



2.1.5. FARC Dissidents

FARC dissident factions that rejected the 2016 peace agreement^{[492](#)} have continued operating from former FARC strongholds inside Venezuela, using Venezuelan territory to evade Colombian security forces and remain active in illicit economies such as drug trafficking, illegal mining,^{[493](#)} and extortion.^{[494](#)} Segunda Marquetalia maintains its base of operations in Apure state; the Acacio Medina Front, which is allied to Segunda Marquetalia, operates along the Orinoco River and in Amazonas state; the 33rd Front, which is part of the General Staff of Blocks and Front (EMBF, Estado Mayor de Bloques y Frentes), is active in Catatumbo on the Colombian side and in Zulia state; and the Estado Mayor Central (EMC) also maintains a presence in Apure.^{[495](#)}

However, sustained military operations by Venezuelan state security forces since 2021, combined with the territorial expansion of the ELN,^{[496](#)} have weakened these dissident structures.^{[497](#)} Several top commanders were killed, prompting many fronts to withdraw or significantly reduce their presence in Venezuela.^{[498](#)} In August 2025, the ELN ambushed and killed a commander of Segunda Marquetalia on the Venezuelan side of the border,^{[499](#)} further diminishing the group's influence in Apure and Amazonas.^{[500](#)} Segunda Marquetalia has nonetheless expanded its presence in Amazonas by recruiting local residents and tightening territorial control through extortion, including demanding gold from miners and pressuring Indigenous communities to grant access to their lands.^{[501](#)} In Amazonas, the group has long cooperated with the ELN, establishing non-aggression pacts, dividing territory and mining sites, and jointly overseeing operations.^{[502](#)} Both organisations impose strict control, extort miners and businesses, and enforce harsh forms of justice, including summary executions.^{[503](#)} In Amazonas, dissident commander Jhon 40 was reportedly permitted to operate a mine and sold gold to state forces at a fixed price below market value.^{[504](#)}

Although FARC dissident groups vowed to 'resist' following the US capture of Maduro, members reportedly began retreating toward the border region as a precautionary response to the shifting political and security environment.^{[505](#)}

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In 2016, the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP, Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo) signed a Peace Agreement that ended an armed conflict that was present since 1964. At least 260,000 people died and over seven million were displaced. BBC, "Se acabó la guerra": después de más de 50 años de conflicto entra en vigencia el cese de fuego definitivo entre el gobierno de Colombia y las FARC, 29 August 2016, [url](#)

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InSight Crime, FARC Dissidents in Venezuela, 26 January 2026, [url](#); International Crisis Group, A Curse of Gold: Mining and Violence in Venezuela's South, 29 July 2025, [url](#), p. 4

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Transparencia Venezuela, The faces of extortion in Venezuela 2024, 2025, [url](#), p. 17

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InSight Crime, FARC Dissidents in Venezuela, 26 January 2026, [url](#)

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The conflict between the ELN and the FARC-EP is longstanding, dating back to their formation in the 1960s. While the FARC-EP originated as a peasant-based insurgency, the ELN emerged as a more ideologically driven movement composed largely of students and union leaders. Structurally, the FARC-EP operated as a hierarchical organisation, whereas the ELN has historically functioned as a more federalised network. These ideological and organisational differences contributed to recurring clashes between the two groups—tensions that persisted even after the FARC-EP's demobilisation, continuing with the rise of FARC dissident factions. BBC, 3 claves para entender la larga rivalidad entre las FARC y el ELN (y cómo ahora llena de violencia la frontera entre Colombia y Venezuela), 4 January 2022, [url](#); SWI swissinfo.ch, El ELN y las FARC, dos caras de la lucha guerrillera en Colombia, 26 October 2016, [url](#)

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InSight Crime, FARC Dissidents in Venezuela, 26 January 2026, [url](#); La FM, De negociador de paz a ordenar el magnicidio de Miguel Uribe: este es el perfil del abatido 'Zarco Aldinever', mano derecha de Iván Márquez, 22 March 2026, [url](#)

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International Crisis Group, A Curse of Gold: Mining and Violence in Venezuela's South, 29 July 2025, [url](#), p. 16

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InSight Crime, Will Colombian Guerrillas Lose Their Safe Haven in Post-Maduro Venezuela?, 22 January 2026, [url](#)