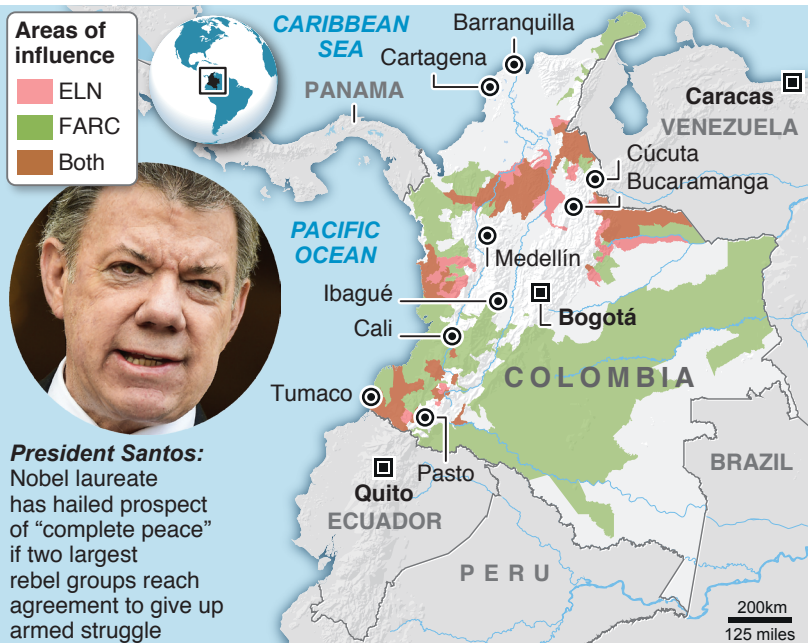


# Colombia to start peace talks with ELN rebels

Colombia's government and the country's second largest rebel group are to start formal peace talks in a boost for President Juan Manuel Santos after the rejection of his deal with the larger FARC guerrilla group



## National Liberation Army (ELN)

- **Leader:** *Nicolás Rodríguez Bautista*, alias *Gabino*
- **Strength:** Around 2,000 fighters
- **1964:** Founded by radical Catholic priests inspired by Cuban revolution
- **Mid-1990s:** Reaches height of power with army of around 4,000 carrying out hundreds of kidnappings and attacking oil infrastructure
- **2002-10:** Greatly weakened by U.S.-backed military offensive
- **Oct 27, 2016:** Formal peace talks to begin in Ecuador



## Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC)

- **Leader:** *Timoleón Jiménez*, alias *Timochenko*
- **Strength:** Around 7,000 fighters
- **1964:** Founded as armed wing of Communist Party
- **2002:** Controls vast parts of country with some 20,000 fighters
- **2008/11:** Suffers bitter defeats with killing of two rebel leaders in two separate bombing raids
- **Oct 2, 2016:** Peace accord with government rejected by 50.2% of voters in referendum