (Henderson, 121). As the guerrillas acted with more impunity, so did the paramilitaries. They kept executing increasingly more violent acts as time passed by. They used threats, selective assassinations and massacres during the Belisario Betancur administration (1982-1986). As time went on, they resorted to the actions of capturing and disappearances of individuals, the collective massacres during the administrations Virgilio Barco Vargas (1986-1990) and César Gaviria Trujillo (1990-1994) (Rivera, 138).

In a way, the state used the paramilitaries to wage a non-conventional war between the leftist guerrillas and the conservative *paramilitares*. In this unconventional war, the target that needed eliminated were not necessarily the guerrillas but the population that formed the social and political base of support for the enemy (Rivera, 139). The military let them do the dirty work. Both the guerrillas and paramilitary groups used illegal drug money to finance their operations and both settled in areas of the country that were strategic for the drug industry. Different paramilitary groups began behaving similar to the guerrillas, targeting areas with low social development and low presence of the state. They provided social programs such as building schools and teaching nationalism and right-wing ideals to the children of these regions. On the other hand, they continued to fight against the guerrillas. President Ernesto Samper (1994-1998) tried to regulate the paramilitary groups by creating Asociaciones Comunitarias de Vigilancia Rural (Convivir). The Convivir was an initiative between the state and paramilitary groups aimed at creating security cooperatives in rural areas in the hopes to gain peace and security in those zones (eltiempo.com,1997). Within these cooperatives it is estimated that 15.000 people were employed in several of the *departamentos* in Colombia (radionacional.co, 2016). They had their legal backing by the Decrees 2535 of 1993 and 356 od 1994. These decrees gave Convivir the function of providing intelligence to the armed forces. However, human rights activists and organizations such as Amnesty international raised their concerns because the Convivir could lead to further legalizations of armed groups in Colombia (eltiempo.com, 1997). When the Convivir were disbanded in 1999, the government did not retrieve their arms and the members of Convivir became employed by wealthy farmers and drug traffickers (Rivera, 139). When they found that the state had become too lenient in the

peace negotiations between the state and the guerrillas in 1999, they focused their efforts to sabotage the peace process.

2.5 Colombia's drug trade with the US and a New Wave of Violence from the Drug Cartels

The drug industry in Colombia was a result of the convergence of several national and international factors. Nationally, as has been described above, the poor socio-economic conditions of particularly the communities in the rural regions made them susceptible to criminal activity in order to survive. The fragmentation of the country's territories also made it difficult for the state to effectively improve the living conditions and stimulate equal development nation-wide. The lightly populated *departamentos* in Eastern Llanos and the Amazonian watershed created perfect hiding spots for criminals. In addition, because the state has historically had difficulties with law enforcement throughout the national territory, those who wished to commit crimes felt confident that their chances of getting caught were slim (Henderson, 16).

The international factor that played a role in the beginning and maintenance of the illegal drug trade in Colombia was the high demands for marijuana in the United States in the 1960s as a result of the period of revolts and protests that were ongoing in the country. American smugglers found two areas which could supply the marijuana demanded in the U.S. First, the foothills of the Santa Marta mountain range; and second, the Gulf of Urabá at Colombia's Caribbean coast (Henderson, 24). For a long time, both the Colombian government and the U.S. government did not realise that they had a growing drug-trafficking industry between them because their attention was set on fighting the guerrilla's. Within this context Colombia became one of the largest suppliers of marijuana to the U.S. When the demand switched from marijuana to cocaine around 1975, the industry became so lucrative for the drug traffickers that this money would be used by the drug Cartels to pay guerrillas such as the FARC to protect their coca crops, to pay off politicians in order to protect their political interests, as well as to fund the fighting amongst themselves.

Both the Medellin Cartel and the Cali Cartel, were the largest and most popular criminal organizations during the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. These cartels shaped a new wave of violence in Colombia. The illegal drug trading cartels waged war against the state in order to avoid the passing of the extradition treaty between Colombia and the U.S. Furthermore, they fought amongst themselves in order to obtain the monopoly over the drug trade with the US. This fight between the two cartels affected the members of the cartel, their families

and even friends of the family. While they did make use of the guerrilla as part of their drug operation, to protect their coca fields in rural areas, they also fought against them through the paramilitary called *Muerte a Secuestradores* (Death to Kidnappers, MAS). MAS was a retaliation against the guerrilla tactics of kidnapping their relatives. Consequently, while the illegal drug trade introduced a new and longer lasting flow of foreign exchange into the country it caused lives of thousands of Colombians. The years of 1980-1990 were some of the years with the highest level of crimes, massacres and terrorist attacks (See figures 3 and 4 below). The drug cartels, the guerrillas and paramilitary groups carried out increasingly violent acts which reached peeks in the period of 1990- 2001. By the time the leaders of the Medellin Cartels were caught by law enforcement and extradited to the US to face charges or dead, smaller cartels and drug traffickers were already there to take over the industry and ensure that it kept growing. Some of the actors who would fill this power void included guerrillas and paramilitary groups.
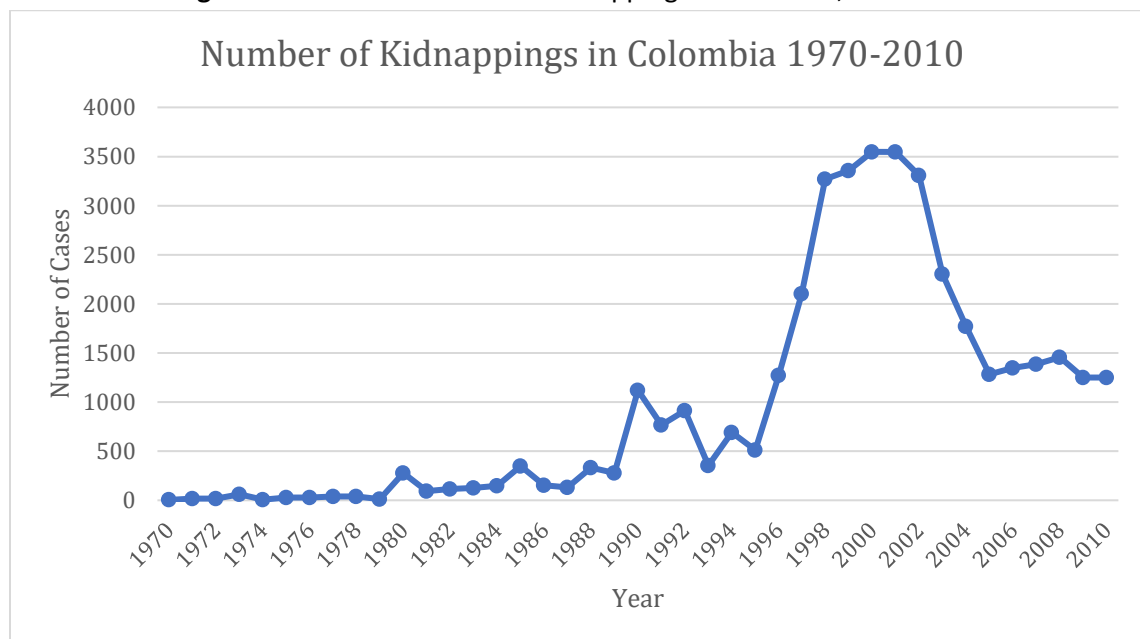
Figure 3. Total Reported Cases of Massacres and Terrorist Attacks in Colombia 1990-2010.
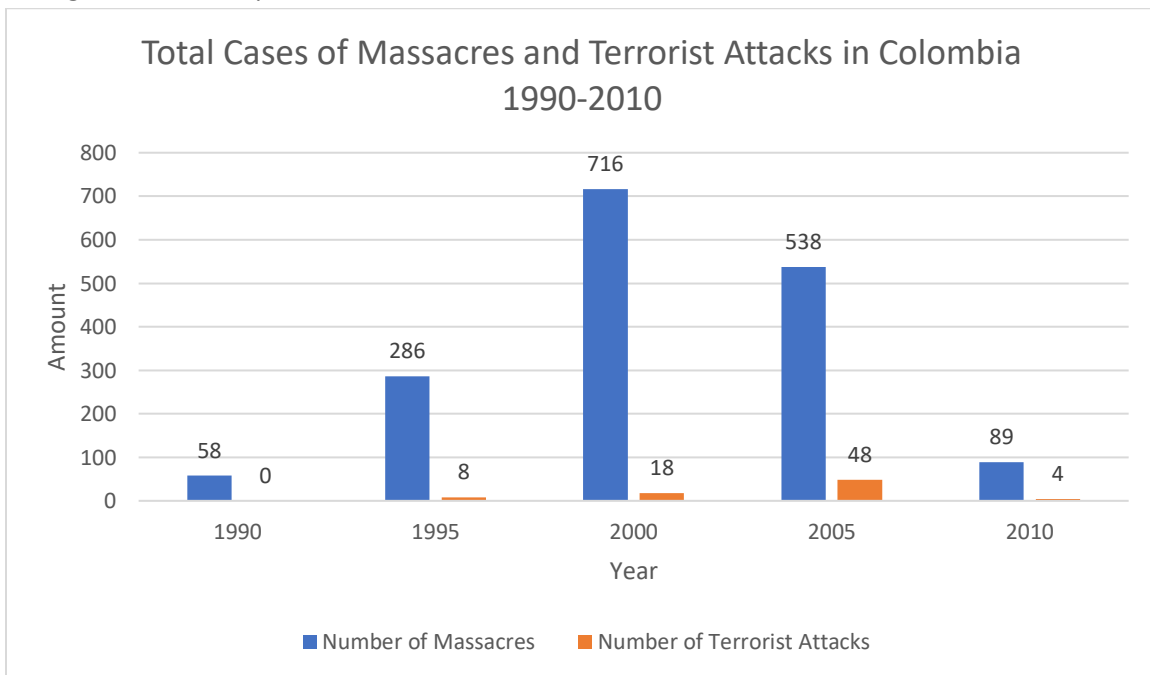
Source: Bases de Datos - ¡¡bastaya! ! Colombia: Memorias de Guerra y Dignidad. N. p., 2018. Web. 6 Nov. 2018.

Figure 4. Recorded Number of Kidnappings in Colombia, 1970-2010.

Number of Kidnappings in Colombia 1970-2010

Source: Bases de Datos - ¡¡bastaya!! Colombia: Memorias de Guerra y Dignidad. N. p., 2018. Web. 6 Nov. 2018.

2.6 Plan Colombia and the Administration of President Álvaro Uribe Vélez

Plan Colombia was announced by the government in 1999. Originally it was a plan that the former president Andres Pastrana created to tackle the means by which the guerrillas could fund their activities against the state, namely the drug trafficking industry. Calling it a Marshall Plan for Colombia, Pastrana sought foreign military aid to carry this plan out in 1998-1999 (npr.org, 2014). By 2000, it received 10 billion US dollars in aid and was set to be carried out in the coming 5 years (Brodzinsky,2016). When Álvaro Uribe Vélez came in the presidential office in 2002, he promised a hard hand approach against the insurgents that kept terrorizing the state. During his acceptance speech he said:

> "The International community should know Colombia has expressed its desire to recover civility, to recover order" (...) "That Colombia does not want the world to just know the bad news about violence, but that the world be notified of our determination to defeat violence" (Forero, nytimes, 2002).

Perhaps this approach was needed after years of failed peace negotiations with the guerrillas, increased violence related to the drug industry and the corrupting nature of this industry. President Uribe sought out to strengthen the existing Plan Colombia by expanding

the size of the army and the national police forces. The main objectives of Plan Colombia were to first reduce the production of illegal drugs, primarily cocaine, by 50% in a period of 6 years. The second objective was to improve security conditions in Colombia by regaining control of the areas in the country that were under the control of illegal and armed groups (Mejía, 51). With regards to fighting drug production, the main tactics used were: Reducing the amount of land used for coca production through the use of areal fumigation of the coca plantations with herbicides; Control the chemicals required to process coca leaves to create the base and cocaine hydrochloride as well as detecting and destroying the laboratories that used it to produce cocaine (Mejía, 52). To decrease the quantity of drugs being trafficked, authorities blocked the routes used by the drug traffickers to move the drugs to consumer countries (Mejía, 52).

With his focus on controlling the rebels in the country he sought to use the resources of Plan Colombia such as the helicopters and equipment to end massacres, prevent the takeover of towns in rural areas and to prevent more kidnappings and the forced displacement of villagers. On the one hand, this hard-line approach towards the guerrilla's raised concerns of the potential of the state to cause further human rights abuses in villages and areas where the fights take place. On the other hand, there were also concerns about whether he would take this hard-line approach toward right-wing paramilitary forces because of their ties with the national military. On the matter of the paramilitaries, Rivera argues, Uribe applied the law of Peace and Justice, virtually legalizing paramilitaries in the sense that he continued to allow them to legalize their illegal earnings and allowing them to do public training exercises (Rivera, 140). Rather than dealing with the paramilitary groups with a firm hand as he had been doing with the guerrillas, President Uribe proposed the decree 2758,52. This decree would allow members of the paramilitary group AUC to avoid jail time for several crimes if they would admit their crimes and make symbolic acts of contrition such as paying fines. In return, the militia members would make peace with the state and hand in their guns (Posnanski, 727). On one hand, this would deactivate the paramilitary and bring an end to the mass violence perpetrated by them. On the other hand, the state would not be condemning the serious human rights abuses committed by these groups. Nevertheless, Uribe managed to disarm roughly 800 militia men that were members of the AUC (Posnanski, 728).

During the Uribe administration Plan Colombia received large amounts of investments by the US. Despite these investments, Mejía argued Plan Colombia delivered mixed results. While the tactics did result in the eradication of large quantities of coca crops (See Table 1 below). In addition to the support from the US, Uribe sought to garner support and multilateral cooperation for Colombia's efforts by defining the drug and guerrilla problems in ways that matched the international anti-drug regime (Borda, 105). The fight against

guerrillas and the drug industry in Colombia during the administration of Uribe has also been influenced by events in the US which caused a shift in their foreign policy towards Colombia. As a repercussion of the terrorist attacks on September 11th 2001, the US changed their securitization strategy and focused on the 'global war against terrorism' rather than the "war on drugs" (Tickner and Cepeda, 146). The shift from the war on drugs to the war on terrorism, in combination with the failed peace talks between the state and the FARC during the Pastrana administration became the justification to consider guerrillas as terrorists. Consequently, the main focus of the U.S. in Colombia became counterinsurgency efforts (Tickner and Cepeda, 146).

Table 1: Harvest Potentials and Efforts to Decrease Coca Production

Year	Potential Harvest of Coca (square hectares)	Eradication of Coca* (square hectares)
1999	122,500	43,246
2000	136,200	47,000
2001	169,800	84,250
2002	144,450	122,695
2003	113,850	132,817
2004	114,100	147,546
2005	144,000	170,060
2006	157,200	213,724
2007	167,000	219,529
2008	119,000	229,228
2009	116,000	165,272
2010	100,000	146,714
*Includes both hand removal and spraying with pesticides.		

Source: International Narcotics Control Strategy Reports. State.gov. N. p., 2018. Web. 6 Nov. 2018.

Despite these efforts, during his two presidential terms Uribe was unable to give the guerrillas their final blow. However, his terms resulted in the increased prosecution of guerrillas, the demobilization of paramilitary groups despite the methods he used caused protests and scandals. Consequently, by the end of the Uribe administration, the nation was seeking a different approach to the guerrilla and drug trafficking problem.

CHAPTER 3
Promoting a New Colombia Abroad

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the aim is analyse public diplomacy in Colombia's foreign policy. This will be done by focusing on both the national and foreign policy objectives set during the administration of President Juan Manuel Santos. During his presidency, it can be argued that Colombia has undergone a series of changes that have led to the decrease in the local violence levels, but also served as a positive light on Colombia as an international player. As can be inferred from the theories discussed in chapter 1, gaining the right attention and maintaining it from the target audience is a key challenge for countries using public diplomacy in their foreign policy strategies. In order to gain insight on the strategy used during the Santos administration, this chapter is structured as follows: First, the research methodology provides the general sources and analysis methods used in this chapter. Second, in the empirical analysis portion, this chapter will focus on three main components, starting with the political rise of President Juan Manuel Santos, by an overview of Colombia's national and foreign policy objectives over the period of 2010-2018. In addition, the various plans to promote Colombia abroad known as *Plan de Promoción de Colombia en el Exterior*, and some examples will be given. Finally, this chapter will refer to Zaharna's communication frameworks described in chapter 1 to determine in which category the strategies used during this administration can be placed.

3.2 Methodology

The evidence used in this chapter has been primarily gathered from policy documents, in particular the National Development Plans of 2010-2014 and of 2014 -2018 which are the development plans and policies that were meant to be implemented during Santos administration. In addition, several of the *Plan de Promoción de Colombia en el Exterior* documents are used to source the main vision, goals, and strategies used as public diplomacy strategy of Colombia. This has been done in order to determine the nature of Colombia's foreign policy as well as the background and political stand point of president Juan Manuel Santos.

3.3 Juan Manuel Santos: Political Background and rise to the Presidential Office

Some might argue that Santos was born to have a political career, considering he was born into a family with great political influence. His great-uncle Eduardo Santos Montejo was Colombia's president from 1938-1942, his cousin Francisco Santos Calderón was the vice president of Colombia during 2002-2010 under the former president Uribe. Furthermore, the Santos family also founded *El Tiempo*, one of Colombia's largest newspapers (brittanica.com,2018). Santos is also highly educated with degrees in economics and business, as well as a master degree in public administration from the University of Harvard (Brittanica.com, 2018). Santos had been working in politics in Colombia since the 1990s, he began as the minister of commerce in 1991-1994 under president César Gaviria (Ortiz de Zárate, 2016). He later became the minister of finance under the conservative president Pastrana during 2000-2002. He also created the Partido de la U (*Partido de la Unidad Nacional*, the National Unity Party) in 2005, taking a step away from the traditional liberal party and forming greater ties with Uribe (Ortiz de Zárate, 2016).

His rise to the presidential office continued when he became the minister of defence under the former president Uribe from 2006 to 2009 (Ortiz de Zárate, 2016). While functioning as the minister of defence of Colombia, Santos gained greater popularity for being hard handed, as was the nature of the Uribe administration against the guerrillas and drug cartels. One of the most well-known successful missions carried out against the FARC during his role as the minister of defence was the liberation of Ingrid Betancourt in July 2008 (Ortiz de Zárate, 2016). Betancourt was a Colombian-French politician who was abducted and held captive by the FARC when she was running for the presidential office in 2002 (Brittanica.com,2018). Using the popularity, he gained by the successes of the missions carried out while he was the defence minister, with the endorsement of the outgoing president Uribe and Santos' own campaigning promise to uphold and even protect the legacy of Uribe, he won both the first and second round of elections in Colombia. The first electoral rounds were won with 47% of the votes in his favour, the second round of votes resulted in 69% of the votes in his favour (Brittanica.com,2018). Santos' presidency lasted two terms from 2010-2014 and 2014-2018, they have arguably caused drastic changes in both the Colombian government and its' international reputation.

3.4 From National to Foreign Policy Priorities in the Eight Year Santos Administration

In Colombia, the national development plan also known as the *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo* (PND), is where presidents and their administration set out their policy goals and strategies for the period of 4 years that they are in office. The national development plan of 2010-2014 for Colombia, named *Prosperidad para Todos* (Prosperity for All), aimed at Colombia becoming a prosperous country for all with more employment, less poverty and more security (PND 2010-2014 Tomo I, 23). The PND 2010-2014 was based on three pillars to achieve democratic prosperity, namely: sustainable economic growth; equality in opportunities so that Colombians have access to the tools they need to forge their own destiny, and consolidating peace in all territories of Colombia. On these pillars the main policy priorities for the period 2010-2014 were:
1. Innovation,
2. Good governance,
3. Increasing the presence and relevance of Colombia on the international market, in multilateral relations and international agenda setting,
4. Environmental sustainability.

From these priorities, the main focus in this case is policy priority number 3. When it concerns Colombia's foreign policy, in Santos first term the administration sought out to increase the international relevance of Colombia on the international market, in general international relations as well as in having a more prominent role in agenda setting in multilateral contexts and international cooperation (PND 2010-2014 Tomo I, 23). To achieve this goal the foreign policy agenda was set around the following strategies (See PND 2010-2014 Tomo II, 672-690):
1. To open Colombia's economy up to the international market.
2. To secure relationships with existing allies (e.g.: in Latin America and the Caribbean, the U.S. and European Union) and establish relationships with new partners (East-Asia) that will help promote integration and development.
3. To diversify the relationship of Colombia and other agents in the multilateral context.
4. To strengthen migration policy and consular services abroad.
5. To strengthen and diversify international cooperation as both a donor and a recipient country.
6. To develop the Colombian maritime and terrestrial border regions.

During the second term of Santos' presidency, the new national development plan, *Plan Nacional de Desarrollo Todos por un Nuevo País* (Everyone for a New Country), had a slight shift in focus, emphasizing the efforts needed to achieve peace, equality and a just society (PND 2014-2018 Tomo I, 23). The main foreign policy objectives for this period were (see PND 2014-2018 Tomo II, 641-644):

1. To diversify the foreign policy agenda to include national development areas (such as education, agriculture, infrastructure, environment, energy and commerce), strengthening bilateral relations and ensuring that previously made agreements are complied with.
2. To consolidate Colombia's presence and positioning in the international, multilateral and regional organizations to promote Colombia's national interests.
3. To strengthen migratory policies and consular services to broaden the attention and integration of Colombian citizens abroad.
4. To stimulate social and economic development and integration of Colombia's frontier regions with its neighbouring countries.
5. To institutionally strengthen the ministry of foreign affairs to achieve transparent and effective management.
6. To consolidate the supply and demand of international cooperation based on the foreign policy objectives and pillars of the national development plan (peace, equality and education) as well as strengthening regional cooperation strategies with Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia-Pacific, Central Asia and Africa.

It is important to note that controlling if all of these national and foreign policies were implemented and the degree to which they were successful, is not the case for this study. However, these policy priorities should be, if soft power and public diplomacy authors are to be consulted, the basis upon which state governments shape their messages and strategies to engage with foreign audiences. Furthermore, based on the foreign policy objectives it can be said that the Santos administration had the ambition to gain greater soft power. By gaining greater international relevance, Colombia would gain access to channels that can later be used to frame international issues to suit their needs. Furthermore, the planned efforts to would have resulted in forging greater credibility of both the domestic and international behaviour of Colombia. In the context of foreign policy in the second term of the Santos administration, the first foreign policy objective was pursued with a two-pronged approach consisting out of:

a) Strengthening bilateral relations with the traditional partners such as the U.S., E.U. as was mentioned above as well as new potential partners by having high level visits, technical missions, and cooperation projects;
b) By promoting Colombia as a contemporary country that is innovative, diverse, inclusive and committed to achieving peaceful cohabitation with all countries with

the *Plan de Promoción de Colombia en el Exterior*, Plan to Promote Colombia Abroad (will be referred to as PPCE in the following sections) (See PND 2014-2018 Tomo II, 642).
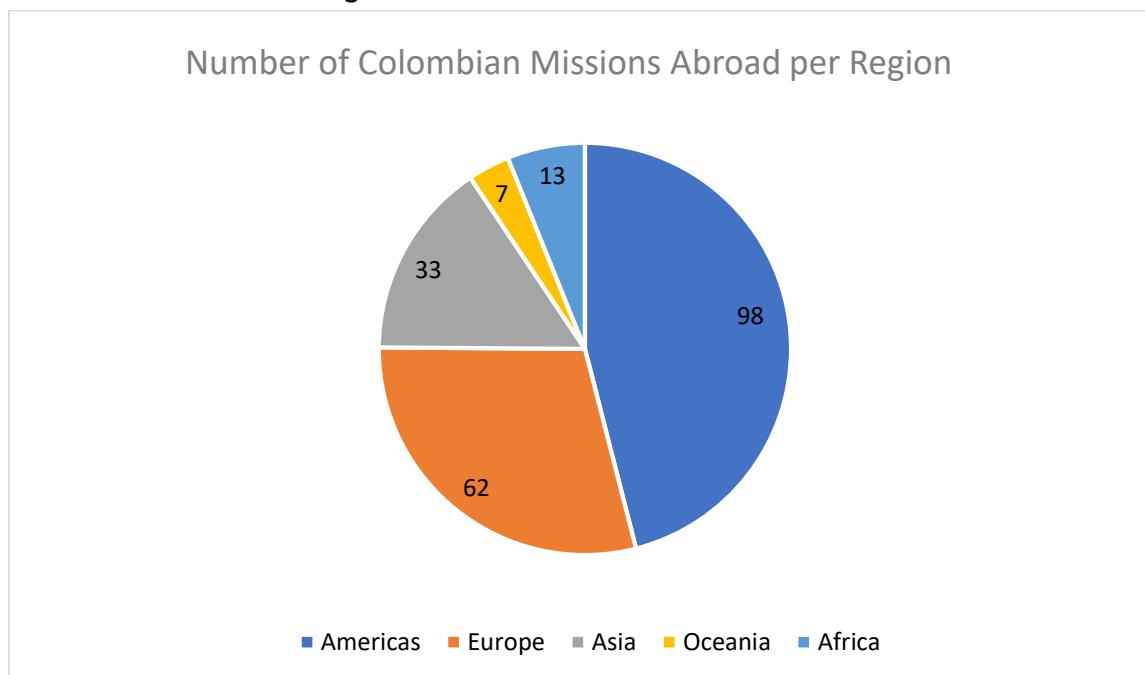
With the second part of this strategy, it is important to note the values and characteristics that were chosen as the things that would be promoted abroad. These values of innovation, inclusion and emphasis on peaceful cohabitation, if they are promoted on the foundation of Colombia's national policies, values and institutions could result in increasing Colombia's soft power. Consequently, these plans to promote Colombia abroad as a part of the foreign policy of Colombia will be delved into further in the following section below.

3.5 Promoting Colombia to Foreign Audiences

The *Plan de Promoción de Colombia en el Exterior* or PPCE, is not an invention of the Santos administration. This plan has been adopted in Colombia's foreign policy strategies since 1983(PPCE Resumen 2015, 3). However, what makes this plan worth discussing is the policy context within which it has been implemented during the Santos administration. This is because of the emphasis that this administration placed on stepping away from the legacy of violence in Colombia, pursuing greater and sustainable development, as well as the ambition to become a relevant and more powerful international actor as can be seen from the policy objectives mentioned above. The PPCE consists out of yearly plans of cultural activities carried out by *Misiones de Colombia en el Exterior* (Colombian Missions Abroad), which is what they call their embassies, consulates and delegations stationed abroad. Currently, these missions are spread across the world, as can be seen in figure 5 below, the majority are stationed in the Americas (Canada, U.S. and Latin American countries). Many of the countries in this region have been allies of Colombia for years. However, they also reached a representation of 33 missions in Asia which has also been on the foreign policy agenda as important relationships to build and maintain (PND 2010-2014 Tomo II, 684).

Figure 5. Distribution of Colombian Missions Abroad

Number of Colombian Missions Abroad per Region

Legend: ■ Americas ■ Europe ■ Asia ■ Oceania ■ Africa

Values shown in chart: 98, 62, 33, 7, 13

Source: Datos.gov.co. N. p., 2018. Web. 4 Dec. 2018.

The events and activities that are carried out under the PPCE are meant to benefit and impact the people in the country that the Colombian Mission Abroad is hosting the event in. Furthermore, these activities primarily target all members of the foreign public ranging from government officials to investors, to students and the general population (PPCE Resumen 2015, 8).

During this administration the PPCE used what they called *Diplomacia Cultural* and *Diplomacia de Deportes* (cultural diplomacy and sports diplomacy) to promote Colombia to the traditional partners and to new prospective partners abroad. As has been noted in chapter 1, one of the challenges in public diplomacy scholarship is the nature of its definition. In her analysis of the U.S.'s diplomatic strategies, Schneider has also come across this issue. Schneider argued that cultural diplomacy is a practice that is an important component of the broader foreign policy tool known as public diplomacy – because cultural diplomacy is exchanging ideas, information, art and different aspects of a country's culture to foreign nations and fostering mutual understanding which ultimately are things that a nation does to explain itself to the rest of the world (Schneider, 147). While in the PPCE plans they do not mention public diplomacy as the greater strategy, the ministry of foreign affairs of Colombia has referred to these activities as public diplomacy in the document *Memorias al Congreso* 2016-2017 (100). Therefore, in the case presented here, cultural

diplomacy activities and sport diplomacy activities carried out in the context of the PPCE are considered as public diplomacy initiatives.

The greater purpose of these activities was to:

> "Strengthen international relations and improve the perception [that] the foreign publics [have of] the image of the country abroad, through various cultural activities that factor the knowledge of the cultural expressions and Colombian diversity" (PPCE Resumen 2015, 7).

This strategy is based on the thought that cultural diplomacy can contribute by creating dialogue opportunities for Colombia with actors of strategic importance for its policy priorities. Furthermore, cultural activities can promote positive images of Colombia, as well as aid in building relationships based on trust, which has been a core value in the relationship building process this administration set out to do. In addition, these cultural activities were seen to be able to promote great social, historical and cultural understanding of Colombia as a country abroad (PPCE Resumen 2013, 10). There are several types of activities that are organized within the framework of the PPCE. These activities involve sports, visual arts, music, academic and literature functions, gastronomy, cinematography, multidisciplinary arts (PPCE Resumen 2013, 6-8). These activities or initiatives serve two functional purposes. First, they provide Colombian delegates and officials with a speaking engagement opportunity, which they can use to promote a positive image of Colombia as well as touch upon policy related issues. Second, each of these activities provide the audience with more insight on Colombia's culture.

While PPCE has been part of the foreign policy of Colombia for years, the Santos administration began emphasizing their efforts in this area around mid.- 2013. This is not to say the PPCE had been inactive until 2013, the Colombian Missions abroad have continuously carried out events and activities based on the PPCE in periods before and during the Santos administration. Furthermore, there are some general trends worth noticing. First, funding for PPCE activities in 2013 were 13.143.000 million Colombian pesos, nearly doubling the one of 2010 which was 6.000.00 million pesos (see table 2 below). Second, while in the second term of Santos presidency the government placed greater emphasis on promoting Colombia abroad with the set of values mentioned above, both the funding and number of activities dropped throughout the years.

Table 2. Number of Countries where PPCE Activities have been held 2010-2017

Year	Number of Countries	Number of Activities Carried out
2010	46	231
2011	54	149
2012	59	185
2013	70	314
2014	54	214
2015	58	199
2016	66	223
2017	65	380

Source: Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores (2013; 2014; 2015; 2016-2017; 2017-2018), Bogotá, 2018. < http://www.cancilleria.gov.co/ministry/strategy/informes>

Next to these trends, it is noteworthy that the activities with the highest numbers throughout the years were Music, Academics and Literature, and Cinematography. For example, in the Academics and Literature initiative, the ELE Focalae[1] program has been an initiative to teach Spanish lessons to delegates of Asian countries. This initiative began as a result of the increasing amounts of Spanish speaking tourists visiting East Asian countries. While this initiative began in 2013, with its main focus being East Asia, by 2017 the program expanded to Asia+, making room for delegates of India, Nepal, Sri Lanka to also participate (apccolombia.gov, 2018). By 2018, this program became East Asia, Central Asia and Africa, resulting in the program encompassing 37 countries with 381 beneficiaries (apccolombia.gov, 2018). The aim of the ELE program is to promote Colombia as a country that offers high quality education, particularly high-quality Spanish courses through the provision of scholarships to students who wish to learn Spanish as a foreign language in Colombia (apccolombia.gov, 2018). For the year 2018, the Colombian government offered 60 scholarships for tourist guides, undergraduate and graduate students to study Spanish in Colombia for 4 months (io.its.ac.id, 2018). During the period that these students stayed in Colombia they also were given the opportunity to learn about Colombia's culture, history, and geography. Consequently, while they gain a new skill in Colombia, they also gain greater understanding of the country and can bring these experiences back with them when they return to their countries.

In the case of musical initiatives, these are mainly concerts held in different countries to familiarize the audiences with typical music of the different regions in Colombia such as

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[1] ELE is the acronym for *Espagnol Langue Étrangère* (Spanish as a Foreign Language), and Focalae is the acronym for the *Foro de Cooperación América Latina-Asia del Este* (The Forum East Asia-Latin America Cooperation).

Vallenato, Joropo and Chimia (PPCE Resumen 2013, 22). An example of this initiative occurred in April of 2015. In this period, 10 young students of the school named Institución Educativa Antonia Santos, also known as 'El Rancho', visited Antalya, Turkey to perform on several stages in the city. In addition, these youths had the opportunity to go on cultural excursions in the city and surrounding areas (PPCE Resumen 2015, 22). However, the key activities that helped to promote Colombia abroad was their opportunities to participate in a nationally transmitted gala by local Turkish television (PPCE Resumen 2015,22). They also visited with local delegates as well as delegates of nearly 40 countries (PPCE Resumen 2015, 23). This example shows that not only was Colombia exporting its culture to different regions, but they also took advantage of situations that could increase the exposure of their culture to both the general public in a country, in this case in Turkey, but also to delegates from around the world. Furthermore, the travel and activities that these youths carried out would also bring them into contact with some cultural aspects of Turkey, expanding their knowledge and understanding of a foreign culture. Consequently, while the intention might be to promote Colombia abroad, those individuals would also be left with an impression of Turkey and bring that back to Colombia with them. However, the greater impact of these small groups going abroad and coming back on the culture of Colombia remains to be seen.

In the case of sports initiatives, one example was the Rugby exchange in March of 2015. A group of 12 young rugby players from Buenaventura and Tierralta travelled to Buenos Aires and Trelew in Argentina. During their program they attended workshops, met with the Argentinian Rugby Union in Buenos Aires as well as gone to visits in the city (PPCE Resumen 2015, 20). Other sports related activities in 2015 were Volley ball excursions in Brazil, Soccer in Germany and Poland, and Baseball in the United States. These exchanges served a similar purpose as the music initiatives in Turkey. Namely, the young athletes that would go abroad would interact with athletes in the country they are visiting and during this interaction both gain a perspective of a foreign culture as well as provide insight on the Colombian culture.

3.6 The Zaharna Frameworks in the Case of Colombia and Additional Observations

Looking at Santos political career gives insight on how he was able to rise through several political ranks in order to gain his presidency. Furthermore, it provides information on which issues were high on the political agenda. In addition, it provides more information regarding the basis of Colombia's soft power. As has been argued in chapter one, a country's soft power is formed by its local policies, values and institutions and culture.

As can be seen from the foreign policy priorities and the PPCE, Colombia's strategy to improve its foreign image has rested on what they call cultural diplomacy and sport diplomacy. From an international relations point of view, it can be said that the soft power resources this public diplomacy carried out by Colombia during 2010-2018 has been based on the notion that Colombia has been moving away from violence and corruption, towards peaceful cohabitation with great cultural experiences to offer abroad. Furthermore, when it comes to the identification of the target audiences, it is clear that based on the strategic importance of both maintaining old relationships and creating new ones, and the general audience identified by the PPCE reports, the audience can be narrowed down to the general public of countries such as: Argentina, Brazil, India, Sri Lanka, Poland, and Turkey to name a few.

The Zaharna communication frameworks can be used to categorize the PPCE efforts, it can be said that the general strategies have included several characteristics and initiatives that pertain to the relational framework. The language in the national development plans and the PPCE reports indicate that the primary objective has been to either maintain, strengthen or establish relationships that are of strategic importance to Colombia's interests. Furthermore, while the core message that is being promoted is that of a friendly and contemporary Colombia which might hint toward the information framework. The PPCE context, which has shown the side of Colombia with great music, sports abilities, and language courses, to name a few of the cultural resources, in the PPCE framework there is a lot of room for the individuals who take part in these exchanges and activities to interact and learn from each other. Collaborating with other countries, as has been done in the ELE Focalae language course provided the context for the participating countries to interact with each other in Colombia for a certain amount of time. The success has also fostered the expansion of this program over the years. When it comes to the sporting initiatives and music initiatives, the exchanges are of shorter time-span, and promotes interactions between the athletes, or between the musicians and state representatives they were able to meet with. Therefore, if the PPCE activities throughout the Santos administration would have to be labelled within a communication framework, based on these characteristics it would be the relational framework. Because of the nature of the initiatives, being short term exchanges and visits it can be said that the activities carried out in the PPCE context during the Santos administration have mainly been focused on the first tier of the relational communication framework. There is still a cause to also consider the second tier of the relational framework because of the nature of the ELE Focalae program which has already expanded twice since its inception in 2013 and has had its 6th round of scholarships during 2018.

However, it still remains to be seen what the long-term impact has been of all of these initiatives, this is a primary characteristic of soft power and public diplomacy itself as has been argued by the scholars surveyed in chapter 1. While short term initiatives such as sending young musicians abroad might be able to be broadcasted to a wider public in a foreign country, there is no direct policy result from these events. Because the greater foreign policy objective the PPCE was used for, opening avenues for interaction and exposing Colombia's culture abroad, it is understandable that there are no direct policy expectations set for these events either. Another area worth exploring is the impact of social media and the manner in which states now have to compete with several nonstate actors to promote themselves abroad. It would also be interesting to see how the PPCE might compare to the strategies of greater powers such as that of Canada or the U.S.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, in this thesis, the primary focus has been on public diplomacy as a strategy in Colombia's foreign policy. As has been elaborated upon in the first chapter, this soft power policy tool lacks a concrete definition, a characteristic that makes it challenging for both scholars and policy makers to identify which activities do and do not belong under this framework. This Nevertheless, from the four contributing disciplines cited above (international relations, communication, branding, and public relations), due to the subject matter of the case study, the analysis has been mainly shaped from an international relation – soft power perspective. Furthermore, this thesis has taken the two communication frameworks under which Zaharna has argued that public diplomacy strategies can be categorized: information framework and the relational framework as one of the points to analyse when it concerns Colombia's public diplomacy strategy during the 8-year term of former President Santos. Before delving into this analysis, it was important to take note of the greater historical, social and political context of Colombia. This task was done in Chapter two, where several trends are noteworthy. First of all, the over 50 yearlong reality of violence in Colombia has been caused by several political, social, and geographic fragmentation. Furthermore, as several waves of violence rose and fell during the decades, different actors such as the cartels, the guerrillas, paramilitary groups, and national military forces contributed to complicating the nature of the violence further. From an international relations perspective, both in the early years of what has been called *La violencia* until the recent mixed results of the Plan Colombia, it can be said that in particular the U.S. and the world market had great influence on the nature of the events that took place.

This also indicates the nature of the position of Colombia within the greater international arena. Both the Colombian state and the violent non-state actors (guerrillas, drug traffickers and cartels, and paramilitary groups) relied on foreign support. This support often depended on factors that the country had no influence on at the time. Cases such as the trends in the U.S. that sparked the demand for both marijuana and later cocaine; and cases where greater powers supported small in order to by proxy spread their ideology around the world.While the situation in Colombia did cause for people to call for change, it remains to be seen whether the guerrillas such as the FARC could have financially maintained their efforts without the support of foreign agents in the early stages of their inception; and without the illegal drug market in later years. However, the state also relied on the help of foreign agents, particularly the U.S. for military aid and financial aid to help resolve the various crisis resulting from. Consequently, up until recent years, Colombia was not in a powerful position on the international arena.

After some economic growth in recent years, and the hard-handed approach of the government against the illicit drug trade and the guerrillas, Colombia has slowly gained more power internationally. However, it was still in need of various reforms and to improve its international reputation. These needs were identified by the state during the Santos administration. The ambition to become a more prominent international actor was written out in goals such as increasing the country's economic integration with the world market, gaining greater agenda setting positions, and promoting Colombia abroad as an innovative, contemporary country seeking peaceful cohabitation. Furthermore, to achieve this goal, the Foreign Affairs Ministry engaged the efforts of the embassies, consulates and delegates abroad to organize cultural and sport's related activities under the framework of the PPCE. These initiatives were the focus of the analysis in chapter three. The issue of defining public diplomacy returned in this chapter. However, it has been argued that both cultural diplomacy and sports diplomacy can be considered as part of public diplomacy.

Based on the nature of the initiatives carried out in the PPCE framework - the examples used were the ELE Focalae program; Music initiatives such as the one that took place in Turky, and sporting activities in various parts of the world, it has been argued that the activities carried out during the Santos administration fall mainly under the relational communication framework presented by Zaharna. While the activities at this stage can mainly be considered as the first tier of the relational framework, there seems to be potential for educational initiatives such as ELE Focalae to be part of the second tier of the relational framework.

To answer the question raised in this thesis, while the PPCE was not an invention of the Santos administration, during the past 8 years Colombia has primarily used its vast culture and sports to show a more positive and friendly face to the world. Furthermore, the overall public diplomacy strategy consisted out first identifying target audiences: both traditional partners of Colombia and new potential partners that could benefit Colombia's national interests. Then, the Colombian government organized high-level visits and mobilized its Colombian missions abroad to create opportunities to showcase what Colombia has to offer culturally in the hopes of leaving behind a positive impression in the audiences where these activities were carried out. In addition, these initiatives opened up the platforms for delegates to discuss policy issues as well as to start building new relationships abroad. This in turn was meant to start building part the foundations upon which Colombia can continue to increase its international relevance and power.

However, as has been noted in chapter 3, these initiatives were opportunities to engage with foreign audiences. This results in both the Colombians who were sent out to carry out

these activities being left with an impression of the country they were in, as well as the audience of the country on the receiving end being left with an impression of Colombia's culture. This exchange has yet to be fully analysed. Another area that requires further exploration is the interaction between the efforts of the Colombian government to promote Colombia abroad, with the various other agents in the international arena.

The public diplomacy strategy described in this case has relied on the vision that the Santos administration wanted to promote abroad. With the new government in place, it remains to be seen whether this same image will be used, or if they will promote other aspects of Colombia abroad. Public diplomacy, as mentioned in chapter 1, is able to provide a change in international perception of a country on the long-term. In the case that a new administration changes the message and methods used to promote Colombia abroad, then this might lengthen the time it takes for this country to distance itself from the darker aspects of its reputation. Furthermore, the film industry in Hollywood, has been continuously publishing films that depict the stories of Colombian cartels, their leaders and how they were caught by foreign officials. This has been an additional reminder of Colombia's not so distant past. In these films the protagonists are often U.S operatives. These films offer up a continual reminder of violence and corruption in Colombia to the world audience. The way in which Colombia is depicted in these media also challenge the more positive narrative that the strategies used with the PPCE try to promote of the country abroad. These factors pose challenges to the impact Colombia's PPCE can have on the perception of the world to the country's image.

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