

### 4.8.1 Colombia

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The Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia (MAPP), undertaken by the Organization of American States (OAS), continued to operate during 2008, but its previous successes showed signs of their fragility during the year.

First deployed in 2004, MAPP is mandated to verify and monitor demobilization of the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC), a right-wing rebel group, as well as to provide support to communities who are victims of violence. Following a critical assessment of MAPP's performance by the OAS in late 2005, and growing criticism from Colombian nongovernmental organizations that MAPP lacked the resources to go beyond basic demobilization verification, the mission received enhanced funding, allowing it to grow from forty-four civilian staff in 2005 to eighty-three by the end of 2006. The enhanced mission

strength yielded a heightened MAPP presence and activity in the field. Since 2004, MAPP has assisted in disarming over 30,000 paramilitaries.

Despite this progress, OAS Secretary-General José Miguel Insulza warned in 2008 that several underlying challenges regarding reintegration of demobilized rebels threatened MAPP's achievements as it entered the complex postdemobilization phase of its deployment. Indeed, during the year, MAPP observed the increasing phenomenon of paramilitary "recycling"—the emergence of criminal groups composed of dismantled AUC forces. These illegal units are connected to drug-trafficking activities, which continue to have a negative impact on communities via murders and acts of intimidation. MAPP observed the presence of twenty-two of these groups in the country throughout 2008. Demobilized

individuals find themselves disaffected from large portions of Colombia's society, and find it difficult to secure employment.

Recognizing the necessity for heightened attention to reintegration of demobilized rebels, MAPP worked closely in 2008 with Colombia's Department for Reintegration. But one year since its inception, the department has yet to publish a policy on the reintegration process, an issue that MAPP officials see as cause for concern. From MAPP's perspective, Colombia's reintegration model needs to be adjusted from focusing solely on the individual, to involving communities as active subjects in the peacebuilding process. Bearing this in mind, it is clear that the more difficult task of completing the reintegration portion of the process will require the concentrated attention of MAPP and the Colombian government for some time to come.