

THE ECONOMIC CLUB

O F W A S H I N G T O N, D. C.

**Excerpts from the Signature Event featuring His Excellency Juan
Manuel Santos Calderón, President of the Republic of Colombia**

May 18, 2017

“Mak[ing] peace is much, much more difficult than making war. Making war is relatively easy, because leadership during war is very straightforward. The other guys are the enemies, rallying the forces around you. And if you win, you become very popular. But making peace means you have to change the perceptions: the attitudes of people, people who have suffered have to forgive or at least [*reconcile*]. And that takes a lot of effort.”

“This is the first agreement (*the peace agreement with FARQ*) that puts the victims at the center of the solution. This has made this agreement very unique and very comprehensive. There are many of the analysts around the world that have studied different peace agreements the last decade, say this is the most comprehensive and most complete agreement signed so far.” ~ *His Excellency Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, President, Republic of Colombia, May, 18, 2017*

“Right now, because of the peace agreement, you have this unique opportunity to reduce the production of drugs out of Colombia and become not the first, hopefully a very minor exporter of coca in the world markets.” ~ *His Excellency Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, President, Republic of Colombia, May, 18, 2017*

“. . . we are the most important strategic ally that the U.S. has in Latin America. . . . we have been together for many, many years. We fought together in the Korean War. We are working together to help Central America fight organized crime. We did together the – what I think – the most successful bipartisan foreign policy initiative that the U.S. has launched in the recent past. Colombia was on the verge of being a failed state in the early – in the beginning of the century, only 16, 17 years ago. Today it’s a flourishing country, one of the top performers of Latin America. That is thanks to Plan Colombia, in big part. So we are good partners. We share the same values, the same principles.” ~ *His Excellency Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, President, Republic of Colombia, May, 18, 2017*

“. . . the strategic interests of the U.S. are much more in Latin America, south of the Rio Grande, than many parts of the world that you are so interested in. And I believe that. And if you look south, if you take into account more what Latin America represents – we’re not the backyard; we’re the front yard of the U.S. – we will be much better off.” ~ *His Excellency Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, President, Republic of Colombia, May, 18, 2017*

“We are making a revolution in our infrastructure. And you can invest part of your portfolio in infrastructure. Tourism. If there is a potential in Colombia, it’s tourism. And in every country that has any tourism potential that has an armed conflict, what has grown the most after the conflict ends is tourism. And we have a tremendous variety of tourist attractions. Something that is getting very popular, many of the U.S. companies are investing there, health – health services. We have a tremendous opportunity in the agribusiness. I say that because of the conflict half of the country that was not exploited. With the peace process, you now have half the country to do what you did in the West in the 19th century, you know? . . . develop. And there is a tremendous opportunity there in agribusiness.” ~ *His Excellency Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, President, Republic of Colombia, May, 18, 2017*

