



# GLOBAL UNION OF SCIENTISTS FOR PEACE

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Dear GUSP leaders,

Greetings, and Happy New Year! I am greatly looking forward to working with all of you in this coming year to prevent conflict wherever possible and further the cause of peace—a noble goal shared by virtually every citizen of our planet during this Holiday Season.

As you may have heard, the Nobel Peace Prize for 2016 has just been awarded to Juan Manuel Santos, the President of Colombia, who has brought an end to 50 years of civil war between the Colombian government and the FARC guerillas—one of the longest wars in modern history. In his Nobel Prize acceptance speech, he describes his joy at forging a successful peace agreement following many challenges:

With this agreement, we can say that the American continent—from Alaska to Patagonia—is a land in peace. And we can now ask the bold question: if war can come to an end in one hemisphere, why not one day in both hemispheres? Perhaps more than ever before, we can now dare to imagine a world without war. The impossible is becoming possible.

**What you may not know**, however, is that President Juan Manuel Santos is himself a committed practitioner of Transcendental Meditation and a vocal advocate for its benefits—individual and collective. Indeed, during his time in office, President Santos has presided over an extraordinary expansion of individual and group practice of TM (and its advanced techniques) throughout the nation.

He has been aided in these efforts by two remarkable individuals. Father Gabriel Mejia, a Catholic priest, has brought the TM program to tens of thousands of orphaned children from the streets of Colombia through his *Fundacion Hogares Claret*, which runs dozens of orphanages and rescues children from lives of poverty, prostitution, and drug abuse (see [www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZOSCL0cdRU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZOSCL0cdRU)). And Dr. Luis Alvarez, chief administrator of the Transcendental Meditation organization for Latin America, has brought this GUSP-supported brain-based practice to hundreds of thousands of people in Colombia and neighboring countries, who gather together in groups to defuse societal stress and create a powerful regional influence of peace and harmony.

The end of Colombia's seemingly intractable civil war is thus a natural consequence of an *actual physical and physiological influence* of peace generated by large meditating groups in the region—supporting the diplomatic and other efforts by visionary leaders, such as President Santos, to bring peace to society. As President Santos said in his acceptance speech,

In the end, we are one people and one race; of every color, of every belief, of every preference. The name of this one people is the world. The name of this one race is humanity. If we truly understand this, if we make it part of our individual and collective awareness, then we will cut the very root of conflicts and wars.

This unity of humanity can be, must be, a living reality in the minds and hearts of every individual. This is a natural consequence of expanded awareness and a nervous system free of stress. And it is on that foundation that the noble and valiant efforts for peace by the well-wishers of humanity will truly blossom.

I wish you all a joyous Holiday and a successful and fulfilling New Year.



John Hagelin, Ph.D.