Australian Government

Refugee Review Tribunal

Country Advice Colombia

Colombia – COL38771 – M19– Bucaramanga – Valledupar – Arjona Cesar – Pailitas – Barranquilla

8 June 2011

1. Can you please confirm that there have been no significant changes to the information contained in COL38612 dated 20 April 2011?

There have been no significant changes to the information contained in *Country Advice COL38612* of 20 April 2011.[1]

More recent reports include the recently released Amnesty International 2011 report on Colombia, which refers to guerrilla groups, paramilitaries and the security forces in Colombia being "responsible for serious and widespread human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law, including war crimes." The parties to the conflict did not distinguish between civilians and combatants, resulting in unlawful killings, forced displacement, kidnappings and enforced disappearances. The FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) and the smaller National Liberation Army (Ejército de Liberación Nacional, ELN) were reported to have "committed serious human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law, including unlawful killings, hostage-taking and the recruitment of children." FARC in particular had "carried out indiscriminate attacks in which civilians were put at risk through the use of low-precision explosive devices." Paramilitaries continued to kill civilians, recruit children, threaten and kill social leaders and human rights defenders, and carry out acts of "social cleansing". These groups had continued to expand and become organisationally more sophisticated. There was continuing collusion with the security forces in many parts of the country.[2]

On 25 May 2011, it was reported that Colombia had issued a new security plan, aimed at breaking up criminal gangs, minimising drug trafficking and improving security in the next three years. President Juan Manuel Santos said that leftist guerrilla groups had to stop violence and criminal activity and release all hostages before any talks. He also said that new criminal gangs known by their Spanish acronym "Bacrim", which were comprised of former members of paramilitary groups initially created to fight leftist rebels but which had become involved in drugs, were a major threat. The Bacrim groups had reportedly been largely responsible for an increase in massacres in recent years.[3] Another article dated 28 April 2011 indicates that around 40% of killings were reported to be perpetrated by new criminal bands, which the government saw as its biggest security threat. In many areas of Colombia, the bands had reached accommodations with FARC, which was also heavily involved in drug-

[1] RRT Country Advice 2011, *Country Advice COL38612*, 20 April – Attachment 1
[2] Amnesty International 2011, *Amnesty International Report 2011 – Colombia*, May – Attachment 2
[3] Kimball, J. & Acosta, L.J. 2011, 'Colombia vows to break up drug gangs, beat rebels', *Reuters News*, 25 May – Attachment 3

trafficking. The FARC was reported to be in smaller bands in remote areas. It continues to inflict casualties on the security forces and makes widespread use of landmines.[4]

In May 2011, the Colombian Red Cross said that FARC rebels had detained more than 140 people in Colombia's northwest who had defied a guerrilla ban on travel in the region. Separately, Colombia's police director said rebels enforcing the ban had killed at least three people on the Atrato River in Choco state.[5] On 16 May 2011, the Colombian military said commandos had rescued a Conservative Party mayoral candidate who had been kidnapped by suspected leftist rebels more than a month earlier in central Colombia. One of the kidnappers was killed and another guerrilla, said to be second-in-command of a FARC unit, was captured.[6]

A report dated 11 May 2011 indicates that FARC guerrillas had killed five members of a family in the Naya region.[7] On 4 May 2011, Colombia's President Santos said that at least nine FARC guerrillas had been killed and 12 wounded in a military operation in the town of Jambalo in Cauca province. During the previous week, three police officers had been killed and three civilians wounded in a car-bomb attack in Jambalo that was blamed on FARC. FARC was also reported to have killed two soldiers and a civilian and wounded other civilians in an attack on an army checkpoint in Arauca province.[8] An article dated 2 May 2011 indicates that FARC had been blamed for the bombing of an oil pipeline in Norte de Santander department.[9] In April 2011, 61 people in Policarpa, Narino, were displaced because of fighting between FARC and a branch of the criminal band "Los Rastrojos".[10] On 22 April 2011, FARC guerrillas killed two soldiers and wounded a civilian in the town of San Juan de Lozada on the border of Meta province and Caqueta province.[11] On 21 April 2011, Colombia's army said the bodies had been found of two Colombian army officers who had been abducted by FARC rebels in Antioquia department.[12]

2. Can you provide any background or history on the guerrilla group M19 in Colombia? Are there any reports that they are still active in Colombia?

A March 2003 paper on the M19 guerrilla group prepared by the US Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services refers to sources that give varying dates between 1972 and 1974 as the year the M19 was founded.[13] Another source refers to the M19 dating from 1973 and to it being formed by supporters of the National Popular Alliance (ANAPO) as the party's armed wing in reaction to disputed results in an election held in Colombia on 19 April 1970.[14] Supporters of ANAPO challenged the result of the April 1970 presidential election in which the National Front's candidate Dr Misael Pastrana Borrero narrowly defeated former dictator General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla, the leader of ANAPO, "and an armed wing of the party, the

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[4] 'New names, old games' 2011, *The Economist*, 28 April – Attachment 4
[5] 'Red Cross says FARC rebels detain 140 people for defying travel ban in northwest Colombia' 2011, *Associated Press Newswires*, 25 May – Attachment 5
[6] 'Colombian troops rescue kidnapped politician' 2011, *EFE News Service*, 16 May – Attachment 6
[7] 'Five family members killed by Colombia rebels: NGO' 2011, *Agence France-Presse*, 11 May – Attachment 7
[8] '9 Guerrillas killed in military operation in Colombia' 2011, *EFE News Service*, 4 May – Attachment 8
[9] 'Colombian rebels bomb oil pipeline, exports unaffected' 2011, *Reuters News*, 2 May – Attachment 9
[10] 'More than 1,800 displaced in 2 months: UNHCR' 2011, *Colombia Reports*, 28 April – Attachment 10
[11] 'Colombian rebels kill 2 soldiers in Good Friday attack' 2011, *EFE News Service*, 24 April – Attachment 11
[12] 'Colombia finds remains of two abducted officers' 2011, *Agence France-Presse*, 21 April – Attachment 12
[13] US Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services 2003, 'Colombia: Information on the Former Guerrilla Group M-19', UNHCR Refworld website, 25 March http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,USCIS,,COL,,414eee264,0.html – Accessed 3 June 2011 – Attachment 13
[14] Szajkowski, B. (ed) 2005, *Political Parties of the World*, 6th edition, John Harper Publishing, London, p. 131 – Attachment 14

Movimiento 19 de Abril (M-19), began to organize guerrilla activity against the Government."[15]

M19's ideology was reportedly "originally an amalgam of Marxism-Leninism and the radical liberal ideas of Jorge Eliecer Graitan (assassinated 1948), which attracted dissident members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) guerrilla group to M19. As its first public act, M19 seized Simón Bolívar's sword and spurs in January 1974. ANAPO, which had shifted to the right, disassociated itself from M19 soon after."[16]

The group's guerrilla activity started in 1976 when a trade union leader suspected of having links with the CIA was abducted and killed. M19 reportedly specialised "in kidnappings and sabotage of multinational companies".[17] In January 1979, it raided an army arsenal north of Bogota and in 1980, was responsible for the occupation of the Dominican Embassy in Bogota for two months.[18] In early 1982, M19 suffered heavy losses in counterinsurgency operations and clashes with Death to Kidnappers (MAS), a new right-wing paramilitary group.[19] It has also been reported that the MAS was created by a group of drug traffickers, including Pablo Escobar, after the M19 began to kidnap drug traffickers or their children for ransom in the late 1970s.[20] In August 1984, M19, which was by then Colombia's most prominent guerrilla group, announced it intended to become a political party.[21] The US Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services paper refers to sources which indicate that in 1984, Colombia's president negotiated an amnesty with some factions of the M19. "These factions then became a legal political entity, the Acción Democrática-Movimiento 19", (hereafter referred to as AD-M19). Some elements of the original guerrilla group were reported to have continued the violent struggle, and the military continued to view the AD-M19 as a fifth column.[22] In November 1985, M19 was responsible for the seizure of the Palace of Justice in Bogota for 27 hours, during which more than 100 people died.[23]

It has been reported that losses in the Palace of Justice attack and the death in March 1987 of Alvaro Fayad, its top political and military strategist, were severe blows to the M19, and in July 1989, the M19 and the government negotiated a pact.[24] Another source indicates that in an attempt to force the government to hold peace talks, the M19 kidnapped Alvaro Gomez

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[15] *The Europa World Year Book 2008 Volume 1* 2008, Routledge, London, p. 1317 – Attachment 15
[16] Szajkowski, B. (ed) 2005, *Political Parties of the World*, 6th edition, John Harper Publishing, London, p. 131 – Attachment 14
[17] Szajkowski, B. (ed) 2005, *Political Parties of the World*, 6th edition, John Harper Publishing, London, p. 131 – Attachment 14
[18] Banks, A.S. et al. (eds.) 2010, 'Colombia', *Political Handbook of the World 2010*, CQ Press, Washington, D.C., pp. 294-303, at p. 300 http://library.cqpress.com/phw/phw2010_Colombia - Accessed 24 May 2011 – Attachment 16
[19] Szajkowski, B. (ed) 2005, *Political Parties of the World*, 6th edition, John Harper Publishing, London, p. 131 – Attachment 14
[20] US Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services 2003, 'Colombia: Information on the Former Guerrilla Group M-19', UNHCR Refworld website, 25 March http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,USCIS,,COL,,414eee264,0.html – Accessed 3 June 2011 – Attachment 13
[21] Szajkowski, B. (ed) 2005, *Political Parties of the World*, 6th edition, John Harper Publishing, London, p. 131 – Attachment 14
[22] US Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services 2003, 'Colombia: Information on the Former Guerrilla Group M-19', UNHCR Refworld website, 25 March http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,USCIS,,COL,,414eee264,0.html – Accessed 3 June 2011 – Attachment 13
[23] Banks, A.S. et al. (eds.) 2010, 'Colombia', *Political Handbook of the World 2010*, CQ Press, Washington, D.C., pp. 294-303, at p. 300 http://library.cqpress.com/phw/phw2010_Colombia - Accessed 24 May 2011 – Attachment 16
[24] US Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services 2003, 'Colombia: Information on the Former Guerrilla Group M-19', UNHCR Refworld website, 25 March http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,USCIS,,COL,,414eee264,0.html – Accessed 3 June 2011 – Attachment 13

Hurtado, the Conservative Party of Colombia's presidential candidate, in May 1988. Partly because of this action, the government put forward a new peace plan in September 1988. The M19 called a unilateral ceasefire and in January 1989, negotiations commenced. Two months later, an agreement on the reintegration of the M19 into civilian life was signed with the government. In October 1989, "the M19 was constituted as a political party – incorporating a number of other left-wing groups. In March 1990 the guerrillas signed a final peace treaty with the government and surrendered their arms. In exchange the government guaranteed the M19 a general amnesty, full political participation in elections and the holding of a referendum on the question of a new constitution."[25] It has also been reported that the M19 reached agreement with the MAS before handing in its weapons. An M-19 faction named the Movimiento Jaime Bateman Cayon reportedly refused to participate in the transition to a political party and continued to engage in guerrilla activity.[26]

As previously mentioned, the US Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services paper refers to sources which indicate that in 1984, Colombia's president negotiated an amnesty with some factions of the M19, and these factions then became the AD-M19.[27] Another publication indicates that the M19 announced it intended to become a political party in August 1984, and in October 1989, it was constituted as a political party. The AD-M19 was reported to be newly-formed in April 1990 when its presidential candidate, M19 leader Carlos Pizarro Leongomez, was assassinated at the instigation, it was believed, of the Medellín drugs cartel. He was replaced as a candidate in the May 1990 presidential elections by Antonio Navarro Wolff, who came third with 12.6% of the vote. The M19 won the majority of 19 seats secured by the AD-M19 in Constitutional Assembly elections, and was the largest opposition block.[28] Another source refers to the M19 operating as the AD-M19 after the May 1990 presidential election, and to Antonio Navarro Wolff running as the candidate of a 13-member leftist coalition styled the Democratic Convergence (*Convergencia Democrática* - CD) in that election.[29]

The AD-M19 is reported to have made an important contribution to drawing-up the constitution which came into effect in July 1991. In March 1992 municipal elections, the party suffered big losses, especially in Bogota. In March 1994 legislative elections, the AD-M19 won only two seats in the House of Representatives and one in the Senate. In the first round of presidential balloting in May 1994, Navarro Wolff obtained only 3.8% of the vote. A dissident faction led by former guerrilla commando Carlos Alonso Lucio subsequently split away from the main party. The party retained a small presence in the House of Representatives following the 1998 legislative and presidential elections.[30]

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[25] Szajkowski, B. (ed) 2005, *Political Parties of the World*, 6th edition, John Harper Publishing, London, pp. 131-132 – Attachment 14

[26] US Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services 2003, 'Colombia: Information on the Former Guerrilla Group M-19', UNHCR Refworld website, 25 March http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,USCIS,,COL,,414eee264,0.html – Accessed 3 June 2011 – Attachment 13

[27] US Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services 2003, 'Colombia: Information on the Former Guerrilla Group M-19', UNHCR Refworld website, 25 March http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,USCIS,,COL,,414eee264,0.html – Accessed 3 June 2011 – Attachment 13

[28] Szajkowski, B. (ed) 2005, *Political Parties of the World*, 6th edition, John Harper Publishing, London, p. 132 – Attachment 14

[29] Banks, A.S. et al. (eds.) 2010, 'Colombia', *Political Handbook of the World 2010*, CQ Press, Washington, D.C., pp. 294-303, at p. 300 http://library.cqpress.com/phw/phw2010_Colombia - Accessed 24 May 2011 – Attachment 16

[30] Szajkowski, B. (ed) 2005, *Political Parties of the World*, 6th edition, John Harper Publishing, London, p. 132 – Attachment 14

Navarro Wolff subsequently joined the PDI (Independent Democratic Pole (Polo Democrático Independiente), which was formed in 2003. He was elected the governor of Nariño department in 2007. The PDI, which was formed by former labour leader Luis Eduardo Garzon, is reported to have had a significant representation of demobilised M19 members. In 2005, it merged with the Democratic Alternative (Alternativa Democrática – AD) to form the left-of-centre Alternative Democratic Pole (Polo Democrático Alternativo – PDA), which contained elements of a number of far-left parties.[31]

Gustavo Petro, another significant member of the AD/M-19, was also affiliated with the PDA.[32] Petro was a candidate in the 2010 presidential election in Colombia, in which he came fourth, winning some 9.2% of the vote.[33] In May 2010, during the presidential campaign, Petro reportedly said he had received death threats from FARC.[34] In November 2010, Petro announced his decision to leave the PDA.[35] In December 2010, it was reported that Petro had resigned from the PDA and had plans to form a separate political movement.[36]

The 2003 US Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services paper refers to sources which indicate that between 1984 and the 1994 elections, many AD-M19 members who attempted to run for office were assassinated by death squads.[37] An RRT research response from January 2003 includes information on whether members of the AD-M19 were targeted by the authorities or paramilitaries.[38] It mentions a May 2001 DFAT advice which refers to comments by the then leader of the Union Patriotica party in Colombia, Mario Upegai, who said that the M19 were no longer persecuted as they did not present a threat to the Colombian government.[39] The research response also refers to a UNHCR report dated September 2002 on Colombian asylum-seekers, which indicates that demobilised members of guerrilla groups such as the M19 had been considered traitors by the group they abandoned and/or other guerrilla groups; they were also subject to persecution by paramilitary groups that accused them of maintaining guerrilla activities.[40] The more recent September 2010 UNHCR eligibility guidelines regarding asylum seekers from Colombia does not specifically mention M19 or AD-M19 members.[41]

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[31] Banks, A.S. et al. (eds.) 2010, 'Colombia', *Political Handbook of the World 2010*, CQ Press, Washington, D.C., pp. 294-303, at pp. 300-301 http://library.cqpress.com/phw/phw2010_Colombia - Accessed 24 May 2011 – Attachment 16

[32] Banks, A.S. et al. (eds.) 2010, 'Colombia', *Political Handbook of the World 2010*, CQ Press, Washington, D.C., pp. 294-303, at p. 301 http://library.cqpress.com/phw/phw2010_Colombia - Accessed 24 May 2011 – Attachment 16

[33] Völkel, C. 2010, 'Colombian Left Continues to Fracture', *IHS Global Insight Daily Analysis*, 30 November – Attachment 17

[34] '11 Wounded in attack on Colombian campaign office' 2010, *EFE News Service*, 26 May – Attachment 18

[35] Völkel, C. 2010, 'Colombian Left Continues to Fracture', *IHS Global Insight Daily Analysis*, 30 November – Attachment 17

[36] 'Colombia: Country outlook' 2010, *Economist Intelligence Unit – ViewsWire*, 9 December – Attachment 19

[37] US Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services 2003, 'Colombia: Information on the Former Guerrilla Group M-19', UNHCR Refworld website, 25 March http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,USCIS,,COL,,414eee264,0.html – Accessed 3 June 2011 – Attachment 13

[38] RRT Country Research 2003, *Research Response COL15665*, 14 January, (Question 3) – Attachment 20

[39] DIMA Country Information Service 2001, *Country Information Report No.146/01 - Patriotic Union in Colombia*, (sourced from DFAT advice of 14 May 2001), 24 May – Attachment 21

[40] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 2002, *International protection considerations regarding Colombian asylum-seekers and refugees*, September, p. 13 – Attachment 22

[41] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 2010, *UNHCR Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Asylum Seekers from Colombia*, 27 May – Attachment 23

According to the *Political Handbook of the World 2010*, "[a]s an electoral group, the AD/M-19 is moribund".[42] Reports were not located of current AD-M19 activity.

3. **Deleted.**

4. **Deleted.**

5. **Please provide a map showing the locations of San Gil, Bucoramanga, Valle Dupar, Arjona Cesar, Pailitas and Baranquilla.**

   A map showing the locations of Bucaramanga, Valledupar and Barranquilla is attached. The map indicates that Bucaramanga is in Santander Department in Colombia, Valledupar is in Cesar Department and Barranquilla is in Atlantico Department.[43]

   A map on the *Microsoft Encarta Interactive World Atlas 2000* shows San Gil being located in Santander Department in Colombia. The map also shows the location of San Gil in relation to Bucaramanga.[44]

   A map which indicates that Pailitis is in Cesar Department is attached.[45] A map showing the location of Pailitis in relation to Valledupar is also attached.[46]

   A map on the *Microsoft Encarta Interactive World Atlas 2000* indicates that Arjona is in Cesar Department in Colombia.[47]

6. **Are these towns in areas in which FARC is reported to have a strong presence?**

   As previously mentioned, the towns referred to above are located in Santander, Cesar and Atlantico Departments in Colombia. A June 2010 International Crisis Group policy briefing on security policy in Colombia indicates that while in 2002, FARC was present in 514 out of a total of 1,098 municipalities in Colombia, in 2009, there was insurgent military action in only 206 municipalities. In 2010, FARC activity was reported to be "mostly in Cauca, Caquetá, Nariño, Huila and Meta departments, which are also of strategic importance for drug trafficking." There had also been an increase in FARC activity in Arauca. The insurgent's presence in the south of Bolívar and the Middle Magdalena River Valley region was previously strong but had been much reduced. FARC's presence had also been reduced in Antioquia and Chocó departments and it had been driven out of most regions on the Atlantic

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[42] Banks, A.S. et al. (eds.) 2010, 'Colombia', *Political Handbook of the World 2010*, CQ Press, Washington, D.C., pp. 294-303, at p. 301 http://library.cqpress.com/phw/phw2010_Colombia - Accessed 24 May 2011 – Attachment 16
[43] Central Intelligence Agency 2008, 'Colombia', Perry-Castaneda Library Map Collection, University of Texas Libraries website http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/americas/txu-oclc-256488229-colombia_pol_2008.jpg - Accessed 27 May 2011 – Attachment 33
[44] 'San Gil, Santander, Colombia' 2000, *Microsoft Encarta Interactive World Atlas 2000* – Attachment 34
[45] 'Pailitas, Cesar, Colombia' 2000, *Microsoft Encarta Interactive World Atlas 2000* – Attachment 35
[46] 'Valledupar, Cesar, Colombia' 2011, Google Maps website http://maps.google.com.au/maps?f=q&source=s_q&hl=en&geocode=&q=Valledupar,+Cesar,+Colombia&aq=0&sll=10.46668,-73.251259&sspn=1.382821,2.290649&ie=UTF8&hq=&hnear=Valledupar,+Cesar+Dept,+Colombia&z=8&pw=2 – Accessed 25 May 2011 – Attachment 36
[47] 'Arjona, Cesar, Colombia' 2000, *Microsoft Encarta Interactive World Atlas 2000* – Attachment 37

coast.[48] The previously mentioned map of Colombia indicates that Bolivar Department is to the northwest of Santander Department, to the south of Atlantico Department and to the southwest of Cesar Department. Antioquia Department is to the west of Santander Department.[49]

In 2010, FARC was "estimated to have around 8,000-10,000 combatants, organised in 61 fronts (*frentes*), of which only 30 are believed to be active, and a mobile structure consisting of an estimated fifteen to sixteen mobile columns (*columnas moviles*) and around thirteen smaller companies (*compañias*)."[50] An Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRBC) response to information request dated 5 April 2011 refers to an article by InSight, which is "a think-tank with offices in Colombia and Washington specializing in research on organized crime in the Americas", that indicates FARC has more than 70 fronts and has militia groups in the cities.[51] Information on the Insight website refers to FARC operating in 25 of 32 Colombian departments.[52]

The IRBC response to information request also refers to a translation of a paper by the Foundation Ideas for Peace (Fundación Ideas para la paz, FIP), which is "an independent Colombian think-tank dedicated to building a sustainable peace in Colombia". The paper provides details of six FARC blocs and the FARC fronts in the blocs, and the locations and names of several FARC fronts. These include Front 10 which operates in Arauca Department and Front 38 which operates in Boyaca and Casanare Departments. In Norte de Santander Department, FARC's "Resistencia Barí" front had formed a partnership with the National Liberation Army's (Ejército de Liberación Nacional, ELN) "Libardo Mora Toro" front to control coca production in the Catatumbo-Barí National Park and routes to Venezuela.[53] The map of Colombia indicates that Boyaca Department is to the east and south of Santander Department and Arauca Department borders Boyaca Department. The Norte de Santander Department is to the north of Santander Department and to the east of Cesar Department.[54]

An article from February 2011 indicates that in the previous few months, there had been "greater frequency of guerrilla attacks in Colombia's southwest (Nariño, Cauca, Putumayo, Caquetá) – where today they are perhaps strongest – as well as in northern Antioquia and along Colombia's eastern border with Venezuela, particularly Arauca." In a New Year's

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[48] International Crisis Group 2010, *Improving Security Policy in Colombia*, Latin America Briefing No. 23, 29 June, p. 2 – Attachment 38

[49] Central Intelligence Agency 2008, 'Colombia', Perry-Castaneda Library Map Collection, University of Texas Libraries website http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/americas/txu-oclc-256488229-colombia_pol_2008.jpg - Accessed 27 May 2011 – Attachment 33

[50] International Crisis Group 2010, *Improving Security Policy in Colombia*, Latin America Briefing No. 23, 29 June, p. 2 – Attachment 38

[51] Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2011, *COL103709.E – Colombia: Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, FARC), including information on criminal activities, such as drug trafficking and kidnapping; state response to criminal activity (2009 - February 2011)*, 5 April – Attachment 39

[52] 'FARC' 2011, Insight website, 29 May http://www.insightcrime.org/criminal-groups/colombia/farc/item/82-farc - Accessed 31 May 2011 – Attachment 40

[53] Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2011, *COL103709.E – Colombia: Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia, FARC), including information on criminal activities, such as drug trafficking and kidnapping; state response to criminal activity (2009 - February 2011)*, 5 April – Attachment 39

[54] Central Intelligence Agency 2008, 'Colombia', Perry-Castaneda Library Map Collection, University of Texas Libraries website http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/americas/txu-oclc-256488229-colombia_pol_2008.jpg - Accessed 27 May 2011 – Attachment 33

video, FARC's paramount leader Alfonso Cano had called for FARC's activities to be redoubled.[55]

Amnesty International reported in November 2010 that a human rights defender, who was a member of the National Movement of Victims of State Crimes (MOVICE) and the Committee of Solidarity for Political Prisoners (FCSPP), had been arrested in Bucaramanga on 16 November 2010 on charges of having links with FARC.[56]

In March 2010, Colombian police in Floridablanca, Santander province, captured Adelmo Cala, a major FARC leader in the Bajo Cauca region in northwest Colombia. Cala was reported to have served as the combat tactics instructor for FARC's 23 and 33 fronts, and to have directed and participated in attacks against police stations in Santander, Antioquia and Bolivar provinces.[57] In December 2009, Colombia's national police said that six suspected members of FARC's 23rd Front "that killed nine police officers and wounded three others in attacks over the past two years", had been arrested in the towns of Cimitarra and Landazuri in Santander. Police said they "belonged to a unit that operated in the two towns, as well as along the corridor from Santander to the neighboring province of Boyaca."[58] An earlier report dated 3 February 2009, sourced from the privately-owned, right-of-centre Colombian newspaper El Espectador, indicates that FARC's 12th and 46th Fronts which operated in Santander Department were "said to be extinct", and the 20th Front was weakened. The mayor of Santa Helena, a locality in Santander where the 12th Front acted, said it had been a while since FARC or the ELN had been heard from. He also said they still received information about a small FARC group that moved through hamlets in the higher elevations.[59]

In August 2009, it was reported that a letter with the FARC logo had been sent to the Barranquilla city council saying the members of the council were considered military targets. The police commander suspected the senders of the letter were not from FARC.[60]

The US Department of State country reports on terrorism for 2009 indicates that on 5 May 2009, the FARC had detonated a bomb near a police station in Valledupar, Cesar, killing two and injuring 10 civilians.[61]

7. Deleted.

[55] Isacson, A. 2011, 'Six months in, Colombia's Santos faces a murky security situation', The Washington Office on Latin America website, 8 February http://www.wola.org/commentary/six_months_in_colombias_santos_faces_a_murky_security_situation - Accessed 30 May 2011 – Attachment 41

[56] Amnesty International 2010, *Concern over arrest of pregnant human rights defender in Colombia*, 18 November http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/concern-over-arrest-pregnant-human-rights-defender-colombia-2010-11-18 - Accessed 2 June 2011 – Attachment 42

[57] 'Major guerrilla leader captured in Colombia' 2010, *Xinhua News Agency*, 17 March – Attachment 43

[58] 'FARC guerrillas burn buses in Colombia' 2009, *EFE News Service*, 27 December – Attachment 44

[59] 'Colombia risk: Alert - Reportedly FARC fronts have been in decline' 2009, *Economist Intelligence Unit - Risk Briefing*, source: BBC Monitoring & El Espectador website, Bogota, 3 February – Attachment 45

[60] 'Barranquilla city council threatened' 2009, *Colombia Reports*, 15 August http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news/news/5441-barranquilla-city-council-threatened.html - Accessed 2 June 2011 – Attachment 46

[61] US Department of State Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism 2010, *Country Reports on Terrorism 2009*, August, p. 173 – Attachment 47

Attachments

1. RRT Country Advice 2011, *Country Advice COL38612*, 20 April.

2. Amnesty International 2011, *Amnesty International Report 2011 – Colombia*, May.

3. Kimball, J. & Acosta, L.J. 2011, **'**Colombia vows to break up drug gangs, beat rebels', *Reuters News*, 25 May. (FACTIVA)

4. 'New names, old games' 2011, *The Economist*, 28 April. (CISNET Colombia CX263951)

5. 'Red Cross says FARC rebels detain 140 people for defying travel ban in northwest Colombia' 2011, *Associated Press Newswires*, 25 May. (FACTIVA)

6. 'Colombian troops rescue kidnapped politician' 2011, *EFE News Service*, 16 May. (FACTIVA)

7. 'Five family members killed by Colombia rebels: NGO' 2011, *Agence France-Presse*, 11 May. (FACTIVA)

8. '9 Guerrillas killed in military operation in Colombia' 2011, *EFE News Service*, 4 May. (FACTIVA)

9. 'Colombian rebels bomb oil pipeline, exports unaffected' 2011, *Reuters News*, 2 May. (FACTIVA)

10. 'More than 1,800 displaced in 2 months: UNHCR' 2011, *Colombia Reports*, 28 April. (CISNET Colombia CX264004)

11. 'Colombian rebels kill 2 soldiers in Good Friday attack' 2011, *EFE News Service*, 24 April. (FACTIVA)

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