

1. What happened in Granada, Antioquia?

Granada is a municipality in eastern Antioquia that suffered one of the most painful episodes of the Colombian armed conflict, the most well-known destruction of the urban area occurred on December 6 and 7, 2000.

National Center for Historical Memory+1

The main facts.

- Since the 1980s, the FARC and the ELN have increased their presence in the area. Granada's strategic location, near the Medellín-Bogotá highway and hydroelectric power plants, has turned the municipality into a territory disputed by different armed actors.
- November 3, 2000: Paramilitaries from the Metro Bloc entered the town and perpetrated a massacre that left 19 people dead, according to the National Center for Historical Memory.
- 6 and 7 December 2000: The FARC carried out an armed takeover that lasted about 18 hours. A car bomb carrying approximately 400 kilos of explosives destroyed part of the urban centre. Civilians and police were killed, and many homes and shops were destroyed or damaged.

2. Photographs of the destruction of the village

These historical images allow us to measure what the population experienced.



Granada, Antioquia. 2000

The center of the municipality after the guerrilla takeover

Historical photograph of the destruction that occurred in December 2000. You can consult the report of El Colombiano: [This is how Granada was left during the guerrilla takeover]





homes and businesses affected

The material damage forced the reconstruction of entire sectors of the municipality. The Ombudsman's Office recorded 209 properties destroyed and 107 partially affected in the events of November and December 2000.

3. How did this affect the population?

The destruction was not just physical. Families lost loved ones, homes, businesses and their livelihoods. Fear forced thousands of people to flee their homes.

The National Center for Historical Memory documented for Granada, in the armed conflict as a whole, at least 460 people murdered, 299 disappeared and nearly 10,000 displaced, according to the figures collected in its historical memory report.





The community did not allow its history to be reduced to destruction. The inhabitants promoted the material and social reconstruction of the municipality, organized expressions of peaceful resistance and promoted initiatives to preserve the memory of the victims.

Among them is the Salón del Nunca Más, a space where photographs and testimonies of murdered or disappeared people are preserved. The Adobe March is also remembered, through which the inhabitants carried bricks to help rebuild their town.

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To go deeper, I recommend the report of the National Center for Historical Memory: Granada: memories of war, resistance and reconstruction.

The great lesson of Granada is that violence can destroy houses, streets and life projects, but it does not necessarily destroy the hope of a community. The reconstruction of Granada is also a story of dignity, solidarity and reconciliation.

What role did the Confraternity Confraternity of Prisons of Colombia play?

The Prison Fellowship of Colombia (CCC) played an important role in a post-destruction stage of Grenada: rebuilding human relations, acknowledging victims, and seeking reconciliation between people affected by the conflict and former members of armed groups.

1. It facilitated the meeting between victims and perpetrators



In 2018, the CCC accompanied and facilitated the meeting in which Pastor Alape, a former FARC commander, publicly apologized to the victims in Granada. His role was to create conditions for a restorative dialogue in which the victims could be heard and recognized.

2. Promoted restorative justice



Rather than being limited to punishing the perpetrator, this approach seeks to acknowledge the harm caused, listen to those who suffered it, and promote commitments to reparation and non-repetition. The CCC helped facilitate this kind of dialogue between people affected by the war and former armed actors.

3. He worked together with ASOVIDA and the community



The Association of Victims of Granada (ASOVIDA) has been a key organization in the memory and defense of the dignity of the victims. The CCC has accompanied this community work and has facilitated meetings to rebuild trust and social ties.

4. It gave continuity to the reconciliation process

On September 23, 2025, the Confraternity once again facilitated the Day of Forgiveness and Reconciliation, with the participation of victims, former military personnel appearing before the JEP and peace signatories. This shows that their work was not limited to the 2018 meeting.

What does this mean for the history of Granada?

It is important to distinguish two processes:

- Physical reconstruction: recovery of homes, businesses and infrastructure after the attacks. The National Center for Historical Memory highlights the leadership of the population, local institutions and various social organizations in this process.
- Human and social reconstruction: recovery of trust, recognition of victims, dialogue, forgiveness and reconciliation. Here is the documented role of the Prison Fellowship.

Grenada is a testament to how a community can transform the wounds of armed conflict into opportunities for the rebuilding of trust and hope.

In this process, the Prison Fraternity of Colombia has contributed by facilitating spaces for restorative justice, dialogue and reconciliation between victims of the armed conflict and former actors of violence. A significant milestone took place in 2018, when it accompanied the meeting in which Pastor Alape publicly asked for forgiveness from the victims of Granada.

In coordination with ASOVIDA and other community actors, the Confraternity has contributed to promoting the recognition of harm, the dignity of the victims and the construction of commitments aimed at non-repetition. The continuity of these meetings, including the Day of Forgiveness and Reconciliation in September 2025, reflects the importance of sustaining these processes over time.

His experience in Grenada shows that peace is not only about rebuilding what the war destroyed materially. It also requires restoring relationships, listening to the victims, taking responsibility and creating conditions so that communities can live together again.

The contribution of the Prison Fellowship is to help open pathways for the recognition of harm and responsibility to become opportunities for restoration and reconciliation.