

3.1.6. Autodefensas Conquistadoras de la Sierra Nevada (ACSN)

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The ACSN, also known as Los Pachenca,269 emerged in 2005-2006 after the demobilisation of the AUC and settled in Magdalena and La Guajira departments, operating mostly around the mountainous areas of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta.270 It is estimated to have between 500 271 to 1 100 combatants and they are currently present in between 14 and 19 municipalities in the departments of Cesar, Atlántico, Magdalena and La Guajira.272 ACSN is composed of seven structures as follows:

La Guajira: Front Renacer;

Magdalena: Front Metro, Caribe Resistance Bloc, Front Cóndor de la Sierra, Urban Front Cacique, Front Bananero, and Los Rojas.273

The ACSN reportedly engages in armed confrontations with the EGC to dispute drug trafficking corridors; often civilians are caught in the crossfire leading to displacement and killings.274 The ACSN also engages in extortion, killings-by-hire, threats, and the recruitment of children to collect extortions and sell drugs locally.275

According to Pares, between January 2023 and May 2025, the ACSN was involved in 415 armed actions, including indiscriminate killings, restrictions to the freedom of movement, forced recruitment, and gender-based violence.276 In areas where they operate, the ACSN has reportedly restricted the celebration of cultural activities in indigenous and Afro-descendant communities, and they have infiltrated universities and unions, turning them into territories to be disputed and forcing changes to curriculums and institutional objectives to benefit criminal interests.277

Negotiations between the government and the ACSN initiated in 2023 and are ongoing, but without significant advances.278 Although the first steps of negotiations were supportive, with the ACSN announcing a ceasefire of military operations in August 2024, months later, in April 2025, the ACSN suspended negotiations after a regional operation of the Colombian army.279

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La Silla Vacía, ‘Paz Total: Autodefensas Conquistadoras de la Sierra anuncian cese al fuego’, 13 August 2024, url

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  EL PAIS, The expansion of the Conquering Self-Defense Forces of the Sierra Nevada sets off alarms, 13 November 2025, url

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  Pares, La paz ¿Cómo vamos?, 18 June 2025, url, p. 120

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  Pares, La paz ¿Cómo vamos?, 18 June 2025, url, p. 122

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  Pares, La paz ¿Cómo vamos?, 18 June 2025, url, p. 122

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  Pares, La paz ¿Cómo vamos?, 18 June 2025, url, p. 115

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  La Silla Vacía, ‘Paz Total : Autodefensas Conquistadoras de la Sierra anuncian cese al fuego’, 13/08/2024, url; El País, ‘Las Autodefensas Conquistadoras de la Sierra Nevada suspenden los diálogos de paz con el Gobierno’, 05/04/2025, url

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