

Document #2019504

USDOS – US Department of State

Country Report on Terrorism 2018 - Chapter 5 - National Liberation Army

Aka ELN; Ejército de Liberación Nacional.

Description: The National Liberation Army (ELN) was designated as a FTO on October 8, 1997. The ELN is a Colombian Marxist-Leninist group formed in 1964. The ELN remains focused on attacking the security services and economic infrastructure – in particular oil and gas pipelines and electricity pylons – and on extorting foreign and local companies.

Activities: In 2016, the ELN continued to target Colombia's infrastructure, particularly oil pipelines. The ELN also launched mortars at police stations and the military, placed explosive devices near roads, and engaged in sniper attacks, roadblocks, and ambushes.

In addition, the ELN continued to kidnap civilians and members of the security services.

Throughout 2017, the Government of Colombia and the ELN conducted peace talks but did not ultimately reach an agreement. Peace talks were intermittent throughout 2018 after being suspended in January following a series of bombings that killed several police officers and injured dozens more. The government indefinitely suspended talks in August 2018.

Strength: The group consists of about 1,500 combatants and an unknown number of supporters.

Location/Area of Operation: The group is based in the rural and mountainous areas of northern, northeastern, and southwestern Colombia, and the border regions with Venezuela.

Funding and External Aid: The ELN draws its funding from the illicit narcotics trade, extortion of oil and gas companies, and illegal mining. Additional funds are derived from kidnapping-for-ransom payments.

ecoi.net summary:

Brief description of National Liberation Army (Excerpt of chapter 5 of the country report on terrorism 2018)



Country:

Colombia

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