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**THE COLOMBIAN ARMY: TERRORISM, THIEVERY, BUNGLING AND
MASSACRES**

Colombian President Alvaro Uribe's policy of democratic security is based on building confidence in public institutions. That is as it should be, and many millions in U.S. taxpayer dollars are supporting the policy. Unfortunately, the Colombian institution that has received most of the U.S. millions, the Colombian Army, has demonstrated repeatedly that it is not worthy of public confidence. It is not worthy of U.S. taxpayer funding.

The following is a brief outline of events reported officially or in the U.S. and Colombian media, describing terrorism, thievery, bungling and massacres by the armed forces of the government of Colombia. Individuals and nongovernmental organizations report many more such examples. This outline was compiled by the Colombia Support Network, a nongovernmental organization headquartered in Madison, Wisconsin, USA. For updated information, see the Colombia Support Network website <http://www.colombiasupport.net>.

* August 24, 2009. Five Colombian Army soldiers were arrested in Riohacha after they reported three civilians killed in combat. The men worked on a farm in a rural area of La Jagua del Pilar (La Guajira Province).

Source: *El Tiempo*, August 24, 2009.

* August 24, 2009. Today at 2 p.m. in Medellin is the beginning of the trial of ten Colombian Army soldiers, including a lieutenant colonel, a major, a lieutenant, five sergeants, and two corporals, for their part in the massacre of eight people from the Peace Community of San Jose de Apartado on February 21, 2005. Three of those killed were children. The soldiers were part of the 17th Brigade, headquartered in Carepa (Antioquia Province).

Source: *El Tiempo*, August 24, 2009.

* August 24, 2009, An ex-soldier from the Colombian Army, along with an ex-paramilitary and an ex-guerrilla were all arrested and charged with aggravated attempted murder, terrorism, and illegal possession of military weapons. They are alleged to have attacked a supermarket with a fragmentation grenade after the merchant refused to pay extortion. Four people were injured, including a four-year-old child.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, and Attorney General's web site, August 24, 2009.

* August 24, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier was arrested and charged with attempted aggravated extortion. He is alleged to have demanded 200 million pesos (about \$100,000) from a merchant in Bogotá and threatening to kill her and her family.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, and Attorney General's web site, August 24, 2009.



* August 23, 2009. There will be a march on Monday, August 24 at 2 pm in Bucaramanga to remember Carlos Mauricio Nova Vega, who disappeared a year ago on August 24. His body was later presented as a guerrilla killed in combat. A spokeswoman for one of the organizations sponsoring the march expressed solidarity with the victim's family and demanded truth, justice, and reparations from the government, and complained that members of the Colombian Army have threatened those who speak out about the extrajudicial killings.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, August 23, 2009.

* August 22, 2009. Two former Colombian National Police officers and two civilians were convicted of kidnapping and murder and sentenced to 32 years in prison for the hijacking of a semi-trailer truck and the killing of a passenger. On July 20, 2005, they dressed in police uniforms and, carrying rifles, stopped the truck. They took the driver and his father to another location and shot them. The father died, but the driver was able to escape. The truck was later found, but its cargo, worth some 40 million pesos (about \$5000) was gone.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site, August 22, 2009.

* August 21, 2009. Colombia's Supreme Court overturned two Military Court rulings that had acquitted soldiers of murder after the massacre at El Recreo in San Carlos (Antioquia Province) on December 12, 1995. Seventeen peasant farmers were killed. The Supreme Court held that the criminal proceeding should have been held in the civilian criminal justice system, not the military system. The Inter-American Court for Human Rights had previously reached the same conclusion. The case will now be transferred to the civilian criminal justice system.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 21, 2009.

* August 21, 2009. "I'm going to murder you ... In a year you'll be dead." With these words, a Colombian Police officer threatened a journalist who was covering a demonstration. He also threatened and yelled obscenities at a photographer who was about to photograph him.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 21, 2009.

* August 21, 2009. Complying with an order of the Inter-American Court for Human Rights, the Colombian government has made reparations to an indigenous organization for the murder of an indigenous leader 21 years ago. German Escue was dragged from his house by a sergeant and eight soldiers who tortured and killed him. The soldiers were sentenced to 12 years in prison.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, August 21, 2009.

* August 21, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier was sentenced to 30 years in prison for the killing of a 16-year-old girl who was presented as a guerrilla killed in combat on September 26, 2004. The soldiers testified that she was a paramilitary who fired on them in a Medellin neighborhood. Near her body were a pistol, several holsters, two fragmentation grenades and a pair of camouflage pants. Forensic investigation showed that she had not fired a weapon and that she had been shot at close range. A corporal has been sentenced to four years in prison for interfering with the investigation.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site, August 21, 2009.

* August 20, 2009. A Colombian Police major and a second lieutenant are charged with the "disappearance" of four people in the municipality of La Estrella (Antioquia Province). Two of the



four victims were minors. They were taken from their vehicle and placed in a patrol car and never seen again. Two other officers are charged in the incident.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site, August 20, 2009.

* August 20, 2009. Five Colombian Army soldiers are charged with aggravated homicide, forced disappearance, and falsifying public documents for the murder of four civilians in La Guajira Province.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 20, 2009.

* August 19, 2009. A Colombian Army Commander and 13 soldiers are charged with homicide, theft, and falsification of documents in the murder of two brothers on April 16, 2007 in the municipality of Hato Corozal (Casanare Province). The two victims, cattlemen who were carrying 10 million pesos for a business deal, were stopped at an Army checkpoint. They were made to leave their vehicle and not seen again until their bodies were presented as Guerrillas killed in combat. The investigation also revealed that five other individuals, including a DAS (Colombian FBI) had been paid for the information that led to the theft and murders.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, August 20, 2009, and Attorney General's web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* August 18, 2009. General Miguel Maza Marquez ex-director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) turned himself in after a warrant was issued for his arrest. Two demobilized paramilitary commanders have testified that General Maza was responsible for the assassination of a presidential candidate, Luis Carlos Galan in 1989. One of the commanders also testified that Maza helped the "hit man" escape from prison.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, and Attorney General's web site.

* August 18, 2009. Three Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide in the murder of three civilians on July 4, 2006. The killings took place on a ranch in the municipality of La Jagua del Pilar (Guajira Province). The bodies of the three victims were presented as guerrillas killed in combat.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, and Attorney General's web site, August 18, 2009.

* August 16, 2009. A Colombian NGO, Government Victims Movement, warns of violations of human rights by the Colombian government. It points to the "false positives", forced displacements and illegal wiretapping by the Colombian government security agency. A spokesman points out that, while the number of massacres has decreased, the "extrajudicial executions" noted by the UN Special Envoy have increased.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, August 16, 2009.

* August 16, 2009. August 18 marks the 20th anniversary of the assassination of Colombian presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galan. On August 16, Galan's son, a Colombian Senator, Juan Manuel Galan, told *Caracol Radio* that he believes that his father was murdered by members of the



DAS (Colombian FBI) and the Colombian Army, conspiring with drug traffickers and corrupt politicians.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, August 16, 2009.

* August 14, 2009. An extradited paramilitary commander, now in prison in the United States, states that he knows which Colombian Army officer furnished the sub-machine gun that was used to assassinate presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galan on August 18, 1989. At the same time, the son of a deceased Colombian official has produced a letter that he claims will prove that the DAS was behind the murder.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 14, 2009.

* August 14, 2009. A Colombian Army lieutenant has pleaded guilty to stealing weapons and munitions in order to sell them to the guerrillas. Searchers at a residence he used for storage found an AK-47, nearly 2,000 cartridges of various calibers, four 38-caliber revolvers, a 9 mm pistol and a 22-caliber shotgun with a telescopic sight.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site.

* August 14, 2009. A demobilized paramilitary commander, Luis Adrian Palacio Londono, alias "Diomedes", making his confession under the Justice and Peace Law, stated that he another paramilitary commander had burned more than 100 bodies of people killed by his troops. Sixty-eight bodies were burned in Santo Domingo (Antioquia Province) and more than 50 in San Roque, so that the authorities would not find them. "Diomedes" also confessed that the Colombian Police had aided in some of the killings.

Source: *El Colombiano* and *El Mundo*, Medellin, and the Attorney General's web site, August 14, 2009.

* August 14, 2009. The family of a Colombian soldier who died in a hospital has protested that, when he complained of extreme kidney pain, his commander ignored him.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 14, 2009.

* August 14, 2009. A judge has denied retired General Rito Alejo del Rio's motion to dismiss the Attorney General's charge of murder, based on his responsibility for the murder by paramilitaries of a young farmer in 1997. As commander of the 17th Brigade, he is alleged to have been aware of the paramilitaries plans to kill civilians. His trial has been postponed because he claims to be too ill to proceed, but a medical report states that he is well enough to go to trial.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 14, 2009.

* August 14, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier is accused of murder in the death of Jose Angel Higuaita. On November 13, 2005, Higuaita, who lived in Dabeiba (Antioquia Province) went to a place named Godo, where he had a job patching the road. He never returned home, but his bicycle and his tools were found in the road. The next day, his family identified him in the morgue at Chigorodo. The investigation revealed that soldiers had taken him to Chichindo, where they removed his clothes and dressed him in a new camouflage uniform and then killed him. They placed a communication radio and a pistol next to his body and reported him as a guerrilla killed in



combat. Another soldier, as well as a 2nd lieutenant, a sergeant, and a corporal, will also be charged with the murder. They are part of the 17th Brigade, headquartered at Carepa.

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* August 13, 2009. Demobilized paramilitary commanders are being questioned about the murder of journalist and comedian Jaime Garzon 10 years ago. One of them, Ever Veloza, alias "HH", gave investigators a USB that belonged to Carlos Castano, a paramilitary leader who was killed several years ago. In one of the documents, Castano states that he gave the order to kill Garzon "as a favor to some friends in the Army." Another paramilitary leader testified that a former Assistant Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) Jose Miguel Narvaez, urged Castano to order the killing. Narvaez has denied that. Prosecutors say that the investigation is not complete.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 13, 2009.

* August 13, 2009. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has expressed its "profound concern" about the illegal wiretapping carried out by the DAS (Colombian FBI). The continuing investigation indicates that DAS officials followed and wiretapped Commission representatives when they investigated a situation in Valledupar (Cesar Province). The Commission has complained to the Colombian Government and to the Organization of American States.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 13, 2009.

* August 13, 2009. An international conference on Forced Disappearance in Latin America has concluded in Medellin. Survivors and families of those killed and "disappeared" in the Trujillo Massacres told their stories. The Inter-American Court for Human Rights determined that agents of the Colombian Army were behind the killing. Survivors complain that 20 years have passed but there have been no convictions and the soldiers responsible are free.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, August 13, 2009.

* August 12, 2009. Two Colombian police officers were found guilty of the murder of a homeless person last January. They will be sentenced in the next two weeks.

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* August 12, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier has been arrested with stealing Army uniforms in order to sell them to the guerrillas. He is accused of taking 60 camouflage uniforms from his station in western Bogotá with the assistance of two civilians. All three are charged aggravated theft and illegal use of Army uniforms and insignia.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site, August 12, 2009.

* August 11, 2009. Now that the International Criminal Court will have jurisdiction in Colombia, the Minister of Defense is developing mechanisms necessary to "... confront the judicial war against our soldiers and police".

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 11, 2009.



* August 11, 2009. Twelve Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with killing civilians and presenting them as guerrillas killed in combat. They are charged with killing Douglas Alberto Tavera Diaz , Danny Diaz, and two others whose names are not known in San Juan del Cesar (Guajira Province) in 2006. An investigation showed that their report was contradicted by evidence found at the scene. They are charged with aggravated homicide, forced “disappearance”, and falsifying a public document.

Authorities also captured a retired Colombian Army sergeant already sentenced to four years in prison for receiving stolen goods. He and the other soldiers are charged with killing five civilians, cattlemen, after they found that they were carrying 150 million pesos (about \$75,000) hidden in the car they were driving. The soldiers then divided the money among themselves.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and Attorney General’s web site, August 11, 2009.

* August 11, 2009. Colombia’s Inspector General filed charged against five police officers involved in setting fire to the clothing of three young men and injuring them seriously. The three were arrested and taken to the station. Another prisoner complained that one of the youths had set him on fire. The officers then soaked the clothing of the three with gasoline and set them on fire.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, August 11, 2009.

* August 11, 2009. The Colombian Inspector General has commenced a disciplinary inquiry against five soldiers implicated in the deaths of three indigenous people, civilians, who were presented as guerrillas killed in combat on February 9, 2007 in a rural area of San Juan del Cesar (Guajira Province).

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, August 11, 2009.

* August 10, 2009. The Attorney General is continuing to interrogate demobilized paramilitary commanders now extradited to the United States for drug trafficking. Jorge Ivan Laverde, alias “El Iguano”, testified that Jose Miguel Narvaez, then Assistant Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) had urged paramilitary chieftain Carlos Castano to order the murder of a comedian, Jaime Garzon, ten years ago. Laverde asserted that Narvaez was close to Castano and often traveled to the paramilitary camps in Cordoba and southern Bolivar provinces. He would make a speech entitled “Why it is lawful to kill communists”.

Another extradited paramilitary, Ever Veloza, alias “HH”, provided a USB that had belonged to Castano, who was murdered in 2004. In it, Castano stated that Garzon’s murder had been a mistake, but that he had ordered it to “do a favor for some friends in the Army.”

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 10, 2009.

* August 8, 2009. Bogotá’s *El Espectador* headlines “The Million Dollar Major” report that describes one Major Lautaro Alberto Lopez Cuellar. Lopez is on active duty, has a good record, and has been involved in charitable activities. At the same time, *El Espectador* reports that he borrowed \$1 million in cash from a Bogotá financial institution known as Fidubogota. Auditors discovered early this year that Fidubogota has lost some \$35 million belonging to the Ecopetrol employees pension fund. Two individuals have already been arrested in connection with the loss and there is an outstanding warrant for the arrest of a third. The Major agreed to repay the \$1 million, but so far has not made any payment. His Army salary is only \$1,829,409 pesos monthly (about \$914). He has registered a company in the British Virgin Islands, capitalized with



\$50,000, half in his name and half in his wife's name. Authorities are continuing to investigate the whereabouts of the Ecopetrol pension fund.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 8, 2009.

* August 8, 2009. Colombia's Inspector General has asked the Attorney General to prosecute General Miguel Maza Marquez for his alleged participation in the August 1989 murder of a presidential candidate, Luis Carlos Galan Sarmiento. The General was responsible for the protection of Maza, and witnesses have testified as to his connection with the killers and those who planned the assassination.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 8, 2009.

* August 8, 2009. Eight Colombian Army soldiers are accused of killing four civilians and presenting their bodies as members of a criminal gang killed in combat. The four were shot while they were riding in a taxi in the La Reforma area in Cali (Valle del Cauca Province) on January 14, 2007. Their motion for bail was denied.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, August 8, 2009 and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site, August 10, 2009.

* August 7, 2009. Fourteen members of an alleged criminal gang have been arrested and jailed in Valledupar (Cesar Province). Among them is the Inspector of Police in the district of La Mesa. The Inspector insisted he did not know why he is being charged, but the provincial Police commander alleges that he was an active member of the gang and used his position to aid in its activities.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 7, 2009.

* August 6, 2009. The Colombian office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has filed a report criticizing the situation of indigenous communities in Colombia. The report finds that there have already been 73 murders of indigenous people in 2009, double the rate of 2008. The guerrillas are responsible for most of the killings, according to the report. The report also criticizes the Colombian armed forces, particularly for using indigenous people as informants, putting them at risk.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Baranquilla, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, August 6, 2009.

* August 5, 2009. A Colombian congressman has introduced legislation to require the Colombian government to provide defense for members of the Colombian Armed Forces who may be charged with crimes in the International Criminal Court. The congressman stated the intent of the proposal to cover charges such as genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, when the actions are part of military service.

* Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 5, 2009.

* August 5, 2009. The Attorney General's office continued presenting its case against 17 Colombian Army soldiers being investigated in the murder of three young men from Soacha (Cundinamarca Province) whose bodies were found in a common grave in Ocana (Norte de



Santander Province). The soldiers were arrested last May 21, but have pleaded not guilty. The three victims were presented as guerrillas killed in combat.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, August 5, 2009.

* August 5, 2009. One Colombian Army officer and six soldiers have been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide in the death of a peasant farmer in Golondrinas, near Cali (Valle del Cauca Province). Three more soldiers are being sought by the authorities in connection with the murder. After killing the farmer on March 9, 2006, the soldiers presented him as a guerrilla killed in combat.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, August 5, 2009.

* August 5, 2009. The trial of Colombian Army retired General Rito Alejo del Rio was postponed because the General's heart condition. He is the former commander of the Army's 17th Brigade and is accused of the murder of a peasant farmer. The victim was beheaded, dismembered, his body thrown in the river, and his head used as a football, according to the charge. The crime led to the displacement of some 2,500 people. The retired general has been in custody since September 2008.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, August 5, 2009.

* August 4, 2009. A former paramilitary commander, Ever Velosa Garcia (alias HH), now extradited to the United States for drug trafficking, has confessed that he bribed witnesses to claim that guerrillas were responsible for the February 2005 massacre at San Jose de Apartado. Eight people were killed, including three children. Velosa confessed that he, himself gave the bribe money to Colombian Army Col. Nestor Ivan Duque Lopez, then the commander of the 17th Brigade, headquartered in Carepa (Antioquia Province). Two captains, two lieutenants, and six noncommissioned officers of the 17th Brigade have been charged in the massacre and one has pleaded guilty.

The ex-paramilitary claims that Col. Duque asked him for the money, saying it was needed to pay the witnesses. He said that he and other paramilitary leaders met regularly with Duque to coordinate troop movements of the paramilitaries with the Army, and that Col. Duque had asked him to kill one of the paramilitaries who had talked too much about the perpetrators of the massacre.

One of the witnesses has now retracted his testimony, and now says that Col. Duque promised him money. He claims that Col. Duque threatened him after he decided to tell the truth, and that the colonel has now bribed new witnesses to contradict his new testimony.

Source: Web site of Bogotá's news weekly *Semana*: <http://www.verdadabierta.com/web3/justicia-y-paz/1485-hh-pago-par...cre-de-san-jose-de-apartado-en-2005?tmpl=component&print=1&page=>

* August 4, 2009. Five Colombian police officers have been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide in connection with the killing of a taxi driver in Buenaventura. The Attorney General alleges that on January 21, 2008, the defendants beat the victim to death at a police checkpoint.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Pais*, Cali, and Attorney General's web site, August 4, 2009.

* August 1, 2009. City officials in Aguachica (Cesar Province) carried out an investigation of at least ten "disappeared" persons and five of them appear to have been "false positives", killed by troops of the Colombian Army's 15th Mobile Brigade, the same unit responsible for the "false



positives” from Soacha. The bodies were found in Norte de Santander Province. Investigating officials allege that the people were dragged from their homes or their jobs and at least one of them had a mental disability. Later two were found in a common grave in Ocana and the others were presented in the Ocana morgue as guerrillas killed in combat. They had bullet wounds but were dressed in camouflage uniforms that had no bullet holes.. Aguachica city officials believe they are at risk for making these charges and have asked the Colombian government for protection.

Source: *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 1, 2009.

* August 1, 2009. Ten officials of the DAS (Colombian FBI) have arrest warrants and seven of them have turned themselves in connection with charges of criminal conspiracy after they illegally wiretapped and followed judges, journalists and opposition politicians. Documents and witnesses indicate that the conspiracy began in 2004 and continued until it was discovered earlier this year.

Source: *El Espectador* and *Radio Caracol*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano* and *El Mundo*, Medellin, *El Pais*, Cali, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, August 1, 2009.

* August 1, 2009. Sixteen Colombian Army soldiers, A captain, a sergeant, four noncommissioned officers and eleven soldiers, attached to the 4th Brigade, headquartered in Medellin, were sentenced to prison for killing two young men and presenting them as guerrillas killed in combat. Eleven of them were sentenced to 30 years for murder, and the other five were sentenced to four years for taking part in the cover-up of the crime.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, August 1, 2009, *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and Attorney General’s web site, July 31, 2009.

* July 31, 2009. On Attorney General Mario Iguaran’s last day in office, his office issued 11 warrants for the arrest of DAS (Colombian FBI) officials for illegal wiretapping and stalking of journalists, judges, and political opponents. The officials included the former DAS chiefs of intelligence, the assistant chiefs of operations, the assistant chief of analysis, an operations chief and two section chiefs. One of them, the former chief of counterintelligence, gave himself up at a military installation.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin.

* July 30, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier was arrested and charged with stealing munitions and attempting to sell them to criminal gangs in Medellin. He was arrested while driving a small car that contained 903 cartridges of various sizes, plus one complete military uniform.

Source: Attorney General’s web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* July 30, 2009. The most recent report of the Colombian Attorney General’s Human Rights Unit, dated July 1, states that, while in June 2008, 753 persons were being investigated for extrajudicial executions, In June 2009, the figure was 1,116, including, police, military, and civilians. The Attorney General’s office reports a 67 % increase in such investigations in the last 12 months. He reports that 1,160 of the murders are believed to have been committed by members of the Colombian Armed Forces, 1,881 people were killed. Of those, 1,710 were men, 113 were women and 58 were children.



Ninety-one members of the armed forces have already been convicted of these crimes, 19 pleaded guilty, and seven were acquitted.

Three hundred fifty arrest warrants have been issued for soldiers and police being investigated for extrajudicial murders, and most of those have been executed.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, July 30, 2009 and *El País*, Cali, July 31, 2009.

* July 30, 2009. Nine Colombian Police recruits are charged with the sexual assault of a 12-year-old girl who was among the displaced people occupying a public park in Bogotá. Police found about the case after the acts were recorded in a video.

Source: Attorney General's web site, *El Espectador* and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, July 30, 2009, *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El País*, Cali and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, July 31, 2009.

* July 29, 2009. The trial of 19 soldiers accused of deceiving young men from Soacha (Cundinamarca Province) killing them and then presenting them as killed in combat in Ocana (Norte de Santander Province) has been postponed to August 4. One of the defense attorneys did not appear. The defendants are a Colombian Army colonel, a sergeant, and a corporal, and the rest are soldiers. During the hearing, a group of university students protested against the "false positives".

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, July 29, 2009.

* July 29, 2009. Three former officers of the Colombian National Police are among a gang of killers and extortionists being prosecuted in Barranquilla. The gang operated in Soledad, a poor neighborhood in Barranquilla (Atlantico Province) between 2004 and 2006. Seven gang members have already pleaded guilty. The three ex-officers are charged with conspiracy to commit murder.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, July 29, 2009.

* July 28, 2009. Colombian Attorney General Mario Iguaran, leaving office soon, reports on his term, stating that he opened investigations into massacres that the country had never heard about. Paramilitary commanders, making their confessions under the Justice and Peace law, such as "Ramon Isaza", testified that the generals themselves had pointed out the victims that the paramilitaries were to kill.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, July 28, 2009.

* July 28, 2009. A former Colombian Army colonel, Bayron Carvajal, has been charged with drug trafficking. He has already been convicted in the deaths of ten police officers and one civilian on May 22, 2006, in Potrerito, near Jamundi (Valle Province) and is serving 57 years in a maximum security prison. He is being accused, along with a former Army sergeant, of stealing some 30 kilos of alkaloid and an informant has testified that he received at least 30 million pesos, (about \$15,000) from a drug trafficker.

Source: *El País*, Cali, July 28, 2009.

* July 27, 2009. The Attorney General's office is investigating Jose Miguel Narvaez, the former Assistant Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) for his connections with paramilitaries. The extradited paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso has testified that Narvaez made a speech



to paramilitaries entitled “Why it is legal to kill communists in Colombia.” Another paramilitary commander, alias “El Iguano” testified that Narvaez was involved in the murder of a journalist, Jaime Garzon.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, July 27, 2009.

* July 27, 2009. Sunday night, July 26, some 100 Colombian Army soldiers from the 23d Brigade in Pasto (Narino Province) were sickened, apparently from eating spoiled chicken. Nearby hospitals reported their entire capacity was taken up by the sick soldiers. All were treated, but a few remained in critical but stable condition.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, July 27, 2009.

* July 26, 2009. A Colombian Army second lieutenant was suspended by the Inspector General for mistreating subordinates. He will not be allowed to return to service for ten years. The order states that he hit them with a cudgel for disobeying orders. Some of them were seriously hurt. A doctor attached to the infantry battalion reported that he had treated more than 20 soldiers and that seven are still receiving treatment.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, July 26, 2007.

* July 26, 2009. The Colombian Inspector General has ordered the discharge of eight National Police Officers, two Army soldiers, and one technician attached to the Attorney General’s office because of their collaboration with paramilitaries in 2002, 2008 and 2004. They will not be allowed to return to service for 20 years, according to the Inspector General’s order. The order finds that they furnished information and were accomplices in illegal acts, including selective murders, “paybacks”, and extortion, in return for payments of money.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, and *El Pais*, Cali, July 26, 2009.

* July 26, 2009. The United Nations has sent a special investigator to Colombia to review the treatment of indigenous people. A few hours before his arrival, the president of the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia complained that the Colombian Army had shot an indigenous leader to death. At meetings held by the UN investigator, James Anaya, indigenous people complained of other killings.

Source: *Radio Caracol*, *El Espectador*, Bogotá, July 26, 2009, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, July 27, 2009.

* July 26, 2009. Indigenous people meeting with the United Nations special investigator complained of a “false positive” in Pitayo (Cauca Province). They alleged that soldiers dragged an indigenous person from his house at 2 a.m. and his body was later found dressed in camouflage. The Army asserts that the individual was killed in combat with the guerrillas. Authorities did not reveal the identity of the victim.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, July 26, 2009.

* July 25, 2009. *El Tiempo* reports that the Colombian Army’s intelligence division paid five billion pesos (about \$2.5 million) for a surveillance system that would have allowed tapping of cell phones of guerrillas, drug traffickers and criminal gangs, but, for months, no interceptions have been possible because the equipment does not work. *El Tiempo* obtained a copy of an internal document



claiming that the contractor had defrauded the Army. The Army continues to negotiate with the various contractors involved.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, July 25, 2009.

* July 25, 2009. Colombia's Public Defender conducted a public hearing to hear complaints about the services of his office. Citizens complained that law enforcement was not protecting them from criminal gangs. Twenty mothers of civilians killed as "false positives" complained that they had been threatened because they had organized a survivors group. There are 100 cases of "false positives" from the Atlantic region. Formal complaints have not been filed in 54 of those cases because the families have received death threats.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, July 25, 2009.

* July 24, 2009. The trial of 17 Colombian Army soldiers charged with murdering three civilians and presenting them as guerrillas killed in combat ("false positives") begins with a motion by the defense to transfer the trials to military courts.

Source: *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, July 24, 2009.

* July 24, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier has pleaded guilty to aggravated homicide, admitting that he shot a fellow soldier to death on July 11 of this year.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, July 24, 2009.

* July 24, 2009. A demobilized paramilitary commander, Sergio Manuel Cordoba Avila, alias "El Gordo" (The Fat One), has testified that he killed 35 people, working from a list supplied to him by the National Police and by merchants.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, July 24, 2009.

* July 23, 2009. Aldemar Correa, a well-known Colombian actor, and his family filed a lawsuit against Colombian soldiers who killed his brother, a civil engineer, buried him in a common grave, and reported him as a guerrilla killed in combat. In the criminal proceeding, four soldiers from the Counter-Guerrilla battalion of the Army's Fourth Brigade were sentenced to 35 years in prison.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, July 23, 2009.

* July 23, 2009. Colombia's Attorney General stated that the Justice and Peace Law has led to the discovery of massacres that even the authorities did not know about. It has also made it possible to charge more than 300 members of the Armed Forces in at least a thousand cases of "false positives", not counting the most recent episode in Soacha (Cundinamarca Province).

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, July 23, 2009.

* July 22, 2009. A retired Colombian Army soldier is in custody and is being investigated in connection with an incident that may be a "false positive". Jose Magdaleno Vallecilla Hurtado was assigned to an anti-guerrilla battalion in Cauca Province. He is alleged to have shot a farmer who was just walking out of his house in April 2006.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, and Attorney General's web site, July 22, 2009.



* July 22, 2009. A Medellin judge has ruled that the Colombian Government is responsible for the death of a woman who was killed during a combined attack by the Army and the Police in Medellin in May of 2002. The case was brought by the Inspector General, who argued that the force used was excessive, including vehicles, tanks, helicopters and every kind of weapon in order to capture 34 people for minor crimes. The court found that the armed forces fired indiscriminately at the homes of poor people, killing two women and four children.

Source: *El Colombiano* and *El Mundo*, Medellin, July 22, 2009.

* July 22, 2009. Six Colombian Police apprentices have been discharged after being implicated in the sexual assault of a 13-year-old girl. One is being charged with sexual assault and the other five with dereliction of duty. The victim was one of a large group of displaced persons camped in a Bogotá park. The National Police have announced changes in police selection and training policies.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, July 22, 2009 and *El Pais*, Cali, July 23, 2009.

* July 22, 2009. A Colombian Army sergeant, Hector Gutierrez Velez, has been charged with helping paramilitaries kidnap two suspected guerrillas who were in Army custody at 17th Brigade headquarters in Carepa (Antioquia Province). Paramilitary commander Carlos Castano ordered the kidnapping. They were never seen again. Sergeant Gutierrez is charged with aggravated kidnapping and is jailed in Bogotá.

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* July 18, 2009. A Colombian National Police major and a second lieutenant, along with two patrolmen are accused of being involved in the disappearance of three women in the municipality of La Estrella (Antioquia Province). They were last seen on May 29 in an automobile along with a gang leader who was being arrested by police. Police inspectors believe that the four were taken to police headquarters, then allowed to leave in the same automobile, accompanied by a police patrol. They have not been seen since. The suspects are in custody.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, July 18, *El Mundo* and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, July 19, and *El Pais*, Cali, July 20.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, *El Mundo*, Medellin, July 18, 2009.

* July 18, 2009. Colombian human rights NGO's complain that the armed forces, especially the police, have refused to respond to threats to their lives from newly organized paramilitary groups, known as "Black Eagles". They refused to meet with police officials after the chief of police repeatedly denied that the "Black Eagles" were a threat, even though the NGO's state that Barranquilla is the city in Colombia where the most journalists have been threatened, and where human rights leaders have received as many as 50 written threats on their lives.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, July 18, 2009.

* July 16, 2009. Two paramilitary commanders were sentenced to 24 years in prison for taking part in the massacre at Mapiripan (Meta Province). They pleaded guilty to aggravated homicide, aggravated kidnapping, aggravated criminal conspiracy and terrorism. According to the evidence, from July 15 to July 20, 1997, paramilitaries killed at least 35 people at Mapiripan. The bodies of an undetermined number of victims were thrown into the Guaviare River. A Colombian Army



colonel and two noncommissioned officers have already been convicted for their part in the massacre.

Source: Attorney General's web site, July 16, 2009: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/DH/DhBananaerojul16.htm>

* July 15, 2009. Nine Colombian Army soldiers have been charged with aggravated homicide in the murder of four people. On January 14, 2007, in Cali, the soldiers killed the four individuals who were riding in a taxi. Later their bodies were presented as members of a criminal band of kidnapers. Seven of the nine defendants are free on bail.

Source: Attorney General's web site, July 15, 2009 and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, July 16, 2009.

* July 15, 2009. A Colombian Army noncommissioned officer and five soldiers from the Fourth Brigade have been charged with the murder of a farmer who they said was killed in an armed class in the municipality of Bello (Antioquia Province) on March 32, 2005. The farmer's body was found with a shotgun and a fragmentation grenade. One of the members of the Army patrol entered into a plea bargain and testified that the farmer was defenseless and that the shotgun and grenade were placed next to the body by the defendants. He also testified that each of the defendants received a reward of ten vacation days and some clothing.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá and Attorney General's web site.

* July 15, 2009. Two "recruiters" were each sentenced to 33 years in prison after they were convicted of multiple aggravated homicides. The prosecution proved that the two "recruited" four young men on November 21, 2005 and took them to the town of La Salada (Antioquia Province) where they were killed by soldiers and presented as guerrillas killed in combat. An Army second lieutenant and four soldiers have been charged in the case.

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/DH/DhRecluHomAgraJulio15.htm>

* July 15, 2009. The Colombian Army has launched a publicity campaign to counter the "false positives" scandal. ("False positives" means cases where Colombian Army officers and soldiers who receive rewards when they present guerrillas killed in combat, kill ordinary civilians and present them as guerrillas killed in combat.) As part of the campaign, the Army has asked Colombian citizens for pardon and to let bygones be bygones. There will be a series of commercials in which soldiers express their commitment and ask for the confidence of the community.

Source: *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, July 15, 2009.

* July 14, 2009. The Colombian Supreme Court of Justice has affirmed the sentences of a total of 177 years in prison for four soldiers from the Fourth Brigade. They had been found guilty of the forced disappearance of a former Police agent and merchant on June 1, 2007. The captain was sentenced to 44 years and the lieutenant and the soldier were sentenced to 43 ½ years in prison. Another soldier was sentenced to 46 years for killing the victims and stealing his belongings.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, July 14, 2009.

* July 14, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier is under arrest for the murder of a fellow soldier with his service weapon. The two were arguing when the victim was killed by one shot to the chest. The



Army is investigating the event, which took place at the Army base in Anchicaya (Valle del Cauca Province).

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, July 14, 2009.

* July 13, 2009. A Medellín tribunal affirmed the sentence of Uber Dario Yanez Cadavias, alias “Comandante 21” to 20 years in prison plus a fine for his part in the massacre at San Jose de Apartado (Antioquia Province). The prosecution established that Yanez and other paramilitaries served as guides for regular Colombian Army troops when the massacre was carried out.

Source: Attorney General’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/DH/DhMasacreJulio13.htm>
El Colombiano, Medellín, July 14, 2009.

* July 13, 2009. The Colombian Inspector General’s investigation of the illegal surveillance conducted by the Department of Administrative Security (DAS) (Colombian FBI) reveals that DAS officials wiretapped phone calls and other messages of journalists, judges, and opposition politicians without any control procedures. Detectives were able to intercept telephone communications and store them on computers without leaving any trace of their actions. Besides monitoring communications, detectives followed them in vehicles. The Inspector General is also investigating the destruction of documents at the commencement of the investigation.

Source: *SEMANA* news magazine, Bogotá, July 13, 2009.

* July 12, 2009. The Tarqui Battalion of the Colombian Army used classified ads to attract singles to 12-hour parties to be held at Battalion headquarters in Sogamoso (Boyaca Province). The ad gave a cell phone number to call. When a representative of *Caracol Radio* called the number, she was told that the cost was 32,000 pesos (about \$16) and that parties should bring a change of clothing. The Colonel in charge of the Battalion first denied that the party was private, or that there was a charge, but later indicated that the party was unauthorized.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, July 12, 2009.

* July 12, 2009. The Barranquilla daily *El Heraldo* quotes news magazine *Semana* reporting that the DAS (Colombian FBI) intercepted the e-mail correspondence of the Human Rights Watch director for the Americas, Jose Miguel Vivanco. The interception was ordered in January 2005 as part of an espionage campaign focused on persons considered “accomplices and defenders” of the FARC guerrillas. Other officials of Human Rights Watch were also espionage targets, including Iranian lawyer and Nobel Prize winner Shirin Ebadi, who visited Colombia in 2005.

Source: *El Heraldo*, July 12, 2009.

* July 11, 2009. Journalist Claudia Julieta Duque won her suit against the Colombian DAS for contempt of court. She had earlier sued the DAS, claiming that it had collected information against her, followed her, and intercepted her phone calls, and demanding the production of all of the information about her that the DAS had obtained illegally. The Constitutional Court granted her request last October, but the agency complied only partially. A subsequent criminal investigation revealed other documents that the DAS had failed to produce.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, July 11, 2009

* July 10, 2009. A Colombian National Police Patrolman was arrested and charged with murder in Melgar (Tolima Province). Investigators stated that, while intoxicated, he had killed his lieutenant



with his service revolver. He is being held without bail.

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/otras/ScJul08.htm>

* July 9, 2009. Nine Colombian Navy sailors have been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide, based on an incident that occurred in August 2005 in the town of San Rafael, in the municipality of El Carmen (Bolívar Province). Prosecutors claim that they killed Israel Arturo Mendoza Gutierrez and reported him as a guerrilla killed in combat.

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/CTI/CTInfantesJul09.htm>

El Heraldó, Barranquilla, July 10, 2009.

* July 9, 2009. The families of three young men killed by Colombian Army troops on July 4 have filed complaints with the Attorney General's office and have requested an investigation. The bodies of the three were presented to the press as guerrillas killed in combat, but their families insist that they were neither subversives nor criminals, but were young men who had traveled to Cauca because they were offered employment. The families said that the young men regularly left their homes in Cali to find work in other areas. They identified their bodies at the morgue in Popayan (Cauca Province).

Source: *El País*, Cali, July 9, 2009.

* July 7, 2009. The former assistant director of the DAS (Colombian FBI), Jose Miguel Narvaez, has been charged with four crimes in connection with the illegal interception and surveillance scandal: criminal conspiracy, illegal interception of communications, illegal use of transmission and reception equipment and falsifying documents. He had previously denied any connection with any of the illegal surveillance and interceptions that had been carried out by the DAS.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, July 7, 2009.

* July 6, 2009. The Vice President of Colombia, Francisco Santos, has revealed that in a meeting he had with the former assistant director of the DAS, Jose Miguel Narvaez, Narvaez admitted that he was listening in illegally on the director of the Vice President's Office of Human Rights. At that time, Narvaez was an assistant to the DAS director. He was later promoted to the position of assistant director. Vice President Santos stated that "We had a pretty strong confrontation and I threw him out of my office."

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, July 6, 2009; *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, July 7, 2009.

* July 6, 2009. Two Colombian Army lieutenants and five soldiers have been found guilty of homicide in two separate cases of "false positives". On June 3, 2004, troops from the Colombian Army's 4th Brigade reported the death in combat of a guerrilla, one German Dario Hernandez Galeano, in the town of Los Mangos (Antioquia Province). A revolver, two explosives and a communications radio were found near his body. Witnesses, however, testified that the soldiers had seized him while he was cutting cane on a nearby farm. A ballistics expert testified that the revolver was inoperative.

In the other case, soldiers murdered an engineer named Gonzalo Corea Roldan and a friend who was with him in a rural area of Yarumal municipality (Antioquia Province). They reported that



the victims were “criminals killed in combat”, and that the killings were part of a “mission”. The prosecutors proved that these statements were false. The soldiers were sentenced to 35 years in prison.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá; *El Colombiano*, Medellín, *El Pais*, Cali; *El Herald*, Barranquilla; *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga.

* July 6, 2009. Colombia’s Inspector General’s office reports that 1,603 Colombian soldiers have been investigated in “false positive” cases, dating back to 2003. The Inspector General’s office has opened investigations of 812 deaths that appear to have been “false positives”. According to the report, soldiers from 32 brigades are under investigation, including 301 officers, 488 noncommissioned officers, and 814 soldiers. Most of the cases have occurred in the Fifth Division, covering Cundinamarca, Boyaca, Tolima and Huila Provinces. According to the report, some of the military units used recruiters to contact poor or unemployed young men, promise them jobs, and then turn them over to the Army to be killed and presented as guerrillas killed in combat. Other victims were labor leaders or community leaders identified for killing and located by demobilized paramilitaries or others working with the Army. They are then presented as guerrillas killed in combat.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, July 6, 2009.

* July 5, 2009. The Colombian news magazine *Semana* headlines an article, “The Army Opened Catatumbo for the Paramilitaries”. The article reviews charges against a retired Colombian Army officer, Col. Victor Hugo Matamoros for his part in helping the paramilitaries take over the Catatumbo region (Norte de Santander Province) in 1999. A key witness is an Army major who is serving time in prison for his participation. Witnesses have testified that two Army generals met with paramilitary commanders Salvatore Mancuso and Carlos Castano to plan the operation.

On May 29, 1999, some 200 heavily armed paramilitaries crossed five provinces in a caravan of trucks. They were only stopped at one checkpoint where a second lieutenant telephoned for instructions and was told to let them pass, that “everything was square.” That first day, the paramilitaries killed five people and left their bodies in the road. The caravan then passed a Police checkpoint without being stopped. Having taken over the region, the paramilitaries allegedly met with Col. Matamoros and a colonel of Police for further planning. Later in the summer 65 of them, in three trucks went to Tibu, dragged people out of shops and houses, and a masked informant told them who was to be killed. This took place one block from the Police station. Nine people were killed and the paramilitaries entered the homes and business and took money and property.

In August of the same year the paramilitaries, without any Army or Police resistance, went to the town of La Gabarra and killed 35 people. The Army captain who was supposed to protect the people, has already been convicted and sentenced for his part in that event. The court found that he had removed the checkpoint at the entrance to the town, in order that the paramilitaries could enter, he paid no attention to calls for help, and he made no attempt to follow the killers.

Source: *Semana*, Bogotá, July 5, 2009.

* July 2, 2009. Four Colombian marines were arrested and charged with aggravated homicide, forced disappearance and falsification of documents in connection with the disappearance of two farmers from Las Palmas (Bolívar Province). Their bodies were found in El Carmen de Bolívar



(Bolívar Province) supposedly after combat. Two other marines were previously arrested and charged in connection with the killings. All are being held without bail.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, July 3, 2009 and Attorney General's web site, July 2, 2009.

* July 2, 2009. Extradited paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso has accused 31 high-ranking Colombian police and military officers, including retired General Rosso Jose Serrano, of having worked with the paramilitaries. As of this date, the Attorney General's office has not commenced its investigation. General Serrano is now Colombia's ambassador to Austria. Mancuso claims that General Serrano was close to the late paramilitary commander Carlos Castano and that he helped him (Mancuso) and another paramilitary commander, "Jorge 40" to escape after their capture in La Guajira in 1997.

Mancuso stated that a number of other generals actively collaborated in various massacres and that retired General Rito Alejo del Rio worked with him, with Carlos Castano and with another paramilitary commander, Fredy Rendon Herrera, known as "El Aleman" (The German). Mancuso also reiterated his previous testimony against the then-commanding general of the Colombian Armed Forces, General Carlos Alberto Ospina, who he says collaborated with the paramilitaries in the massacres in La Granja and El Aro, where more than 40 people were killed.

Source: *Semana* news magazine, *Caracol Radio*, *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Pais*, Cali, July 2, 2009.

* July 2, 2009. The former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) will be charged with aggravated criminal conspiracy, abuse of authority, and falsifying a public document, in the continuing investigation of the DAS wiretapping scandal. The conspiracy charge is based on allowing subordinates to carry out illegal invasions of privacy of judges, members of Congress, journalists and others by permitting them to be followed and their telephone conversations and e-mails intercepted.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Pais*, Cali, July 2, 2009.

* July 2, 2009. A retired Colombian Army colonel, Col. Alvaro Diego Tamayo Hoyos, has been accused by the Attorney General's office of faking a military combat and falsifying military reports in the case of the disappearance of a 19-year-old man from Soacha (Cundinamarca Province).

The news agency Colprensa also reports that a retired colonel being investigated for his part in the "false positive" cases accused the Army's former commanding general, General Mario Montoya, of measuring the accomplishments of military units by "body count", *i.e.* by counting those killed in combat.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, July 2, 2009.

* July 2, 2009. Six Colombian soldiers were each sentenced to 28 years in prison for the murder of two young men whom they killed in March 2006 and presented as guerrillas killed in combat. Two of the defendants were officers, a major and a captain. The prosecutor charged that the soldiers murdered the victims in order to receive time off as a reward.

In a related case, a judge ordered the arrest of 27 Colombian Army soldiers, including a retired colonel, in the death of a young man in March of 2008. Fifty-four members of the military are now under arrest in the recent killings of 11 young men from Soacha (Cundinamarca Province).

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, July 2, 2009.



* July 2, 2009. Colombia's acting Minister of Defense, General Freddy Padilla, stated that the extrajudicial executions that have been perpetrated by the Army have "horrified" and "shamed" his troops. He said that cases like the 11 men who disappeared at the beginning of 2008 in Soacha (Cundinamarca Province) and whose bodies were presented as killed in combat in Ocana (Norte de Santander Province) "fill us with shame and horror". He warned that justice will deal with the 54 soldiers who have so far been arrested in connection with the Soacha murders. The Attorney General is investigating 1,150 soldiers and police for the extrajudicial executions of 1,708 people in the last few years.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, July 2, 2009.

* July 1, 2009. A Colombian Army lieutenant and two soldiers have been charged with homicide in the killing of three indigenous people (Wayuu), including a child. The killings took place on January 21, 2006 in the town of Wuasimal (Guajira Province) during a search. The soldiers reported the three victims as killed in combat. They are being held without bail.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, July 1, 2009 and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, July 3, 2009.

* July 1, 2009. The Colombian Inspector General has charged a Colombian Army second lieutenant and a sergeant after two indigenous people (Wiwa), a child was injured and a six months pregnant woman was killed. The woman was caring for her two children, ages 2 and 5. The soldiers claimed that the injuries took place during combat between the military unit and FARC guerrillas. They claimed that the woman was fighting, had a shotgun, two kilos of explosives, weapons and propaganda materials, and was wearing size 40 combat boots. A relative testified that she was very small and could not have worn boots of that size.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, July 1, 2009.

* July 1, 2009. An NGO composed of Colombian lawyers has complained to the European Union in Brussels because the members believe that the DAS (Colombian FBI) has been spying on them since 2004. Their complaint states that they have been followed and photographed, and DAS agents have collected information about their families and their routines, all in order to sabotage their work on behalf of human rights.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, July 1, 2009 and *El Pais*, Cali July 2, 2009.

* July 1, 2009. A major and a captain in the Colombian Army have been arrested and charged with kidnapping and aggravated criminal conspiracy. The prosecution alleges that, working with an accomplice who is also in custody, they kidnapped a civilian, intending to kill him and report him as a guerrilla killed in combat. The Colombian Judicial Police intervened and prevented the killing.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/DH/DhjuicioSecJulio01.htm>

* June 30, 2009. The Attorney General of Colombia has arrested nine more members of the Armed Forces for their part in the murder and torture of an indigenous man, German Escue Zapata, on February 1, 1988. They are to be charged with aggravated homicide, torture, kidnapping, theft and damage to property. The Attorney General alleges that a Colombian Army patrol dragged Zapata from his house in the town of Vitoyo (Cauca Province). His body was found later with bullet wounds. The soldiers claimed that Zapata was killed in the cross fire



when the patrol was attacked by an illegal armed group. Three soldiers, a lieutenant and two noncommissioned officers, have already been sentenced to 18 years in prison for their participation.

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/DH/DhindigenaJunio30.htm>

* June 28, 2009. Philip Alston, the special envoy sent by the United Nations to investigate Colombia's "false positive" scandal, has issued a preliminary report. The report expresses concern about the technical-sounding term "false positives", believing that a better description would be "the cold-blooded and premeditated murder of innocent civilians". He notes that the scandal was not limited to Soacha, but that there were similar killings in Antioquia, Arauca, Valle del Cauca, Casanare, Cesar, Cordoba, Huila, Meta, Norte de Santander, Putumayo, Santander, Sucre and Vichada Provinces and that "an important number of military units were involved.

Alston's report states that adolescents and even a man with the mental age of nine years were among the victims. Recently ironed uniforms, boots four sizes too large, and left-handed victims with weapons in their right hands all show a pattern by a significant number of Army troops. He also denounced the threats and retaliation by the military against the victims' families after they complained.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 28, 2009.

* June 26, 2009. Colombian prison authorities are investigating the source of three explosions between 3 and 4 am in the La Picota prison. The artifacts or grenades appear to have been thrown into the prison from an Army base located next to the prison. A source indicates that a group of soldiers had been drinking and were playing with grenades, then threw them into the prison.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 26, 2009.

* June 26. Nine Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged in the disappearance and death of Joaquin Castro Vasquez and Elkin Gustavo Verano Hernandez. The two were last seen in Soacha (Cundinamarca Province) on January 13, 2008. Two days later they were reported as members of a criminal gang killed during an alleged armed combat with regular Army troops in a rural area in Abrego (Norte de Santander Province).

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/DH/DhFPSoachaJun26.htm>

* June 26, 2009. The Colombian Attorney General's office reveals that a criminal organization composed of both Army soldiers and civilians checked backgrounds in advance in order to recruit young men who had a history of alcoholism, drug addiction, or criminal records, in order to make them "false positive" victims. The Attorney General's complaint documents allege that the recruiters offered the young men work, then took them to Ocana, where they were taken to a fake checkpoint where a squad was waiting to kill them. Later a group of soldiers would prepare false intelligence reports describing their death in combat.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, June 26, 2009

* June 25, 2009. Eleven Colombian Army soldiers have been formally charged in the disappearance and murder of Joaquin Castro Vasquez and Elkin Hurtado Verano Hernandez in "false combat". The two victims were last seen in Soacha (Cundinamarca Province) and were reported killed in combat by troops headquartered in Ocana (Norte de Santander Province). An



AK47, a fragmentation grenade and a revolver were placed next to their bodies. But local residents reported that there were no illegal armed groups in the area and there had been no battle.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Pais*, Cali, and Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/DH/DhFPSoachajun25.htm>

* June 25, 2009. In presenting the charges for the deaths of the two young men named above, the Attorney General's staff pointed out that neither of them knew how to use a gun and that they were murdered in cold blood. Their identification documents were taken from them. The prosecution stressed that the soldiers had to produce bodies or they would not be able to obtain leave or be promoted.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, June 25, 2009.

* June 25, 2009. The Inspector General of Colombia has criticized the Attorney General's office for failing to order the arrest of retired Colombian Army General Miguel Maza Marquez, in connection with the assassination of Luis Carlos Galan Sarmiento on August 18, 1989. The Inspector General believes that there is enough evidence to charge the former general with participation in the assassination. He has also requested that the assassination of Galan be declared a crime against humanity.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali and *El Mundo*, Medellin, June 25, 2009.

* June 24, 2009. News analyst Laura Gil, writing for the news magazine *Cambio*, also comments on the preliminary report by Philip Alston, the special envoy sent by the United Nations to investigate the "false positives" scandal. She focuses on Alston's conclusion that the Colombian military justice system was doing everything in its power to impede the transfer of the cases to the civilian justice system. In addition, the report finds that the extrajudicial killings by members of the Colombian Armed Forces were systematic and followed a pattern. They were not isolated murders by a few "rotten apples" as government officials have claimed.

Source: *Cambio* news magazine, Bogotá, June 24, 2009.

* June 24, 2009. A retired Colombian Army colonel, Gabriel de Jesus Rincon Amado and Medardo Rios, a soldier, have been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide and criminal conspiracy in the recruitment, transportation, and murder of two young men, one only 17. The two were killed in January 2008 and later presented as guerrillas killed in combat. Witnesses testified that the colonel paid a million pesos (about \$500) for any person "killed in combat", and that 2,010,000 pesos (about \$1,000) was paid in an envelope for the two victims.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, June 24, 2009.

* June 24, 2009. So far, 27 Colombian military personnel have been arrested and charged in the killing of six young men who lived in Soacha (Cundinamarca Province). They are being charged with homicide, criminal conspiracy, forced "disappearance", and falsifying documents.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 24, 2009.

* June 24, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier was sentenced to 30 years in prison for killing a peasant farmer, supposedly as part of a military operation. On April 10, 2004, troops from the Colombian Army's Fourth Brigade reported the death of a civilian who supposedly was trying to dynamite a bridge. Next to his body were a fragmentation grenade and a shotgun. One of the



soldiers in the patrol confessed that they had planned to “legalize” the death of the civilian and that they had taken up a collection to buy the shotgun that they placed next to the body. One noncommissioned officer and three other soldiers have already pleaded guilty to the crime.

Source: Attorney General’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.c/AG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/secantioquia/SaFalsoPosiJun24.htm>

* June 24, 2009. An important demobilized paramilitary commander, alias “Don Berna”, extradited to the United States and now in U.S. custody, made an initial confession transmitted to Colombia so that victims’ families could hear it. He said that the demobilized paramilitaries are unwilling to make confessions because of threats to their families. He noted that two of his relatives in Colombia have already been killed. He said that, if families could be protected, the demobilized commanders would testify about the relationship between the paramilitaries and high-ranking Army and Police officials.

Alias “Don Berna” claimed that the massacre of eight people, including four children, at San Jose de Apartado on February 21, 2005, was the responsibility of Major Jose Fernando Castano of the Army’s 17th Brigade, headquartered in Carepa (Antioquia Province). According to “Don Berna”, Major Castano was the one who ordered the youngest children to be killed, stating that “they could grow up to be guerrillas.”

“Don Berna” also asserted that former Army General Mario Montoya and former National Police General Leonardo Gallego worked closely with paramilitaries in “Operation Orion” on October 16, 2002. They met with paramilitary leaders for planning, they provided intelligence, and they drove with the army, masked, to point out the homes of “guerrillas” to be killed.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, June 24, 2009. Also *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla.

* June 23, 2009. The Attorney General has charged two individuals with being accomplices to aggravated murder and aggravated forced disappearance. In early September 2007, they recruited young men and offered them jobs on farms in Cordoba Province . Later the young men were found dead and reported by Colombian soldiers as guerrillas killed in combat. The two are being held without bail.

Source: Attorney General’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/DH/DhReclutJune23.htm>

* June 23, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier killed a second lieutenant when his service weapons went off.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 23, 2009.

* June 23, 2009. Jorge Noguera, formerly the director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) is being investigated for his part in the illegal wiretapping scandal, in which DAS officials intercepted phone calls and e-mails of judges, journalists, and members of the political opposition. Noguera is now in prison awaiting trial for his connections with the paramilitaries.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Pais*, Cali, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, June 23, 2009.



* June 21, 2009. Thirty-three ex-paramilitaries making their confessions under the Justice and Peace law have maintained that they worked together with Colombian National Police, with members of the military, and with other government agencies. The Attorney has 97 open investigations of allegations of this nature. The name heard most often is the name of retired general Rito Alejo Del Rio Rojas. He has been identified by extradited former paramilitary commanders Salvatore Mancuso, Hebert Veloza Garcia, alias “HH”, David Hernandez Lopez, William Manual Soto Salcedo, Ruben Dario Rendon Blanquizez, and Alberto Garcia Sevilla as helping paramilitaries with their offensives. They testified that they met with officers of the 17th Brigade, headed by Rito Alejo, that they patrolled with them, and that they entered Brigade headquarters, seized “guerrillas” being held prisoner, took them away, and killed them.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, June 21, 2009.

* June 21, 2009. In an op-ed in the Sunday edition of *El Tiempo* in Bogotá, columnist Natalia Springer comments on the report made by Philip Alston, the special envoy sent by the United Nations to investigate the Colombian Army’s “false positives” scandal. He noted that the killings were neither “false” nor “positive”. Rather they were systematic massacres of innocent civilians by the Colombian military and for a prolonged period of time. He notes that the practice followed a common pattern that was well known to the Colombian authorities, and that the military was allowed to threaten survivors who complained.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 21, 2009.

* June 20, 2009. Attorney General Mario Iguaran stated that he did not begin to have the resources to investigate and prosecute the more than 1,000 reported cases of extrajudicial executions (“false positives”). In two years he has found more than 1,100 individuals connected with such killings, 230 convicted and another 500 charged.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, June 20, 2009.

* June 20, 2009. The Colombian Armed Forces and the Comptroller General are studying reward payments made since 2006. The examination is one of the 15 measures promised by the Armed Forces to avoid future “false positive” cases. On November 17, 2005, the Ministry of Defense issued a directive establishing a system of rewards for the killing or capture of guerrillas and their leaders.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 20, 2009.

* June 19, 2009. United Nations special envoy Philip Alston, an Australian, spent ten days in Colombia investigating the “false positives” scandal. He interviewed more than 100 witnesses and survivors. His preliminary findings make clear that the killings were not just carried out “on a small scale by a few bad apples.”

Source: Associated Press story, appearing in the *Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., June 18, 2009 and in the *Wall Street Journal*, New York, June 19, 2009.

* June 19, 2009. United Nations special envoy Philip Alston found no proof that the “cold-blooded murders of civilians” were an official Colombian government policy. His preliminary report states that such murders of young civilians were “a systematic practice” of the Colombian armed forces. He urged that the Colombian Army admit the extent of the problem and take the action necessary



to punish those responsible and prevent any repetition. The report also denounces “systematic harassment” by the military of survivors and their families.

Source: *El Pais*, Madrid, June 19, 2009.

* June 19, 2009. *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, interviews UN special envoy Philip Alston on the release of his preliminary report on the “false positives” scandal. He believes that the practice may have started in one province and the Army then instituted it in other areas. He said that some sources did tell him that the Army cooperated with the paramilitaries. In his interviews with the Soacha families, he was told that they had received significant threats. Most of them have had to leave their homes.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 19, 2009. Other news sources covering the release of the report include *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano* and *El Mundo*, Medellín, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, and *El Pais*, Cali.

* June 18, 2009. Columnist Laura Gil comments in *El Tiempo* on the report issued by Philip Alston, UN special envoy sent to investigate “false positives” in Colombia. She quotes his conclusion: “The very quantity of cases, their geographical distribution, and the diversity of military units implicated indicates that the executions were carried out in a manner more or less Systematic by a significant number of elements in the Army.” She blames the extensive use of rewards, days off, etc. as payment for “result” and calls the government “deaf and blind” for insisting on continuing to use rewards. She notes that while the Defense Ministry assured the special envoy that directive #29 providing rewards had been withdrawn, in fact, it was only modified and the reward system continues. She also points out that the “false positives” have actually been going on for years, and was not just discovered at Soacha.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 18, 2009.

* June 18, 2009. Six members of the Colombian Army, a captain, a noncommissioned officer, two soldiers and two retired soldiers have been charged by the Attorney General with aggravated homicide. They are accused of seizing three young men, two of them minors, and killing them on July 15, 2005 in Dabeiba (Antioquia Province). Their bodies were presented as guerrillas killed in combat.

Source: Attorney General’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/DH/DhFalsosPosiJune18.htm>

* June 18, 2009. A Colombian Administrative Court in Medellín has found the government of Columbia liable to pay 4 billion pesos (about \$2 million) to survivors of civilians killed in the Urrao massacre (Antioquia Province). Paramilitaries gathered 22 persons and began killing them. Some who survived by pretending to be dead testified that they saw Army soldiers among the killers. The Attorney General established that the large number of armed paramilitaries traveled freely on roads patrolled by the Army, soldiers and police took no action when vehicles stolen for the transportation of the bodies, and the fact that none of the victims had any connection with the guerrillas.

Source: *El Mundo*, June 18, 2009.

* June 16, 2009. Two reporters from *El Nuevo Herald* in Miami interviewed some of the “Mothers of Soacha” whose sons were murdered by the Colombian Army and presented as guerrillas killed in combat. Soacha (Cundinamarca Province) has some 700,000 inhabitants, and contains more



displaced people than any other city in Colombia. One mother said that her son had planned to enter the Army, as the other men in the family had done. He was contacted by two men who offered jobs, left with them, and was murdered in the municipality of Villa Caro, near Ocana (Norte de Santander Province). His body was found wearing a guerrilla uniform. When his mother did not hear from him, she worried and soon heard that other mothers in Soacha had the same concern. After they complained, authorities investigated. Some mothers actually received documents that identified their sons as guerrillas.

Source: *El Nuevo Herald*, Miami, June 16, 2009.

* June 14, 2009. Investigators from Colombia's Attorney General's office found in DAS (Colombian FBI) files a manual showing how to "shadow" judges, journalists, and political enemies. An investigator reported that the DAS group located parents and spouses of members of nongovernmental organizations, both Colombian and international; they photographed the children of defenders of human rights and even wrote threatening graffiti on walls near the house of a government official. It appears that they sent a bloody doll to a defense lawyer, with the message "You have a beautiful daughter; don't sacrifice her." The files contained photos and records of stalking the children and nieces and nephews of other human rights lawyers. The DAS officials collected photos, bank records, analyses of "habits, strengths and weaknesses", reports of places frequented, friends, property records, and international contacts. The practices ceased only a few months ago, after they came to light.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 14, 2009.

* June 12, 2009. United Nations special envoy Philip Alston met with government officials and with survivors of "false positives" victims in Medellín. Antioquia is the province that has had the highest number of killings, 220, of civilians by the Colombian Armed Forces. A lawyer from a non-governmental organization told him that the extrajudicial executions are continuing, with impunity.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellín, June 12, 2009.

* June 12, 2009. Extradited Colombian paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso writes a letter to President Uribe from his prison cell in the United States. He warns that the close relationship between the Colombian Armed Forces and the paramilitaries will be shown to be more serious than has been revealed up to now. He describes the relationship as "government policy".

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellín, June 12, 2009.

* June 11, 2009. A retired Colombian Army colonel, Gabriel de Jesus Rincon Amado, former chief of operations for the 15th Mobile Brigade, is accused of paying 2,200,000 pesos (about \$1,100) for the recruitment of two young men to be killed and presented as guerrillas killed in combat ("false positives"). The cash went for bus fare for the recruiters and the victims, and payments to the recruiters. The two victims were taken to a fake checkpoint, their identity documents were seized, and they were then killed. The Attorney General also charges that the report was falsified to state that the two victims were members of a gang engaged in cocaine trafficking.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 11, 2009.

* June 10, 2009. Two more retired Colombian Army generals have been charged in connection with the January 18, 1989 massacre at La Rochela (Santander Province). Twelve



judicial investigators were killed as they investigated a massacre that took place two years earlier. In May 2007 the Inter-American Court for Human Rights condemned the Colombian Government for its part in the massacre at La Rochela, and ordered that the investigation be re-opened and those responsible be charged and tried. (The Court has also condemned the Colombian Government for its part in the first massacre, in that the Army was also involved.)

One Colombian General has already been sentenced for failing to protect the judicial officers, for failing to respond after they were attacked and for his connection with the paramilitaries.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 10, 2009.

* June 8, 2009. The Colombian Senate heard testimony that 189 cases of human rights violations by the Colombian Armed Forces are being handled in the civilian criminal justice system. The Vice President of the Senate pointed out that this is an advance, because the military criminal justice system has recognized that these cases should be investigated by the ordinary criminal justice system.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, June 8, 2009.

* June 6, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier has pleaded guilty to aggravated homicide in connection with a violent rape of a person with a disability, a 55-year-old woman from El Roble (Sucre Province). The soldier was attached to the 17th Brigade headquartered in Carepa (Antioquia Province).

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 6, 2009.

* June 5, 2009. A Colombian Army major, two sergeants and an ex-paramilitary serving as a paid informant have been arrested and charged with homicide, falsifying a public document and embezzlement in connection with the killing of two farmers in Hato Corozal (Casanare Province). The two victims were reported as extortionists killed in combat with the Army. The Attorney General's office alleges that the two farmers were not criminals, that the ex-paramilitary signed the intelligence report submitted by the soldiers, although he did not know the victims or the location where they were killed. He also testified that the soldiers had paid him 200,000 pesos (about \$100), but the Attorney General alleges that the soldiers had paid him 5 million pesos (about \$2,500).

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, June 5, 2009.

* June 5, 2009. A Colombian Army Corporal faked his own kidnapping in 2005 and his family continued to draw benefits until he was captured in a street fight in May 2009. He will be discharged from the Army and charged criminally.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 5, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, June 6, 2009.

* June 2, 2009. A Colombian Army corporal has told prosecutors from the Attorney General's office that the murders of young men to be presented as "false positives" in Ocana (Norte de Santander Province) began at least as early as 2006. The corporal described how a young man from Soacha (Cundinamarca Province) was murdered and presented as a member of an illegal armed group who had been killed in combat. The Attorney General's office intends to prove that there was "a criminal organization", composed of both soldiers and civilians, that brought young men from other locations to kill them at Ocana, because the Army wanted "operational results". The



testimony was presented in connection with the arrest and charge of former Lt. Col. Alvaro Diego Tamayo, who allegedly demanded body counts and obtained reward money for the killers.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, June 2, 2009.

* June 2, 2009. The Attorney General has charged former Lt. Col. Alvaro Diego Tamayo with aggravated homicide, criminal conspiracy, forced disappearance, and falsifying public documents. He was discharged from the Colombian Army when his responsibility for “false positives” was discovered.

Source: *Caracol Radio* and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 2, 2009.

* June 2, 2009. The Attorney General’s office revealed new evidence demonstrating the tactics used by the Colombian Army in the “false positive” cases. For example, an Army report stated that 11 soldiers fired 550 cartridges and two grenades to kill two individuals, only one of whom was reported to be firing. The prosecutors found that there was no order for any operation in the area and on the day in which the victim was said to have been killed in combat. According to the testimony of soldiers, the colonel ordered a sergeant to find victims and take them to the area so that they could be killed and reported as having been killed in combat.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, June 2, 2009.

* June 2, 2009. A Colombian NGO, the Center for Investigation and Popular Education (CINEP is the Spanish acronym.) reports that cases of “false positives” have increased by 34% in 2008. There have been 95 cases with 175 victims in 19 of the 32 provinces in Colombia. Most of the victims were young men who were peasant farmers or came from poor areas. The report states that more than 94 percent of the killers are Army soldiers and the rest are National Police. Another NGO warns that some of the victims’ family members have been murdered, so that family members are afraid to complain.

The Attorney General’s office is working on 1,009 investigations of murders presumably committed by members of the Colombian Armed Forces, involving 1,666 victims.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, June 2, 2009.

* June 2, 2009. The Attorney General’s office is re-opening the long-closed investigation into the assassination of a leading politician, Luis Carlos Galan Sarmiento in 1989, based on new evidence. In 2007, a demobilized paramilitary commander testified that the assassination could never have been carried out without the cooperation of the DAS (Colombian FBI) and Army Intelligence. Police agencies may also have been involved.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 2, 2009

* May 30, 2009: Jhon Fredy Marulanda Urrego, ex-investigator of the CTI, was sentenced to nine years in prison for torturing a woman during a false raid. Marulanda arrived in a neighborhood in Belen in February 2002 to investigate the forced disappearance of Hernan de Jesus Ocampo Velasquez. After entering onto the property, he and the other criminals beat the sister of the disappeared man and demanded the money that her brother supposedly owed. Marulanda, who escaped from San Quintin de Bello prison, has an order out for his capture so that he may finish serving his sentence for aggravated torture. Marulanda is also being investigated for the murder of



CTI investigator Johan Orlando Castro Orozco and the attempted murder of Brisbani Orlando Gomez Vanegas.

Source: *Fiscalia*, Attorney General's Website. Medellin, May 29, 2009

May 30, 2009: According to Attorney General, Mario Iguaran, in the last 18 months 400 officials in the Police Force have been taken to court for their role in extrajudicial executions. Iguaran says that the Attorney General's office is taking measures to solve the murder of 11 youths in Soacha who were victims of "false positives". In the last ten months, the number of investigations into extrajudicial executions by the police have nearly doubled. In June of 2008 there were 555 such investigations and by April of 2009 there had been 1009.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, May 30, 2009

May 28, 2009: Ex-paramilitary Salvatore Mancuso who has been extradited to the U.S., admitted that his organization supported Uribe in the 2002 elections because of orders from their commanders. Mancuso also implicates subdirector of DAS, Miguel Narvaez, in indoctrinating the paramilitaries ideologically to favor Uribe.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, May 28, 2009

* May 28, 2009: Following the evidence contributed by the Attorney General to demonstrate the guilt of Metropolitan Police Sergeant Luis Alberto Lizarazo Rodriguez in the murder of a 27 year old youth, a judge entered a decision against the accused. According to the Attorney General in May of 2008 in Villas del Madrigal, Lizarazo Rodriguez gave the youth a kick in the head that caused his death. The Attorney General proved that the Sergeant used excessive force while the victim was defenseless. The Sergeant also self-inflicted wounds on himself to justify his encounter with the youth.

Source: *Fiscalia*, Attorney General's Website, Bogota, May 28, 2009.

May 28, 2009: Antonio Yesid Galindo Alvarez, an ex policeman was arrested in Bogota for the trafficking of 2, 7-ton packages of cocaine. He has been sentenced to 14 years in prison

*Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, May 28, 2009

May 28, 2009: The Attorney General called for the investigation of four ex-directors of the DAS and the legality of their activities with this office. The officials are expected to respond as to their responsibility in seven types of crimes. 30 more officials will also be investigated.

*Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, May 28, 2009

May 27, 2009: Two soldiers are implicated in the death of a young student. In March of 2005 the Giradot battalion reported finding the body of Samir Diaz, a minor, and next to his body, a shotgun.

*Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, May 27, 2009

May 27, 2009: The State Attorney General filed a list of charges against five members of the National Army for their participation in the murder of Fabio Nelson Rodriguez. According to the Attorney General, troops commanded by Army Captain Ivan Andres Gonzalez Villafane were patrolling the zone when they encountered Rodriguez and took him to an unfamiliar location. His



disappearance went unexplained until weeks later when his body was flown in an Army helicopter to Medellin and presented to his family as a guerilla killed in combat. The evidence shows that he was not in fact part of an armed group but rather an innocent civilian.

*Source: *El Colombiano Medellin*, May 25, 2009

May 26, 2009: The bodies of four young victims of extrajudicial executions in 2007 were buried. The youths were presented as killed in combat, “false positives”.

*Source: *El Tiempo, Bogota*, May 25, 2009

May 24, 2009: Colonel Nelson Guaidia Amezquita has been fined for physically and verbally attacking a patrolman that tried to stop him after seeing his dangerous driving maneuvers. He was obviously intoxicated and threatened the patrolman.

*Source: *Caracol Radio*, May 25, 2009

May 23, 2009: Eleven paramilitaries have been given 38 year prison sentences for their roles in the kidnapping and homicide of a man whose body had been dressed up by the military to seem like a guerilla. The man was leaving a party on his way to his mother's house when the paramilitaries kidnapped him. The paramilitaries then presented his body as killed in combat.

*Source: *El Herald*, Baranquilla, May 23, 2009

May 22, 2009: A major and a Corporal were arrested for their role in the 2005 murder of a peasant. The man was taken and beaten by the regiment and presented to his family as a guerilla killed in combat. The accused are also expected to be charged for their role in his forced disappearance and the illegal bearing of firearms.

Source: *Fiscalia, The Attorney General's Website*, May 22, 2009

May 21, 2009: An ex-soldier and police officer was arrested for the homicide of a student in 2005.

*Source: *Fiscalia, The Attorney General's Website*. May 21, 2009

May 21, 2009: A judge announces the arrest of 17 soldiers implicated in the disappearances of eleven youths and the deaths of three in Soacha. The Attorney General showed evidence that the guns found with the supposed guerrillas' bodies were purchased by the military. During the trial, the Attorney General also asserts that the soldiers knew the true origin of the youths but purposely hid that information.

Source: *El Tiempo, Bogota*, May 21, 2009

May 21, 2009: Based on the 1,666 denunciations of ‘false positives’ that have been made to the Attorney General, 436 military men have been arrested. It is estimated however that at least 1500 more cases have gone unreported.

* Source: *El Pais, Cali*, May 21, 2009

May 21, 2009: For their role in the disappearances of three of the eleven missing youths in Soacha, the Attorney General has charged 17 military men with the crimes of forced and aggravated



“disappearing”, aggravated homicide, and criminal conspiracy. Prison sentences may range from 8 to 60 years. The three youths were murdered using the tactics of “false positives”.

*Source: *El Pais, Cali*, May 21, 2009

May 21, 2009: The Attorney General revealed in trial that the three murdered youths in Soacha, who were later determined to be victims of “false positives”, were tricked by the military men into believing that they were being taken to visit the coast and promised the possibility of job opportunities

*Source: *Caracol Radio*, May 21, 2009

May 21, 2009: In Soacha the Attorney General is forming a case against 17 military men that may have participated in the deaths of three missing youths. The bodies of the three were reported as guerrillas killed in combat. The Attorney General intends to show that the youths were lured to Ocaña with the false promise of work opportunities.

*Source: *El Tiempo, Bogota*, May 21, 2009

May 20, 2009: The ERC political party in Spain wants to get involved in combating the human rights violations taking place in Colombia. According to the ERC, in the last 40 years, 22,000 people have been ‘disappeared’ and in the last five years one thousand more disappearances are attributed to the military. Human rights attorney Nancy Fiallo reports that 99 defenders of human rights have been murdered in the last three years, six have been ‘disappeared’ and countless others kidnapped and tortured for denouncing the military’s extrajudicial executions.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, May 20, 2009

May 19, 2009: A human rights attorney issued a preventative detention for an ex-battalion commander for his alleged role in the massacre committed in October of 2001 in Buga, (Valle del Cauca) in which 24 people were killed.

*Source: *El Colombiano, Medellin* May 19, 2009

May 19, 2009: A judge charged seven police officers for allegedly accepting bribes from a group of drug producers and distributors. After the break-up of the drug ring, the members confirmed that they were packaging and selling drugs with the backing of the police to whom they paid a monthly quota.

*Source: *Fiscalia, The Attorney General’s Website*, May 19, 2009

May 18, 2009: President of Costa Rica gave a speech at the Summit of the Americas entitled “Something We Have Done Badly”. This title could be applied to many cases but one case for example are the “false positives” committed by members of the police in Colombia. Measures are not being taken to investigate and punish those responsible for these claims. Last week some of the details about ‘false positive’ cases were illuminated, the ways in which these crimes are carried out: A member of the police encounters a defenseless person and later the body of the person turns up dressed in guerrilla gear and armed. The officer, for killing a guerrilla, receives a reward of 200,000\$. This signals not only the corruption of the police force but a degeneration of the value of life in the minds of Colombians. It is inconceivable to sell the life of another person for a pocketful of money.



It also denotes something very serious about society because “false positives” have happened not once but rather hundreds, of times.

*Source: *El Heraldo, Baranquilla*, May 18, 2009

May 18, 2009: An ex-police officer was assassinated by two hired hitman. The officer had retired after his arrest for his alleged role in “The 40” gang. He had only been out of prison two weeks when he was murdered.

*Source: *El Heraldo, Baranquilla*, May 18, 2009

May 17, 2009: In the 80’s the DAS decided that the best way to combat Pablo Escobar’s drug trade was by allying itself with the drug traders in Cali under the logic that an enemy of an enemy is a friend. This pact opened the doors for police corruption. The DAS became entangled with the dirty war between these competing drug cartels. Some agents would come to talk to reporters and divulge secrets and these reporters were then persecuted. This sordid situation worsened when Noguera entered and the paramilitaries who were meant to protect the state from criminals became a cave filled with assassins. It is now the duty of the DAS to investigate the infiltration of the mafia into the higher courts.

*Source: *El Tiempo, Bogota*, May 17, 2009

May 17, 2009: Seven police officers in Bucaramanga were fired from their positions for extortion against drug dealers. The seven had a trial and were sent to prison in Bucaramanga.

*Source: *Caracol Radio* May 17, 2009

May 15, 2009: Attorney General wants six soldiers charged in a case of “false positives” for their participation in the ‘disappearing’ of two young people in Soacha. While awaiting charges these six will not be entrusted to provide security to the community. The victims were presented as “fallen in combat” and reported as guerrillas. Informants from the military told the Human Rights office that the only instruction they were given was to obtain fallen guerillas; they were to find men and demonstrate that they had died in combat. Other informants’ statements support these assertions of the Attorney General.

*Source: *El Pais. Cali* May 15, 2009

May 15, 2009: A sergeant in the army reveals that for each of the “false positives” in Soacha, a million pesos were paid to the assassin. The sergeant reports discussions among his superiors about the prices they were willing to pay for bodies presented as guerillas killed in combat.

*Source: *Caracol Radio*, May 15, 2009

May 15, 2009: The Attorney General says that the killing of two young people in Soacha was staged to look like they were guerillas fallen in combat. The two were lured on false promises to Ocana, killed, and presented as guerillas. The Attorney General is charging four professional soldiers with aggravated homicide, conspiracy, fraud and falsification of documents. The four are being preventatively detained.

*Source: *El Tiempo, Bogota*, May 15, 2009



May 15, 2009: Coronel Jorge Alberto Amor Perez is being investigated for his role in the massacre of 24 people that occurred in 2001 in Buga.

*Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, May 15, 2009

May 15, 2009: Six military men are behind bars while they are being investigated for the murders of two youths. The Attorney General is continuing the investigation of 49 other possible soldiers involved.

*Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota May 15, 2009

May 15, 2009: Four people, including one active military official, were arrested for the appropriation of 1200 million pesos of Military funds.

*Source: *Fiscalia The Attorney General's Website* May 15 2009

May 15, 2009: The office of Human Rights, investigating the murder of 11 youths in Soacha, charged two military officials, one subofficial, and three professional soldiers with homicide, "disappearing", and criminal conspiracy. None of the charged military men accept the accusations, claiming that they were fighting against an armed enemy and that the victim was not obligated to accompany the soldiers, but rather, did it of his own accord.

*Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, May 15, 2009

May 15, 2009: A judge in Soacha sentenced four military men to sentences ranging from 45 to 58 years in prison for kidnapping and homicide.

*Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, May 15, 2009

May 14, 2009: The Attorney General calls for the prosecution of six soldiers implicated in the murder of a mentally challenged man whose body was dressed up to look like a guerilla. The Attorney General also asks that the soldiers be charged with conspiracy, forging public documents, and forced disappearance.

*Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, May 14, 2009

May 14, 2009: A witness in the trial against the six soldiers accused of murdering a man in Soacha reveals details of the tactics used to kidnap the victim. According to the testimony the military would wait in a police car in the dark areas of the highway and pullover the victims as they passed. They then kidnapped and murdered them, and placed their bodies in guerilla combat territory to receive rewards for apparently killing a guerilla in combat.

*Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, May 14, 2009

May 14, 2009: An informant today spoke about the grave human rights situation in Colombia. In 2008 there were 535 reported extrajudicial executions. This points to the idea of two Colombias; the one, in which there is no war according to the government, and the other in which an attempt was made on the life of the twelve year daughter of a protestor of this violence. How do we expect to fix this problem if we keep denying its existence.

*Source: *Vanguardia*, Baranquilla May 14, 2009



May 14, 2009: The Attorney General presses charges against six military men for the murder, conspiracy and kidnapping. The victims were summoned with false promises of job opportunities, then killed, dressed up like guerillas, and presented as killed in combat. One of the victims had mental handicaps, attended a special needs school and was incapable of reading or writing. His body was turned in by the military men for rewards for killing a guerilla fighter in another case of a “false positive”

*Source: The Attorney General’s website, Bogota, May 14, 2009

May 14, 2009: The Attorney General revealed in court that there is evidence of an organization made up of military men and civilians that is dedicated to committing “false positives”. This organization and the six charged soldiers are thought to be responsible for the murder and kidnapping of the youths in Soacha. The judge rejected the defendants plea that they were acting in self-defense and declared that the victims were in fact defenseless

*Source: *Caracol Radio* May 14, 2009

May 14, 2009: Luis Miguel Sierra Diaz, a professional soldier, was linked to the murder and disappearance of 11 people between July and August 2007. The victims were lured with false promises of work then killed and dressed up like guerrillas.

*Source: *Caracol Radio* May 14, 2009

May 14, 2009: The trial began for 6 of the 49 accused soldiers involved in the murder and kidnapping of 11 youths in Soacha. The penalty could be as much as 60 years in prison

*Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin May 14, 2009

May 14, 2009: The four military officials accused of murder, kidnapping and conspiracy in connection with the “false positive” reports in Soacha deny the charges.

*Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota May 14, 2009

May 13, 2009: The Human Rights Attorney General is bringing charges against 3 sub-officials and 6 professional soldiers for the murder and kidnapping of a “false positive” victim, a 19 year old man. The soldiers waited by the side of the road at night then accosted the victim demanding his legal papers. He was then kidnapped and dressed up to look like a guerilla fighter killed in combat.

*Source: The Attorney General’s website, Medellin, May 13, 2009

May 13, 2009: 49 soldiers will be brought to trial for their role in the kidnapping, murder, and “false positive” presentation of 11 youths in Soacha.

*Source: *Caracol Radio* May 13, 2009

May 13, 2009: The Attorney General is bringing charges against five soldiers for their role in the murder of three youths in Antioquia. The three had met in the park and were summoned into a taxi where they were taken and killed and presented as guerillas killed in combat

*Source: The Attorney General’s website, Bogota, May 13, 2009

May 13, 2009: 5 members of the military were charged with disappearance, torture, conspiracy and murder. They are accused of kidnapping and murdering a girl of sixteen who was living with



her sister one day and the next day was dressed up by the soldiers and presented as a guerilla killed in combat so that they would receive a reward.

*Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, May 13, 2009

* May 13, 2009: In the first action under new director, Hugo Daney Ortiz, 300 falsified DAS judicial certificates were captured in raids. This operation also captured Carlos Alberto Vargas who will be prosecuted for criminal conspiracy.

Source: *El Mundo*, May 13 2009.

* April 30, 2009. The human rights unit of the Colombian Attorney General's office is investigating 1,666 homicides alleged to have been committed by members of the Colombian armed forces. Fifty-one of the victims are children. In June 2008, the unit had only 555 such cases, but there has been an increase of 82%. According to the report, such cases began to increase in 2001, when there were 10 cases. In 2003, there were 37, in 2004, there were 89, and in 2007, 390 such cases were reported.

The report further states that, as of this date 83 members of the armed forces have been convicted and 232 are in trial or awaiting trial.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, April 30, 2009.

* April 30, 2009. The Colombian Attorney General's office is preparing charges of aggravated homicide, forced "disappearance", misuse of public funds and falsifying a public document against eight soldiers for the murder of two young men from Soacha (Cundinamarca Province). The two victims were reported as members of an illegal armed group killed in combat in Cimitarra (Santander Province). The defendants include a retired lieutenant colonel, a retired lieutenant, a retired sergeant and five soldiers.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and the Attorney General's web site, April 30, 2009.

* April 29, 2009. The Colombian Inspector General has filed charges against to Colombian Army soldiers, accusing them of executing a wounded kidnap victim and then presenting his body as guerrilla killed in combat. According to the investigating, Mauricio Vives Lacouture was kidnapped by guerrillas in November 2005. When the Army attacked the guerrilla camp where the captive was kept, the guerrillas shot and wounded him and then fled, leaving him behind, where he was killed by the soldiers.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, April 29, 2009.

* April 29, 2009. A Colombian Special Forces captain has been arrested and charged with murder in connection with the May 25, 2004 murder of two brothers. The soldiers reported falsely that the two had attacked buses and fired on the soldiers. The investigation revealed that the two had nothing to do with criminal gangs and instead ran a food business in Medellin. Four noncommissioned officers and 11 soldiers have already been found guilty in the incident and are awaiting sentencing.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, and Attorney General's web site.



* April 29, 2009. The former paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso, now extradited to the United States for drug trafficking, confessed that, at the request of Colombian politicians and military commanders, his troops had cremated hundreds of bodies in ovens located near the Venezuelan border. Mancuso's statement was made in a deposition in which he answered questions for families of people killed by paramilitaries under his command.

In his deposition he stated that the action was taken after a meeting with military officials and politicians in which they agreed that they would do the authorities a favor and lower the statistics of victims of paramilitary violence. There were too many murders and massacres coming to light in 2001-2003. Mancuso said that the bodies were disinterred after being buried for months and taken to cremation ovens to eliminate evidence of the crimes.

The ovens were first mentioned in another confession in October 2008, by the paramilitary commander Jorge Ivan Laverde, alias "El Iguano". He said that the first oven was built in 2009 to cremate 98 bodies in Norte de Santander Province. In 2004 another oven was built on a ranch in the same area, and 20 bodies were cremated there.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Herald*, Barranquilla, *El Colombiano*, Medellín, April 29, 2009, and *El Mundo*, Medellín, April 30, 2009.

* April 29, 2009. The *Manchester Guardian* revealed a letter from United Kingdom Foreign Minister David Miliband to the House of Commons that UK military aid to Colombia will be suspended because of the "false positives", murders of civilians committed by Colombian military. About a month ago, U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy froze more than \$70 million in U.S. military aid, also because of the "false positives".

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 29, 2009.

* April 29, 2009. Eleven more intelligence officers have been fired by the DAS (Colombian FBI) after the discovery of illegal wiretapping and stalking by DAS officers. This brings the total of officials discharged since the discovery of the scandal to 33. The internal investigation has uncovered 104 intelligence files that had been kept "off the record". The files contained information collected about judges, journalists, and opposition politicians.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *El Mundo*, Medellín, *El Herald*, Barranquilla, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, and *El País*, Cali, April 29, 2009 and *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., April 28, 2009.

* April 29, 2009. The Colombian Inspector General has asked the Attorney General to file criminal charges against the former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) Jorge Noguera Cotes, because of his support for paramilitaries between 2002 and 2005. He is accused of impeding investigations into paramilitary activities and protecting paramilitary commanders. The Inspector General also believes that Noguera used his position for his own financial gain and accepting bribes.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá and *El Colombiano*, Medellín, April 29, 2009.

* April 28, 2009. The current director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) reported to the Attorney General that DAS detectives working on the wiretapping investigation had been manipulating information in order to hinder the investigation. He turned over 104 additional files that had not been inventoried.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, April 28, 2009.



* April 28, 2009. The Chief Justice of the Colombian Supreme Court complained that DAS (Colombian FBI) officials lied to the Court on two occasions, by denying that DAS detectives were wiretapping and intercepting communications of the judges, when, in fact, they were doing that.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 28, 2009 and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, April 27, 2009.

* April 28, 2009. Colombia's Attorney General has charged a Colombian Army lieutenant, a sergeant and a soldier with the murder of two young farm workers in a rural area of Almaguer (Cauca Province). On May 26, 2005, they reported the two victims as guerrillas killed in combat. They also reported capturing weapons and munitions. The Attorney General's investigation revealed that the two young men had no connection with any illegal armed group.

Source: *El Tiempo*, April 28, 2009, and Attorney General's web site, April 27, 2009.

* April 28, 2009. The Attorney General's report on his investigation of illegal wiretapping and surveillance by the DAS (Colombian FBI) states that the illegal acts do not appear to be the work of a few "undisciplined" agents, but rather a carefully planned operation. There were reports on various judges, biographical information about them and their families, including "analysis" of each of them, data about their political connections and even "intimate aspects of their personal lives". Wiretapping is not legal unless by court order. Not only judges, but also the Vice-President, a former president, a former Minister of Defense, and police officials were subject to the wiretapping.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, April 28, 2009.

* April 27, 2009. Not only did DAS agents intercept the conversations of judges, but they followed them on their vacations, checked their bank records and where they stayed and how they paid when on vacation and reported on their attendance at a birthday party .

Source: *El Pais*, Barranquilla, April 27, 2009 and *Vanguardia Liberal*, April 25, 2009 .

* April 27, 2009. Colombia's Attorney General gave an interview to *El Tiempo* after his department's investigation into illegal wiretapping and surveillance by the DAS (Colombian FBI). He reports that DAS officials have systematically wiretapped and even followed judges and government officials. *El Tiempo* considers this especially serious because the DAS reports directly to the President.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 27, 2009.

* April 27, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier has been captured and charged with homicide, forced "disappearance", and criminal conspiracy in connection with the deaths of ten young men in Toluviejo (Sucre Province). During the months of July and August 2007, 11 young men "disappeared" from this town and were later reported as killed in combat with the guerrillas. An investigation revealed that they had been recruited with phony job offers and turned over to the Army to be killed as guerrillas. The bodies of all but one of them have been found. The defendants are being held without bail.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, and Attorney General's web site, April 27, 2009.

* April 27, 2009. A Colombian Army lieutenant and two soldiers have been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide in the death of a laborer, whom they presented as a guerrilla killed in combat. The soldiers testified that they were carrying out an operation to capture some



extortionists when they killed the “guerrilla”. His body was found with a revolver, several cartridges and some explosives. The investigation revealed that the victim was a beekeeper, had never been involved in extortion, and had no criminal record. In addition, no Army operation had been ordered in the sector.

Source: Attorney General’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/otras/ScFalsoPosiAbr27.htm>

* April 27, 2009. The President of Colombia’s Supreme Court of Justice, Jaime Arrubia, has complained that the illegal wiretapping of judges and other officials, conducted by officials of the DAS (Colombian FBI) was planned by top managers, those in authority over the agency, and not just by a few rash detectives.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, April 27, 2009.

* April 27, 2009. The Commander of the Colombian Army’s Third Division has opened a disciplinary investigation into the possible misuse of an Army vehicle by three soldiers. The vehicle was close to the house of writer Gustavo Alvarez Gardezabal when a group of armed men broke in. Several high-ranking military officers met with Alvarez Gardezabal to apologize for “a sad coincidence” between the armed assault on his home at the same time that the Army vehicle was being used by a sergeant to help a peasant farmer family. The author stated that six men and one woman had threatened him and then robbed him of two computers and two cell phones.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 27, 2009

* April 27, 2009. Writer and journalist Gustavo Alvarez Gardezabal characterized the Colombian Army’s denial of its participation in the break-in at his home as “ridiculous.” The Army’s chief of intelligence for Valle del Cauca maintained that the Army vehicle was carrying out humanitarian work in aid of a peasant farmer family when it was captured on a surveillance camera near the author’s home. Colombia’s President Uribe has ordered special protection and bodyguards for Alvarez Gardezabal.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, April 27, 2009, and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 26, 2009.

* April 26, 2009. A Colombian NGO, the Center for Investigation and Popular Education (CINEP is the Spanish acronym.) has documented 175 civilians killed by the Armed Forces and presented as guerrillas or criminals killed in combat (“false positives”. The government has stated that only one “false positive” case is known since October 2008 when the Soacha scandal was uncovered and more than 30 Army officers were discharged. Nevertheless, another NGO, the Observers for Coordination among Colombia, Europe and the United States, has documented six such cases between December 2008 and March 2009. The newspaper *El Espectador*, also points out that often months pass between a victim’s disappearance and the family’s complaint or the discovery of the body, opining that it is too soon to conclude that “false positives” have been eliminated.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, April 26, 2009.

* April 25, 2009. A well-known Colombian writer, Gustavo Alvarez Gardezabal, who appears on *Caracol Radio*, complains that the Army is implicated in an armed break-in at his residence. He demanded that the Army explain why one of its vehicles was parked nearby two minutes before the attack. The local Police Commander stated that several vehicles were being investigated, not just



the Army vehicle and that photos of three men had been captured on a surveillance camera near the author's residence.

Source: *Caracol Radio, El Espectador*, Bogotá, April 25, 2009.

* April 24, 2009. Eight Colombian soldiers have been arrested in connection with the murder of young men from Soacha (Cundinamarca Province). The investigation shows that they and several accomplices recruited young men with promises of good-paying jobs, transported them to Ocana (Norte de Santander Province) where they were killed and reported as guerrillas killed in combat ("false positives"). They will be charged with aggravated forced disappearance, aggravated homicide, and criminal conspiracy.

Source: *El Tiempo, Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, April 24, 2009.

* April 23, 2009. Five Colombian Army soldiers were arrested and charged with aggravated murder. They killed three women and one man on July 22, 1998, and reported them as guerrillas killed in combat. An investigation showed that their report of combat was inaccurate and inconsistent with the testimony they gave to investigators.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellín and Attorney General's web site, April 23, 2009.

* April 22, 2009. After families in Soacha (Cundinamarca Province) complained of the disappearance of 11 young men, the Colombian Army conducted an internal investigation. *Caracol Radio* obtained a copy of the Army's internal report on the "false positives". According to the report, the Army had a network of "recruiters" in Soacha. The recruiters offered their victims jobs and paid their way to Ocana (Norte de Santander Province). The recruiter was paid 1,250,000 pesos (about \$625) for each person recruited and later murdered. After the young men arrived in Ocana, the soldiers took their identification papers and killed them. They were then reported as unnamed guerrillas killed in combat. The report revealed that one of the dead men was wearing boots too small for him and only half on; another, in spite of the heat was wearing three shirts and a uniform that didn't fit. A third was wearing boots so new that the soles were white—they had never touched the ground.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, April 22, 2009.

* April 22, 2009. Both the Attorney General and the Inspector General are investigating the illegal wiretapping carried out by DAS officials, mostly between August 2007 and the end of 2008. DAS directors and highest officials are involved, according to investigators. The Inspector General has found at least 700 interceptions that were not properly documented.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellín, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, April 22, 2009.

* April 22, 2009. The interim director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) has discharged 22 officials in connection with the illegal wiretapping scandal. The officials worked in various parts of the country. Three detectives are charged with crimes. Besides illegal wiretapping, some are charged with burglary, "leaking" of confidential documents, "loss" of weapons and captured drugs, and allowing a drug trafficker to escape.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, April 22, 2009.



* April 22, 2009. A “recruiter”, Andres Rafael Corrales Narvaez, has been arrested and charged for his part in the “disappearance” of 11 young men from Toluviéjo (Sucre Province). In July or August of 2007, the defendant offered them ranch work for a good salary. Later they were murdered and reported by the Colombian Army as guerrillas killed in combat.

Source: Attorney General’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/DH/DhFalsosPosiAbr22.htm>

* April 21, 2009. A Colombian NGO, the Center for Investigation and Popular Investigation (CINEP is the Spanish acronym.) reports that, in spite of the “false positives” scandal and the discharge of more than 30 military officials, extrajudicial murders by soldiers have continued. Army officials deny the claim. CINEP figures show that there were 95 cases of “false positives” and 175 deaths last year, fewer than the figures for 2007 (149 cases with 324 victims). The Army claims that there have been no new “false positives” since the scandal was brought to light in October 2008, but CINEP identifies 35 cases in the last two months of 2008. Colombia’s Inspector General is investigating more than 900 cases from 2007 and 2008, while the Attorney General is investigating another 716 complaints.

Source: *Semana*, Bogotá, April 21, 2009.

* April 21, 2009. The Colombian Attorney General’s investigation of the DAS (Colombian FBI) wiretapping scandal shows that the agency had four groups dedicated to the illegal interceptions, each with specific functions. One group was focused on judges, collecting information on their finances and travels. Another group followed and intercepted messages of members of the opposition political party.

Investigators found a file labeled “Vices and Weaknesses”, containing a detailed report about very intimate details in the lives of opposition politicians and judges, including sexual preference, whether they had lovers, or consumed drugs or alcohol.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, April 21, 2009.

* April 21, 2009. The preliminary report on the DAS wiretapping scandal emits a “stench”, according to the Attorney General. DAS agents tracked the private lives of nine criminal court judges and at least eight judges from the civil and labor sections of the Supreme Court of Justice. Twenty-two DAS agents have been discharged in connection with the scandal, and the Attorney General’s office is studying criminal charges.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, April 21, 2009, and *El Mundo*, Medellín, April 22, 2009.

* April 20, 2009. The President of the Human Rights Subcommittee of the European Parliament, Helene Flautre, has called on the European Union to act “more firmly and boldly” to defend the rights of Colombian citizens. She notes that Colombia is experiencing an “extremely serious human rights crisis” and that many human rights violations are being committed directly by agents of the Colombian government, such as extrajudicial executions.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, April 20, 2009.

* April 20, 2009. Colombia’s Vice Minister of Defense, Sergio Jaramillo, confirmed that Great Britain has reduced its military aid to Colombia because of the “false positives” scandal. Members



of the U.S. Congress have also expressed concern. He made the statement in a meeting of military leaders at the military college.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, April 20, 2009.

* April 20, 2009. A retired Colombian Army sergeant has been arrested and charged with trafficking weapons. A search of his residence revealed two M60 machine guns, two rifles, two 9mm pistols, three M60 machine gun barrels, and ten rifle barrels. Besides the weapons, the residence contained various tools and parts for the assembly of revolvers and rifles.

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/AG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/secbogota/SbSubofArmasAbr20.htm>

* April 20, 2009. A Colombian soldier was captured after a warrant was issued for his arrest on charges of aggravated homicide. He is charged with killing two civilians who were presented as guerrillas killed in combat on September 25, 2007. Evidence collected at the scene and the testimony of witnesses support the conclusion that the victims were farmers who were not connected with any armed group.

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/CTI/CTIFalsosPosiAbr20.htm>

* April 18, 2009. *El Espectador* tells the story of one of the "Mothers of Soacha" Carmenza Gomez Romero learned that her son had gone to "the coast" for an offer of work and two weeks later was found dead in the morgue at Ocana (Norte de Santander Province). Army officials told her he was a guerrilla killed in combat. She joined other mothers in Soacha who had experienced the same thing. Another of her sons took part in the effort to find out what had happened. The family began to receive death threats and, within six months, her second son was murdered by a "hit man". She is more determined than ever to find her son's killers, but now one of her daughters has also been threatened.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, April 18, 2009.

* April 18, 2009. *El Tiempo* reports on the method used by the Colombian Army soldiers in Ocana (Norte de Santander Province) to lure young men from Soacha (Cundinamarca Province) to be killed and presented as guerrillas killed in combat. One of the soldiers, a corporal, decided to cooperate with the Attorney General's investigation. According to his testimony, all of the members of a particular squadron, Boyaca 22, took part in the murder of two victims, Camilo Andres Valencia and Daniel Suarez Martinez. The two were recruited by a civilian who also has cooperated with the Attorney General. He says he received 100,000 pesos (about \$50) for recruiting the two .

The corporal said that the victims were usually turned over to the soldiers during the night and they were killed early the following day, so that it appear more likely that there had been combat. They received the order to kill them by radio from their lieutenant. Their superiors never asked where and how the Boyaca 22 squadron was accumulating its "positives". They just signed the false reports without checking.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 18, 2009.

* April 17, 2009. Colombia's Inspector General has ordered that Rafael Enrique Garcia Torres, the former chief of information of the DAS (Colombian FBI) not hold any public office or employment for 15 years. The Inspector General found that Garcia had ordered the alteration and



deletion of information from the DAS database in 2004. Two of his former subordinates received similar punishments for their part in the actions.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *Caracol Radio*, and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, April 17, 2009, and *El Mundo*, Medellín, April 18, 2009.

* April 17, 2009. Investigators from the Colombian Attorney General's office have determined that DAS (Colombian FBI) officials illegally wiretapped more than 600 people, and that the same officials have destroyed relevant records and other evidence.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, April 17, 2009.

* April 16, 2009. A Colombian Army sergeant, a corporal, and five soldiers from Brigade XVII have been sentenced to 30 years in prison for the murder of a farmer in the municipality of San Jose de Apartado (Antioquia Province). The soldiers had testified that on January 12, 2006, they were fighting guerrillas, and that Edilberto Vasquez Cardona had been killed in the combat. His body was found with a hand grenade, a rifle, 86 5.56 cartridges, and a communication radio. However, the Attorney General's office determined that there had been no combat, and that the victim had been dragged from his home and executed by the soldiers.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano* and *El Mundo*, Medellín, and the Attorney General's web site, April 16, 2009, and *El Pais*, Cali, April 17, 2009.

* April 15, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier has pleaded guilty to attempted murder after he tried to kill two other soldiers. He pretended to be ready to pay them a debt of six million pesos (about \$3,000) but when they got into his car, he attacked them. He is assigned to the XIII Brigade.

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/AG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/secbogota/SbSLPAsegAbr16.htm>

* April 15, 2009. The Inspector General has punished five Colombian Army soldiers for their responsibility in the death of a child in 2003. His investigation determined that they believed that guerrillas occupied a certain house and they charged in with guns blazing, without trying to find out if there were children present.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, April 15, 2009.

* April 14, 2009. The Colombian NGO CINEP, (Center for Investigation and Popular Education) reports that in 2008, there were cases of "false positives" (murders of civilians by the armed forces) in more than half of Colombia's provinces. There was an increase of 35% of reported cases in the second half of 2008. A CINEP spokesman stated that more cases were reported after the Soacha scandal came to light.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, April 14, 2009.

* April 14, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier and a "recruiter" are the first defendants to be charged in the Soacha "false positives" scandal. They are charged with the murder of two civilians, Daniel Suarez Martinez and Camilo Andres Valencia. Their actions were described in *El Tiempo's* article dated April 18. The Attorney General will investigate their participation in other murders.

Source: *El Tiempo*, and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and the Attorney General's web site, April 14, 2009, *El Colombiano*, Medellín, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, April 15, 2009, and *El Mundo*, Medellín, April 17, 2009.



* April 14, 2009. A former Colombian Army commander is being investigated for his alliance with a paramilitary leader. According to the Attorney General's investigation, between January 2002 and December 2003, while he commanded an Army Battalion in Valledupar (Cesar Province), he conducted meetings with the paramilitaries. He is also connected with a "false positives" proceeding.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, April 14, 2009 and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, April 15, 2009.

* April 14, 2009. Colombia's Public Defender first warned Colombian authorities in December 2007 that young men from Soacha (Cundinamarca Province) were being recruited for jobs and then "disappearing". He repeated the warning in July 2008. It was not until a large public meeting in Soacha in October 2008, where victims' families exchanged information about the disappearance of the young men, that the government began to investigate, according to the Public Defender's statement.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, April 14, 2009

* April 13, 2009. The Attorney General's office has issued a warrant for the arrest of a Colombian Army officer charged with aggravated torture and aggravated assault and battery. To punish soldiers who had lost service weapons, he punched them, threatened to shoot them, and tried to choke one of them with a curtain.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, April 13, 2009.

* April 12, 2009. Colombia's news magazine *Semana* carries a long article about the February 21, 2005 massacre in the Peace Community of San Jose de Apartado. Captain Armando Gordillo, who has pleaded guilty to criminal charges and turned states' evidence, described how his superiors in the 17th Brigade had worked with the paramilitaries to plan an attack. A paramilitary, "Melaza", who regularly spent time at 17th Brigade headquarters, would guide the soldiers, wearing camouflage, carrying an Army-issue rifle, and communicating by radio with other Army units. He was known as a killer after he participated in the massacre of six farmers in 2001.

Luis Eduardo Guerra, a leader of the Peace Community, along with his partner and his 11-year-old son, along with his half-brother, Dario, were on their way to their farm to harvest cacao. Suddenly the soldiers appeared and stopped them. Dario realized that there were paramilitaries with the soldiers and he ran into the woods. He heard screams, but no shots. The three were killed with machetes. The 11-year-old was beheaded.

About four hours away, in the town of La Resbalosa, paramilitaries were advancing ahead of the soldiers. They entered the house of Alfonso Bolivar, another leader of the Peace Community. The family was eating lunch, along with some farm workers. The soldiers began shooting and one of the workers returned fire. Five men ran from the house. A paramilitary who is now serving time in prison described what happened next. A woman was lying dead on the floor. Two small children were hiding under the bed. A paramilitary grabbed them and took them outside. He asked his commander what he should do with them. They concluded that they would grow up to be guerrillas and so they should be killed, but without noise. At that moment, their father came running back, saw them, and begged for their lives. All three were killed, their bodies dismembered, and buried near the house.

A large group of people from the Peace Community, including some international observers walked to La Resbalosa to recover the bodies. The other three bodies were found the next day. The Commander of the Armed Forces insisted that Army troops had not been located anywhere



near where the murders took place. The government supported that claim. It was not until the paramilitary “Melaza”, being investigated for a different murder, began talking, that the truth began to come out. Captain Gordillo reported that General Fandino, commander of the 17th Brigade, had urged him to lie about what happened, but he has entered a plea and will testify.

Source: *Semana*, Bogotá, April 12, 2009.

* April 8, 2009. A local radio station in the indigenous communities in Cauca Province complains that indigenous people are being threatened by the Police, by the Army, and by the guerrillas. An announcer at the station was stopped by the Police when he returned from a tribal meeting. The Police officer criticized a CD that he was carrying. He claims that soldiers mock and insult the indigenous people, and that threats and illegal stops have increased.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, April 8, 2009.

* April 8, 2009. Two Colombian Police Officers and a civilian were captured as they transported 87 kilos of cocaine. The civilian is wanted for extortion, theft, and murder.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and Attorney General’s web site, April 8, 2009.

* April 7, 2009. A prison director in Medellin was removed after a search of the prison found prisoners in possession of 149 cell phones, 1,000 grams of cocaine, and 180 weapons.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 7, 2009.

* April 6, 2009. The Attorney General’s most recent report reveals that, as of this date, there are 292 investigations of alleged extrajudicial executions in Antioquia Province. The investigations cover occurrences between 2002 and 2007. One of the cases involves the disappearance of two young men from Medellin who had a food business. They disappeared in 2007 and were reported by the Army as guerrillas killed in combat. Throughout Colombia, there are 938 investigations covering the last three years. The Attorney General has opened 659 prosecutions. Another 204 cases have been turned over to the Attorney General by the military justice system. Sixty-seven defendants, almost all members of the military, have been convicted.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, April 6, 2009.

* April 4, 2009. A demobilized paramilitary commander, Freddy Rendon, alias “El Aleman” (The German) continuing his confession under the Justice and Peace law, stated that he always felt as if he were a member of the Colombian Armed Forces. He was never stopped at Army or Police checkpoints. He was treated like just another soldier or police officer. Besides hundreds of crimes, Rendon’s paramilitary troops were responsible for massive displacements of people and seizure of land for the benefit of companies that were creating palm oil plantations.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, April 4, 2009.

* April 3, 2009. A retired Colombian Army major, has been charged with aggravated homicide, assault and battery, falsifying a public document, and fraud. According to the Attorney General’s investigation, on April 4, 2004, in the town of La Cecilia, municipality of Teorama (Norte de Santander Province) a civilian noncombatant was killed and another civilian injured in a supposed combat that really did not take place.

Source: Attorney General’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/DH/DhMayor®Abr03.htm>



* April 2, 2009. The demobilized paramilitary commander, Freddy Rendon, alias “El Aleman” (The German) confessed that members of the Colombian navy and armed forces helped the paramilitaries attack the guerrillas in the area of the Atrato River.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, April 2, 2009.

* April 2, 2009. A demobilized paramilitary commander, Jose Gregorio Mangones Lugo, alias “Carlos Tijeras” (Charlie Scissors) testified that in 2002 and 2003 in the municipality of Zona Bananera, the paramilitaries under his command would capture certain civilians and turn them over to various battalions of the Colombian Army. Later the victims would be reported as guerrillas killed in combat.

Another paramilitary commander, alias “Brayan” revealed that he and members of the Army’s Cordova Battalion murdered “Carlos Tijeras” with two of his bodyguards, and turned them over as “false positives”, intending to distract the authorities who were closing in.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, April 3, 2009 and Attorney General’s web site, April 2, 2009.-

* December 12, 2008. A regional DAS (Colombian FBI) official has been arrested and will be charged with extortion. The Public Prosecutor alleges that he demanded the sum of 80 million pesos (about \$40,000) from a woman who is wanted for extradition to Belgium. The regional DAS director is being investigated for his part in the same case.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota; *El Colombiano*, Medellin; *El Herald*, Barranquilla; and Public Prosecutor’s web site.

* December 12, 2008. The former national director of the DAS (Colombian FBI, Jorge Noguera, was re-arrested in Bogota and charged with criminal conspiracy for his alleged connections with paramilitaries. He had previously been arrested and charged, but was released because of a procedural technicality. Noguera is accused of providing secret information to paramilitaries about police investigations and plans. He is also accused of ordering a subordinate to deliver computer disks containing secret information to paramilitaries and drug traffickers and of destroying evidence against paramilitaries and drug traffickers. He is alleged to have pressured subordinates to collaborate with paramilitaries.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, *Radio Caracol*, Bogota; *El Colombiano*, Medellin; *El Herald*, Barranquilla; *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, December 12, 2008.

* December 12, 2008. Two Colombian Army officers, along with one non-commissioned officer and three soldiers, were arrested and charged with murder. They are being held without bail. Three minors were killed and presented as guerrillas killed in combat in a rural area near Dabeiba (Antioquia Province). Witnesses have testified that that were seized forcibly at different times and places by armed men.

Source: Public Prosecutor’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/DH/DhMiliHomiDic12.htm>

* December 11, 2008. A retired Colombian Army Sergeant has been arrested for fraud, after investigators found that he was offering to sell phony draft cards. He allegedly told his victims that



he had military contacts, but needed money to bribe them. After receiving the money, he would disappear.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, Decemberr 11, 2008.

* December 10, 2008. A United Nations delegate is investigating the disappearance of 22 young men in Pereira (Risaralda Province). Their bodies were found in various regions of Colombia and reported as guerrillas killed in combat. The Public Defender complains that there are three new cases of young men disappearing in Quindio (Quindio Province) and then being found dead, supposedly killed in combat with the 8th Brigade of the Colombian Army. The Public Defender is concerned that so many young men, including lawyers and indigenous people, have disappeared in the same area in just three years.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, December 10, 2008.

* December 10, 2008. The Council of State, Colombia's highest administrative court, has decided that the Colombian government is responsible for its failure to protect Senator Manuel Cepeda Vargas, who was assassinated in 1994. The government is ordered to pay damages to his survivors. Cepeda's life had been threatened many times, and the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights had ordered the government to protect him. In its investigation, the authorities found evidence that members of the Colombian Armed Forces may have participated in the assassination.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, *Radio Caracol*, Bogota; *El Colombiano*, Medellin; *El Pais*, Cali; *Vanguardia*, Bucaramanga, December 10, 2008.

* December 10, 2008. Two Colombian police officers have agreed to plead guilty to aggravated homicide, after an investigation showed that they attacked and killed a taxi driver and another man.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/seccionales/ScHomiTaxistaDic10.htm>

* December 9, 2008. The extrajudicial executions committed by members of the Colombian Armed Forces are the biggest problem Colombia has in its presentation to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva tomorrow. Vice President Francisco Santos will be representing Colombia at the meeting. Before leaving for Geneva, he told reporters that "This is a public disgrace of enormous dimensions, but we have taken measures to see that it will not be repeated." But Colombian NGO's claim that in the past five years, extrajudicial killings by the Colombian Armed Forces have increased by 67.71 percent (1,122 cases, compared to 669 cases between 1997 and 2002). The Colombian Government states that, since 2002, 748 members of the Armed Forces have been investigated and 242 arrest warrants have been issued in these cases.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin; *El Pais*, Cali; *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla.

* December 9, 2008, A retired police chief has been arrested and charged with being part of a criminal organization that "disappeared" an assistant chief and a patrolman. Seven other officers, already in custody, are charged with bank robbery and murder, and with furnishing civilian criminals with military equipment. The chief will be charged with forced disappearance and aggravated criminal conspiracy.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secvalle/SvintendenteDec09.htm>.



* December 9, 2008. A paramilitary commander who is about to be extradited to the United States issued a statement claiming that he is being extradited because he was about to identify the military commanders who aided him in his paramilitary activities. Miguel Angel Mejia Munera, alias El Mellizo (The Twin) stated that the DAS (Colombian FBI), police and military worked with him and his paramilitaries, that “ ... they identified the people we were to kill, they fought beside us against the guerrillas and there were many occasions when the Colombian Air Force supported us.”

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, December 9, 2008.

* December 8, 2008. Colombia's Attorney General has filed homicide charges against a Colombian Army lieutenant and a soldier for killing a farmer and presenting his body as a guerrilla killed in combat in Ocaña (Norte de Santander Province). The two claimed that he had fled from the troops and later attacked them with a handgun. His family testified that he had been dragged from his house by uniformed men who first said they were paramilitaries. After they shot the victim, they placed a pistol and a grenade beside his body.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, December 8, 2008.

* December 7, 2008. Colombia's Attorney General has ordered an investigation into illegal arrests by an Army colonel and an Army captain. The colonel ordered the arrest of nine people on January 3, 2006, and the captain carried out the order. The nine people had been identified as guerrillas by an informant, but none of them had any weapons, pamphlets, uniforms, or anything that would support a conclusion that they were guerrillas. At the time of their arrest, they were not violating any law and there was no evidence that they had previously violated any law.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin; *Radio Caracol*, Bogota; *El Pais*, Cali; *Vanguardia*, Bucaramanga, December 7, 2008.

* December 6, 2008. A Colombian Navy officer, now discharged, will be extradited to the United States to face charges of aiding drug traffickers. He is accused of furnishing the traffickers with Colombian Navy maps showing the location of U.S. Navy ships assigned to intercept drug shipments.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, December 6, 2008.

* December 6, 2008. The Minister of Defense announced that members of the Colombian armed forces who have participated in the recent pyramid scheme (Ponzi scheme) will be discharged.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, December 6, 2008.

* December 5, 2008. The Public Prosecutor reports a significant increase in three provinces in “false positives” (cases where members of the Colombian Armed Forces kill a civilian and report him or her as a guerrilla killed in combat). According to a report from the Public Prosecutor's Human Rights Unit, there were 558 such investigations in August and 703 cases in November of 2008. According to the Public Prosecutor, at present 46 soldiers have been convicted and 952 are being investigated, along with 21 police officers, 20 Navy personnel, and four DAS (Colombian FBI) agents.

According to *Caracol Radio*, between August and November of 2008, in Antioquia Province alone, murders committed by members of the Armed Forces increased from 155 to 219. In Meta



province, complaints increased from 107 to 115, and in Norte de Santander Province, the figure increased from 16 to 50 murders apparently committed by members of the Armed Forces.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, December 5, 2008 and *El Pais*, Cali, December 6, 2008.

* December 5, 2008. A major in the Colombian Police Force, the commander of police in Mocoa (Putumayo Province) has been arrested and charged with extortion. According to the Public Prosecutor's Office, a crowd of people who had been duped by a pyramid scheme were attacking and throwing rocks at the headquarters where the illegal investments had been sold. The police commander and another officer are accused of demanding two million pesos (about \$1,000) from each of the occupants of the headquarters, in exchange for protecting them from the mob.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, *El Mundo* and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, Public Prosecutor's web site, December 5, and *El Pais*, Cali, and *El Espectador*, December 6, 2008.

* December 4, 2008. A Colombian Army officer, a non-commissioned officer, and four soldiers have been arrested and charged with the kidnapping, torture and murder of two civilians. They are accused of making an illegal search of a residence and seizing two men and taking them away. The next day the two victims were found in the local morgue and represented as guerrillas killed in combat. The defendants are being held without bail.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/DH/DhHomiTortuDic04.htm>

* December 3, 2008. Five Colombian Army officers have been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide. They are alleged to have killed three civilians, falsely claiming that they were killed in combat. They are being held without bail.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, December 3, 2008.

* December 2, 2008. Seven members of the DIJIN (Colombian Judicial Police) and one civilian have been arrested and charged with the crimes of aggravated forced disappearance and criminal conspiracy. The defendants are accused of being part of a criminal gang that "disappeared" two police officers. They are also charged with bank robbery and murder, and furnishing military weapons to civilians.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secvalle/SvSijinDic02.htm>

* December 2, 2008. A Colombian police officer has been found guilty of aggravated homicide for shooting a homeless person to death. His sentencing hearing is scheduled for February 3, 2009.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/seccionales/ScHomilndigDic02.htm>

* September 10, 2008. The Criminal Branch of the Supreme Court of Justice has ordered that the investigation into retired General Rito Alejo Del Rio's connections with paramilitaries to be re-opened. This renewed investigation is in addition to one which is ongoing. In that case, he is alleged to be responsible for the murder and dismemberment of a farmer in Riosucio (Choco Province). He is being held in a military guardhouse.

Source: Caracol Radio, Bogota, September 10, 2008.



* September 9, 2008. A general in the Colombian National Police, formerly the Police Chief in Cali, has stepped down after a lengthy investigation revealed his ties to a paramilitary/drug trafficker, Daniel Berrera, known as “El Loco” (The Crazy Man).

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 9, 2008.

* September 8, 2008. The Public Prosecutor estimates that 661 members of the Colombian Armed Forces, of all ranks, active and retired, are under investigation for human rights violations in connection with their cooperation with paramilitaries. These include retired General Rito Alejo del Rio, formerly commander of the 17th Brigade, headquartered in Carepa (Antioquia Province). Two other generals are reported to be under investigation in connection with massacres of civilians: General Hector Jaime Fandino, who headed the 17th Brigade at the time of the February 2005 massacre at San Jose de Apartado, and General Farouk Yanine, who commanded the 14th Brigade at the time of the 1987 massacre of 19 civilians and the January 1989 massacre of 12 judicial investigators at La Rochela (Santander Province).

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, September 8, 2008.

* September 8, 2008. Ten Colombian soldiers will be prosecuted for aggravated homicide. They are charged with killing two young men and reporting them as guerrillas killed in combat.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and Public Prosecutor’s web site, September 8, 2008.

* September 7, 2008. A retired Colombian Army colonel states that he was forced out of the Army because he complained to superiors that the 17th Brigade, commanded at that time by General Rito Alejo del Rio, was allied with paramilitaries.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, September 7, 2008.

* September 7, 2008. An ex-paramilitary has told Colombian prosecutors how General Rito Alejo del Rio, commander of the Army’s 17th Brigade, met with paramilitary leaders to plan strategy in the war against the guerrillas. This testimony and that of paramilitary commanders has led the Public Prosecutor to re-open a closed investigation of Rito Alejo’s conduct. Another ex-paramilitary has testified that the armed forces under his command furnished weapons and other materials to the paramilitaries.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, *El Pais*, Cali, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, September 7, 2008.

* September 6, 2008. Retired General Rito Alejo del Rio appeared before a prosecutor to answer questions about his connections with paramilitaries while he commanded the Army’s 17th Brigade. He is charged with homicide, displacement, and forced disappearances. One of the cases being investigated is the killing, at his direction, of a farm leader. After the victim was beheaded by the paramilitaries, they used his head to play football (soccer) in order to terrorize other farmers and get them to leave their farms. Paramilitaries then took ownership of the land.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, September 6, 2008.

* September 5, 2008. Retired Colombian Army General Rito Alejo del Rio will be charged with crimes against humanity based on his cooperation and that of his troops with paramilitaries while he headed the 17th Brigade in Carepa (Antioquia). Victims’ families have testified that paramilitaries, accompanied by 17th Brigade troops, committed dozens of murders and “disappearances” in Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities, and caused thousands to



flee. One investigator stated, “The military and the paramilitaries caused a reign of terror” in the communities.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota; *El Colombiano* and *El Mundo*, Medellin, September 5, 2008.

* September 5, 2008. In Las Pulgas (Cordoba Province) six people were injured by an exploding grenade after children brought home some 40 supposedly exploded grenades from a landfill used by police to detonate weapons seized from criminals. Neighbors complained that this was not the first time this had happened. The police commander in Monteria admitted that all of the grenades should have been buried.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, *El Heraldo*, Baranquilla, September 5, 2008.

* September 5, 2008. *El Tiempo* headlines that the beheading of the young farmer, Marino Lopez Mena, will be the key case in the prosecution of General Rito Alejo del Rio. Four ex-paramilitaries have confessed to their part in the killing, part of an Army/paramilitary attack on farmers alleged to be helping the guerrillas. The witnesses say that Lopez was beheaded, his head kicked around like a soccer ball, and then his body was dismembered and thrown in the river. They say it was done to be a warning to the farmers. Immediately, some 2,500 people left the area.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 5, 2008.

* September 5, 2008. A non-commissioned officer, a paramilitary leader, and a civilian were each sentenced to 40 years in prison for the murder of four indigenous people, including a former reservation governor, in RioSucio (Caldas Province). They had made a previous attempt to kill the former governor.

Source: Public Prosecutor’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secantioquia/SaHomiIndigSep05.htm>

* September 5, 2008. Residents of the Peace Community of San Jose de Apartado have provided the Public Prosecutor with evidence of other atrocities committed by paramilitaries who worked together with soldiers under the command of General Rito Alejo del Rio. They have furnished documents showing that, between February and September of 1997, joint operations of soldiers and paramilitaries killed 35 people, “disappeared” another five and displaced more than 500 people in the area. They also complain that victims were tortured, killed with machetes, and sometimes beheaded.

Neighbors testified that a young man who was mentally retarded and worked on a farm was killed two days after having been detained by the Army. His body was dressed in military uniform and he was reported as a guerrilla killed in combat.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, September 5, 2008.

* September 5, 2008. Twelve Colombian police officers were captured and arrested. The Director of the National Police stated that they were wanted for common crimes, and alleged to belong to criminal gangs.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 5, 2008.

* September 5, 2008. The Medellin Metropolitan Police Department announced the capture of



seven police officers. They will be charged with crimes such as bribery and extortion. Officials did not believe they were connected with a criminal gang.

Source: *El Colombiano*, *El Mundo*, Medellin, September 5, 2008.

* September 5, 2008. Hebert Veloza Garcia, alias HH, continued his confession under the Justice and Peace Law. He stated that his paramilitary group had taken over the municipality of Buenaventura (Valle del Cauca Province), killing more than 1,000 people between the years 2000 and 2001. He testified that all of the Colombian Police in the area known as Calima-Darien were on his payroll. "Each of them received a monthly payment", he said.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, September 5, 2008.

* September 5, 2008. A member of the British Parliament, back-packing with a friend in Colombia, was stopped by Colombian soldiers and searched. He was carrying a jar of Coffee Mate and the soldiers, suspecting cocaine, forced him at gunpoint to eat several mouthfuls of it.

Source: *TimesOnline*, London, September 5, 2008; <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/politics/article4683141.ece?print=yes&randnum=1220891524193>

* September 3, 2008. The Attorney General of Colombia ordered the discharge of a Colombian Army colonel, two captains and a lieutenant, and ordered that they exercise no public function for 20 years. His investigation showed that they burst into a residence near Saravena (Arauca Province) and killed three individuals who were active in the labor movement. They then altered the crime scene and presented the victims as guerrillas killed in combat.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *Vanguardia Libertad*, Bucaramanga, September 3, 2008.

* September 3, 2008. The Public Prosecutor has ordered the arrest of a Colombian Army lieutenant colonel and a major in connection with the February 2005 massacre of five adults and three children near the Peace Community of San Jose de Apartado. The three are charged with being parties to the crime of homicide. They are being held without bail.

Source: *El Colombiano* and *El Mundo*, Medellin; *Caracol Radio*, *Vanguardia Libertad*, Bucaramanga; *El Espectador*, Bogota; and Public Prosecutor's web site.

* September 2, 2008. Based on testimony by paramilitary commanders making their confessions under the Justice and Peace law, the Public Prosecutor will bring charges against retired General Rito Alejo del Rio. The paramilitary commanders have testified that the General and his troops aided them in multiple killings, kidnappings, and forced displacement of civilians.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 2, 2008.

* September 1, 2008. The Attorney General of Colombia has asked the Criminal Branch of the Supreme Court of Justice to re-open a case against General Rito Alejo del Rio, based on revelations by paramilitary commanders making their confessions under the Justice and Peace Law. The case had been closed in 2004 at the request of the then-Public Prosecutor, alleging lack of evidence. The paramilitary commanders, Salvatore Mancuso and Ever Veloza Garcia have recounted planning meetings they had with the General and described how the Army troops aided the paramilitaries in depopulating certain communities.

Source: *Vanguardia Libertad*, Bucaramanga, September 1, 2008; *Caracol Radio*, *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 2, 2008.



* September 1, 2008. The Colombian Attorney General is investigating the failure of the Public Prosecutor's Office in Medellin to pursue charges against a paramilitary known as "McGiver" and two members of the Armed Forces for the torture, murder and dismemberment of a woman and the kidnapping and torture of a man, both civilians. The Attorney General has found that the Prosecutor's Office in Medellin has failed to follow up on this case as well as others.

* September 1, 2008. A former Colombian Army soldier has pleaded guilty to aggravated homicide and was sentenced to 15 years in prison. The evidence showed that a farm laborer who was mentally retarded was intercepted by soldiers, interrogated, and then killed. The victim was reported as killed in combat. The soldiers had placed a shotgun and a fragmentation grenade beside his body. One of the soldiers confessed that they had purchased the weapon in order to give their story credibility so that they would obtain a leave. Four other soldiers have already pleaded guilty and been sentenced in the same case.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secantioquia/SaConExSoldSep1.htm>

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 1, 2008.

* August 31, 2008. A small-time criminal from the Caribbean coast of Colombia is now hiding in Canada and ready to give testimony about the connections between paramilitaries, Army, ranchers, and politicians. Jairo Castillo Peralta, alias "Pitirri" began as a river boat man and ended up as a paramilitary used as an informant by the 2d Brigade of the Colombian Army. The Army got him a job as a bodyguard for a former Senator, who was a well-known rancher in Sucre Province. The Senator formed his own group of paramilitaries and the group met regularly with Army officers to decide on murders, massacres, and provincial contracts. "Pitirri", the head of security, was in charge of delivering government money to the paramilitaries. He witnessed the massacres at El Salado, at Chengue and Macayepo and saw the victims buried in common graves.

But Salvatore Mancuso ordered his death in 1998 when he refused to start a new group of paramilitaries. He escaped and in 2000, he became an informant for the Public Prosecutor. By 2001, it was rumored that his head was worth \$12 million. After an attempt on his life, he told a prosecutor what he knew. She was killed. "Pitirri" is now in Canada.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, August 31, 2008.

* August 30, 2008. Two police officers were killed while they investigated the ownership of 10 tons of cocaine discovered in Uraba. The murders are among the charges that will be brought against ten people captured and charged with drug trafficking. Two of the ten were soldiers and two were active duty police. They are jailed pending the conclusion of the investigation, charged with murder, attempted murder, conspiracy and bribery.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 30, 2008.

* August 29, 2008. Three Colombian Army officers were sentenced to 18 years in prison for the murder of a 19-year-old indigenous man on February 1, 1988. Witnesses testified that the victim had been dragged out of his house and that they heard shots shortly afterward. The officers testified that an illegal armed group had fired on them after they had seized the victim and that those shots caused the victim's death. The Public Prosecutor's investigation disproved their claim.

* Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/DH/DhHomiIndogAgo29.htm>



* August 29, 2008. A Colombian National Police official was sentenced to 96 months in prison. He was convicted of extortion. The investigation revealed that on June 25, 2007, three citizens were being arrested and taken to police headquarters. The Police official demanded 20 million pesos (about \$10,000) to make their case go away.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secvalle/SvCondPoliAgo29.htm>

* August 29, 2008. Demobilized paramilitary commander Ever Veloza, alias "HH" continued making his confession under the Justice and Peace law. Members of massacre victims' families were allowed to provide him with written questions, such as the names of government officials who knew about or took part in the massacre. He identified Col. Jorge Alberto Amor, whose jurisdiction included Alaska, where some of the killing took place and Jose Benedicto Grosso, the local police chief as officials who permitted the paramilitaries to enter the towns and carry out the massacre. "HH" also testified that the Army commander provided the paramilitaries with ammunition and with military vehicles, so that the people would think they were Army soldiers. He also testified that Army officers identified labor leaders for the paramilitaries to kill.

Source: *El Pais*, August 29, 2008.

* August 29, 2008. A Colombian Army officer and two noncommissioned officers were found guilty of murdering a 19-year-old indigenous man 20 years ago in the reservation at Jambalo (Cauca Province). They were sentenced to 28 years in prison. Two of the defendants were also convicted of perjury. The investigation showed that they dragged him out of his house and shot him. His body showed signs of torture. The defendants claimed that they had exchanged fire with an illegal armed group that included the victim.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site, *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 29, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, August 30, 2008.

* August 29, 2008. A Colombian couple complains that 3 people, apparently guerrillas, came to their house at 8:30 at night and demanded a place to sleep. The family said no, but the guerrillas entered the house anyway. Two of them lay down in the living room and the other one went to the room where the couple's five-year-old son was sleeping. At around 6 am, some soldiers kicked down the door and started shooting and the child was killed. "My wife and I screamed 'Let us take the baby away, let us take the child out of the room'" said the father. The Army insists that the guerrillas opened fire first and even threw a grenade. Two guerrillas and two soldiers were killed.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, August 29, 2008.

* August 28, 2008. The Historical Memory Group of Colombia's National Commission on Reparation and Reconciliation has spent six months collecting testimony from the families of the victims of the Trujillo massacre. The term refers to the deaths of 342 people between 1986 and 1994. The Group's report is titled "El Trujillo, a Tragedy Without End."

No one has been prosecuted for the crimes, but the Public Prosecutor has filed charges against Lt. Col. Alirio Antonio Unuena Jaramillo, what at the time of the killings was a commander in the area and is alleged to have participated in the killings. The tortures and killing of living people with chain saws were so horrible that an Army guide who first dared to reveal it was thought to be insane. He was later tortured and killed. The report states that drug traffickers and members of the armed forces were mostly responsible.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, August 28, 2008.



* August 28, 2008. Four Colombian soldiers were arrested and charged with aggravated homicide. They are being held without bail. They are alleged to have murdered a man who was guiding a medical mission in Los Lirios (Casanare Province). Shots were heard and he disappeared. When he didn't return, his wife inquired and recognized the photos taken of his body at the morgue.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/DH/DhEjerHomiAgo28.htm>

* August 28, 2008. A demobilized paramilitary commander, Ever Veloza Garcia, alias "HH", making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, testified that when his group of paramilitaries entered and left a town where they murdered five people, they passed a Colombian military checkpoint both times and their passage was authorized. He also claimed that Army officials told the paramilitaries who ought to be killed in Cali and in other areas, including a number of labor leaders. One of the Army sergeants was also a paramilitary commander, he said. He also testified that the late Col Danilo Gonzalez and drug traffickers planned the kidnapping of the brother of former president Cesar Gaviria and the murder of the conservative leader Alvaro Gomez.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, August 28, 2008.

* August 28, 2008. General Oscar Naranjo, commander of the Colombian National Police, has demanded that General Jesus Antonio Gomez Mendez explain his connection to Felipe Sierra, a Medellin businessman who is alleged to have been a go-between for the drug traffickers and Medellin police and prosecutors. Gomez has been replaced, along with General Marco Antonio Pedreros, who commanded the police units in Antioquia, Cordoba and Choco. He resigned when the media connected him with Sierra.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Radio Caracol*, Bogotá; *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla; and *El Pais*, Cali, August 28, 2008.

* August 27, 2008. Juan Forero writes in *The Washington Post* that new information about killings by Colombian paramilitaries, working closely with army units, is uncovering thousands of bodies left in shallow graves. There are many thousands more than had been expected. Forero quotes Ever Veloza, a paramilitary commander imprisoned in Colombia who gave an interview to the *Post*, as saying that army officers who collaborated with paramilitary units encouraged them to bury the dead or toss their bodies into the river. He said the security forces told paramilitaries to disappear the bodies in order to control the homicide rate.

Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., August 27, 2008.

* August 27, 2008. The Public Prosecutor has admitted that four police and army officers were among the ten people arrested and charged with aiding wanted drug trafficker "Don Mario". He admitted that prosecutors as well as soldiers had been connected to the traffickers.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 27, 2008.

* August 27, 2008. Ten people have been captured, including an Army officer attached to the 17th Brigade, a police patrolman, and two other officers, and charged with assisting the wanted drug trafficker "Don Mario". Among those arrested were those in charge of recruiting, patrolling, collecting extortions, and controlling the export of the cocaine. The police have increased the



reward offered for information leading to the arrest of “Don Mario” to three billion pesos (about \$1.5 million).

Source: *Radio Caracol* and *El Tiempo*, and Public Prosecutor’s web site, Bogotá, August 27, 2008.

* August 26, 2008. President Alvaro Uribe requested and received the resignation of General Marco Antonio Pedreros because of the infiltration of the drug traffickers in the Public Prosecutor’s office in Medellín. General Pedreros was responsible for security in Antioquia, Córdoba, and Chocó Provinces.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 26, 2008.

* August 26, 2008. A judicial detective stationed in Villavicencio (Meta Province) has been arrested for extortion. He is accused of demanding one million pesos (about \$500) from an individual involved in a criminal prosecution. He is being held without bail.

Source: Public Prosecutor’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secvillavi/SvAsegCTIAgo16.htm>

* August 25, 2008. A retired Colombian Army lieutenant colonel has been accused of helping the paramilitaries and drug lords carry out their crimes. The prosecutor charges that he visited the drug lord “Don Diego” regularly. He is in custody and has previously been charged with conspiracy to commit crimes, torture, and murder.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 25, 2008.

* August 24, 2008. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has agreed to investigate the case of Richard Velez, a cameraman who was assaulted and threatened and had to flee the country. The Commission accepted the case because the government of Colombia has not charged anyone with the crime. Velez was attacked while covering a protest march in Morelia (Cauca Province). The soldiers fired tear gas, beat and shot at the marchers and Velez photographed the goings-on. The soldiers then threatened him and demanded his film. When he refused, they beat and kicked him unconscious and he suffered serious injuries. After he got out of the hospital, he began to receive threats, including to his wife and children. He then left Colombia.

Source: *Semana.com*, retrieved August 24, 2008.

* August 21, 2008. Galo Torres, the Mayor of El Carmen (Atlántico Province) stood up in a public meeting with the Minister of Defense and complained that the Army had kidnapped him for six hours, put a carnival mask on his face, and taken his fingerprints. He said he had a witness to the events.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 21, 2008.

* August 20, 2008. Telephone conversations intercepted by investigators show that the head of the Public Prosecutor’s office in Antioquia Province, Guillermo Leon Valencia Cossio, was working with the wanted drug trafficker “Don Mario”. Other intercepted conversations implicate other prosecutors and a general in the National Police.

Source: *Cambio*, *Radio Caracol*, *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, Bogotá; *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga; *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 20 and *El País*, Cali, August 21, 2008.

* August 20, 2008. A former member of Colombia’s Congress, Eleonora Pineda, testified in the trial of four soldiers and one noncommissioned officer for the murder of her brother and another



man. Pineda is serving a prison sentence for her connections with the paramilitaries. The soldiers first said that the victims were guerrillas and later, when they learned that one of the victims was related to a member of Congress, they claimed that the victims were common criminals. The trial will continue.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 20, 2008.

* August 19, 2008. Retired Colombian Army Co. Victor Hugo Matamoros was arrested and charged with the murder of six civilians in La Gabarra (Norte de Santander Province).

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 19, 2008.

* August 19, 2008. A new district police chief in Atlantico Province has fired or transferred 49 police officers and has 120 others in the same process. The chief, General Oscar Gamboa indicated that he found their behavior untrustworthy.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 19, 2008.

* August 18, 2008. Demobilized paramilitary commander Ever Veloza, alias “HH”, spoke to *The Washington Post* from his cell in Itagui prison, near Medellin. In Colombia, “HH” is making his confession under the Justice and Peace law. He told the *Post* that the Colombian Army is penetrated by the paramilitaries. “It was not just one general liked with the Self-Defense Forces. It was many generals and many colonels.”

* Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., August 18, 2008.

* August 18, 2008. A Colombian Army Captain, Guillermo Armando Gordillo Sanchez, under arrest for his part in the massacre of eight people at San Jose de Apartado in February 2005, claims that his then-commanding officer, General Hector Fandino, contacted him and warned him not to testify about certain facts. Captain Gordillo said that General Fandino told him not to reveal that the paramilitaries had accompanied the soldiers on the day of the massacre. The general said that the position was to be that the FARC had committed the murders.

Captain Gordillo said that General Fandino was not the only superior officer who had talked to him about what his testimony should be. He said that a Lt. Col. Espinosa had visited him in the military prison where he is being held. Lt. Col. Espinosa told him not to worry, and not to talk about the paramilitaries and the events of that day. Captain Gordillo has asked to be admitted to the witness protection program.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 18, 2008.

* August 18, 2008. A former paramilitary, known as “Domionedes” served in the Colombian Army from 1999 to 2002, when he was discharged after being arrested. He insists that General Mario Montoya, the present commanding general of all of Colombia’s military forces, who was the commander of the 4th Brigade in 2002, gave him an SUV with seven rifles hidden in it. The vehicle, according to “Domionedes”, was to be a gift from the Brigade to the paramilitary group. General Montoya denies the story.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, August 18, 2008.

* August 18, 2008. The demobilized paramilitary commander Hebert Veloza Garcia, known as “HH”, making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, has detailed ways in which the



Colombian National Police and the Colombian Army aided the paramilitaries. He identified Army then-captains Marco Antonio Martinez and Andres Zambrano as officers who had provided transportation for the paramilitaries and had informed them of Army troop locations so that they could avoid Army checkpoints.

“HH” testified that Col. Martinez as the one who collaborated with paramilitaries to carry out the massacre at Barragan, in Tulua (Valle Province) where seven people were murdered in a chapel in December 2000. Witness testimony and documents contained in the USB memory stick belonging to the late Carlos Castano identify General Rito Alejo del Rio, Danilo Gonzalez, Col. Bayron Carvajal and Jaime Amor as some of the members of the armed forces who helped the paramilitaries.

* August 18, 2008. *El Tiempo* complains that the highest point of Bogotá, the capital city, 3,603 meters above sea level, and one of the most scenic areas in the city, has been turned into a stinking garbage dump by a Police squadron that is stationed there to guard communication equipment. According to *El Tiempo*, the police have been discarding trash and garbage there for the last fifteen years. The police explained that there is no way to take the trash and garbage down from the mountain.

Source: *El Tiempo*, August 18, 2008.

* August 16, 2008. Eight Army officers and one detective from the DAS (Colombian FBI) are being tried for the massacre of six people in what they claim was a rescue operation. They are charged with aggravated kidnapping for extortion, aggravated homicide, conspiracy to commit crimes and illegal use of military force.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 16, 2008.

* August 15, 2008. A corporal in the Colombian Army was sentenced to 26 years in prison for kidnapping and sexually assaulting a five-year-old girl.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 15, 2008 and Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/seccionales/ScCaboVioladorAgo15.htm>.

* August 13, 2008. Fourteen soldiers from the Colombian Army's Fourth Brigade are being tried for murdering two brothers in order to obtain some days off. The Public Prosecutor charges that the two brothers were going to their home in a Medellin neighborhood when the soldiers seized them, killed them, and reported them as killed in combat. One of the defendants has pleaded guilty in a plea agreement.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, August 13, 2008.

* August 12, 2008. A demobilized paramilitary commander, alias “Diomedes”, making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, testified that General Mario Montoya, the commander of Colombia's defense forces, personally gave him an SUV to be delivered to the late paramilitary commander known as “Doble Cero” (“Double Zero”). According to “Diomedes”, the SUV contained six AK47 rifles and one M-16. He also testified that the General had assigned troops to accompany the vehicle. General Montoya denies the charge, calling it “an infamous lie”.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá; *El Colombiano*, Medellin; and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 12, 2008.



* August 11, 2008. A former investigator from the Public Prosecutor's office has been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide in the death of a 16-year-old girl in Cali.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/AGDIVULGANoticias2008/secvalle/SvExCTIAgo11.htm>

* August 11, 2008. The Attorney General has charged five Colombian Army soldiers in connection with the death of a civilian in Cocorna (Antioquia Province). The investigation concludes that they arrived in a town and they captured two civilians and took them away. They let one of them go, but the other one was found dead the next day and reported as killed in combat.

Source: *El Espectador*, *El Tiempo*, *Caracol Radio*, *El Espectador* Bogotá; *El Colombiano*, Medellin; and Public Prosecutor's web site, August 11, 2008.

* August 11, 2008. The Public Prosecutor has ordered the arrest of Rosalia Rebeca Negrete Florez, the former director of the Public Prosecutor's Investigation Section (CTI) in Cordoba. She is charged in connection with the murder of a university professor who was a candidate to head the University of Cordoba. Investigators are also studying her connection with Salvatore Mancuso, a paramilitary commander who has admitted his participation in the professor's murder, as well as in other crimes.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, August 11, 2008.

* August 9, 2008. A demobilized paramilitary has turned over to the Public Prosecutor a USB memory stick belonging to the late paramilitary commander Carlos Castano. According to the documents, a retired Colombian Army colonel, Danilo Gonzalez, had carried out several murders on Castano's orders and Gonzalez killed Alvaro Gomez, a professor at a university in Bogotá. Castano said that Gonzalez led a band of drug traffickers, paramilitaries, guerrillas, and corrupt police. Col. Gonzalez also worked closely with Wilber Varela, head of the drug cartel in Norte de Valle.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 9, and *Semana*, Bogotá, August 10, 2008.

* August 7, 2008. The weekly news magazine *Cambio* reports that a demobilized paramilitary commander, Ever Veloza, alias "HH", making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, testified that General Rito Alejo del Rio, who commanded the 17th Brigade in Carepa (Antioquia Province) from 1995 to 1997, was his ally. He allowed free movement of paramilitary troops in his jurisdiction; he provided information; he sent his troops to patrol alongside the paramilitaries and allowed them to enter military headquarters, according to the testimony of Ever Veloza.

Last May, demobilized paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso, now extradited to the United States, testified that General del Rio was the direct contact with Carlos Castano. Mancuso described periodic meetings where the General and the paramilitary leaders planned their strategy to "clean up" Uraba. Many farmers were murdered and other displaced from their land, so that it could be used to plant African palm plantations. He testified that the paramilitaries also met with General del Rio in his office at the Brigade headquarters in Carepa.

Source: *Cambio*, Bogotá, August 7, 2008.

* August 6, 2008. A Medellin businessman, Juan Felipe Sierra Fernandez, owner of a security company, was arrested and charged with being the connection between the wanted drug trafficker "Don Mario" and high officials of the National Police and the Public Prosecutor's offices in



Antioquia and Cordoba. Sierra's role was to see to it that police and prosecutors did not interfere with the drug business. Arrests of police and prosecutors are expected.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 6, 2008.

* August 6, 2008. The Public Prosecutor intends to re-open the cases of two Colombian Navy officers, Oscar Eduardo Saavedra Calixto, captain of a frigate, and Camilo Martinez Moreno, captain of a corvette, alleged to have cooperated in the Chengue massacre in January 2001. The military justice system had exonerated them and the former Public Prosecutor, Luis Camilo Osorio had closed the case against their commander, Rear Admiral Rodrigo Alfonso Quinonez. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has accepted a case brought by the victims' families against the Colombian government because no one had been charged in the case. The Attorney General's investigation showed that Saavedra saw the paramilitaries' trucks headed for the village and took no action. It also showed that an investigating prosecutor, after the massacre, had requested Martinez to arrest the killers, but he refused. She was later murdered. In the massacre, some 80 paramilitaries murdered 27 farmers with sticks and machetes.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 6, 2008.

* August 6, 2008. A former Police Inspector, Adriana Loaiza Canaval, has been charged with extortion. According to the investigation, when a citizen complained of problems with neighbors, Canaval told them that, for a payment of two million pesos (about \$1,000) she would get rid of them.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secvalle/SvinspectAgo06.htm>

* August 4, 2008. A Colombian Army colonel, a lieutenant colonel, and two noncommissioned officers have been arrested and charged with aggravated conspiracy to commit crimes. They are being held without bail. The prosecutor alleges that between January 2002 and December 2003 they met with paramilitary commanders and that they murdered two civilians who were later reported as killed in combat. They were also involved in killing paramilitaries whose deaths were ordered by other paramilitaries.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/DH/DhHMejiaAgo04.htm>

* August 1, 2008. The Attorney General of Colombia has brought charges against nine soldiers for their part in the massacre of eight people, including three children in San Jose de Apartado (Antioquia Province) in February 2005. The soldiers, including a captain and a lieutenant colonel, are charged with facilitating the incursion of the paramilitaries and aiding in torturing and dismembering the victims. One of the officers, Captain Guillermo Armondo Gordillo has confessed in a plea bargain to his part in the massacre.

Source: *El Espectador* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 1, 2008.

* August 1, 2008. Two Colombian Army soldiers, part of the 4th Brigade headquartered in Medellin and nine others were sentenced to 35 years in prison after being found guilty of murdering three civilians and reporting them as guerrillas killed in combat. Their families testified that the victims had been dragged out of their houses and killed. The defendants told conflicting



stories and ballistics tests did not support their version of events. In addition, instead of taking the bodies to the nearest town, as called for by Army procedures, they took the bodies to Medellin by helicopter.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Radio Caracol*, Bogotá, and Public Prosecutor's web site, August 1, 2008 and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, August 2, 2008.

* July 30, 2008. Two men who were Colombian Army soldiers at the time of their offense have been charged with sexual assault of a civilian woman in April of 1997 in La Trinidad en Palme (Cundinamarca Province).

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/D/DhAbusoCampjul30.htm>

* July 30, 2008. Six Colombian Army soldiers are under arrest for their part in the massacre at Puerto Valero (Atlantico Province). They are accused of murdering six civilians who were in Barranquilla on business. Alex Felipe Navarro Salcedo, accused of planning the killings, was recently arrested in the Dominican Republic and extradited to Colombia.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, July 30, 2008.

* July 29, 2008. A Colombian Army lieutenant and a noncommissioned officer were arrested and charged in the disappearance of another soldier in 1997. The soldiers were camped in a town in San Juanito (Meta Province). There was a loud argument between the soldier and his superiors after the explosion of a grenade. Subsequently, the lieutenant ordered the group to break camp and the soldier has never been seen again.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla and Public Prosecutor's web site, July 19, 2008.

* July 27, 2008. The Colombian news weekly *Semana* expresses concern about the involvement of police and armed forces personnel in organized crime. It recounts the events of last July 17 when an Army captain, a prosecutor, a lawyer and their driver were all found shot to death. A retired 2d lieutenant, who has been involved in crimes before, survived. The soldiers and the prosecutor were not on government business. The magazine also reports that at least one high official in military intelligence in the Fourth Brigade is under suspicion for drug trafficking.

Source: *Semana*, Bogotá, July 27, 2008.

* July 27, 2008. The Colombian news weekly *Semana* reports on the slaying of Gustavo Garzon, who used his connections with Colombian law enforcement, prosecutors, and the military to provide drug traffickers with information. The drug traffickers paid him for the information and he paid his law enforcement connections. No one has been charged in the killing, but authorities conclude that the traffickers tired of his demands for money.

Source: *Semana*, Bogotá, July 27, 2008.

* July 26, 2008. The body of a labor union leader was found and his family and supporters accused the Colombian police. A witness claims to have seen him handcuffed and struggling with a police patrol. He was strangled and his body showed signs of torture.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, July 26, 2008.



* July 24, 2008. Eight Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with murdering four farmers. They were killed by soldiers in Yarumal (Antioquia Province). The soldiers presented the victims as guerrillas killed in combat, but investigation found this to be false.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, July 24, 2008 and Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/DH/DhAcuMiliJul24.htm>

* July 24, 2008. The Colombian Army has asserted that the four young men killed by soldiers were guerrillas killed in combat, but their families insist that they were just young workers going about their business. One had a job handing out flyers at the bus terminal in Cucuta (Norte de Santander Province). He had completed his military service. One was a high school student. They had gone to a motorcycle repair shop and were never seen again.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, July 24, 2008.

* July 24, 2008. Raul Emilio Hasbun, alias "Pedro Ponte", a paramilitary commander making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, testified that he formed a paramilitary group at the request of General Alfonso Manosalva, who commanded the 4th Brigade in the mid-1990's.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, July 24, 2008.

* July 23, 2008. A demobilized paramilitary, Carlos Andres Palencia, alias "Visaje" ("Mug") making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, testified that the police officers in the municipality of El Tarra (Santander Province) received payments from the paramilitaries. In return for the payments, the police were expected to keep silent about paramilitary activities.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, July 23, 2008.

* July 23, 2008. Four Colombian soldiers, a lieutenant, a corporal and two others have been charged with the murder of a child who walked out of his house carrying a lantern. After the shooting, the soldiers placed a radio and a weapon beside the body, according to the investigation. The four are being held without bail.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secvillavi/SvMiliHomijul23.htm>

* July 22, 2008. The Colombian Government, the Navy, and the Ministry of Defense are held responsible for failing in their duty when a group of paramilitaries massacred 28 farmers in the rural area of Ovejas (Sucre Province), according to a court decision. In January 2001, 300 paramilitaries murdered the farmers with blows to the head and then burned their houses. The Attorney General has already punished the former commander of the First Brigade of the Marine Infantry, Rear Admiral Rodrigo Quinones.

Source: *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, July 22, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, July 21, 2008.

* July 19, 2008. Two former Cali police officers were captured after they murdered a local merchant. According to reports, the merchant was driving his car, along with his wife and two young children. The two stopped the car, identifying themselves as police officers. When they handcuffed the driver, his wife called for help. One hit her with a weapon and she was knocked



unconscious. The two fled with their victim, followed by police cars. When they were stopped at a police roadblock, they shot the merchant in the head and fled, but were captured shortly afterward.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, July 19, 2008.

* July 18, 2008. The Attorney General has ordered Jorge Noguera, the former director of DAS (Colombian FBI) not to hold any public office for 18 years. The decision was based on his cooperation with paramilitaries and graft, as well as obstruction of criminal investigations. Noguera is also facing criminal charges.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, July 18, 2008.

* July 18, 2008. Col. Jose Edgar Cepesa, former Police chief in Cesar Province, and Major Henry Cortes, former commander of the judicial police in the Province are being investigated for theft of reward money. An informant was to be paid 50 million pesos (about \$25,000) for his assistance in a murder case. The two policemen are charged with keeping 30 million pesos (about \$15,000) of the reward.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, July 18, 2008.

* July 17, 2008. A 2d lieutenant in the Colombian Army has been arrested and charged with homicide. According to the investigation, a resident of Dabeiba (Antioquia Province) left his home to work on the road. He never returned and his tools and bicycle were found on the road. His family identified his body in the morgue at Chigorodo where it had been presented as a guerrilla killed in combat. His civilian clothes had been removed and his body was dressed in camouflage. A radio and pistol were found beside the body. Three other soldiers, stationed at 17th Brigade headquarters in Carepa, have already been charged in this murder.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/DH/DhSubTteHomiJul17.htm>

* July 16, 2008. Two Bogotá police officers are arrested and charged with extortion against one of their fellow officers. They are alleged to have stolen the officer's motorcycle and to have demanded money for its return.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, July 16, 2008.

* July 17, 2008. A Colombian Army sergeant has been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide for killing a retired police officer. He is alleged to have headed a band of thieves who stole 15 million pesos (about \$7,500) and some household appliances before killing the victim. According to the investigation, the group had been operating several months in the area of Salento (Quindio Province).

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/seccionales/ScMilitHomiPolJul18.htm>

* July 15, 2008. A retired Colombian Army officer who escaped from jail in 2004, has been recaptured. Former Major Cesar Alonso Maldonado had been investigated for an attack on a labor leader, Wilson Borja, in December 2000. A bystander was killed in the attack and Borja and one of his bodyguards were wounded. Officials still do not know how Maldonado escaped from his



cell, when there were some 30 officers assigned to guard him. Four Army officers were discharged after the escape. Maldonado is charged with murder and escape.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Radio Caracol*, Bogotá, July 14, 2008.

* July 10, 2008. A former Colombian National Police captain, Luis Alexander Gutierrez Castro, has been captured and will be charged in connection with the massacre at La Gabarra (Norte de Santander Province) in August 1999. Thirty-four people were killed. As commander of Police in Tibu (Norte de Santander Province) he is alleged to have cooperated with the paramilitaries in carrying out the massacre. He subsequently joined the paramilitaries and is known as “El Capi”.

Source: Public Prosecutor’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/seccionales/ScCapitanJul10.htm>

* July 10, 2008. Ever Veloza, alias “HH”, a demobilized paramilitary commander, making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, turned over a USB memory stick that had belonged to the late Carlos Castano, “HH” also testified that Castano had ordered the death of a well-known journalist and humorist, Jaime Garzon, because Army officials wanted it. Before he was killed, according to “HH”, Castano told his friends that the killing of Garzon had been a bad idea, but a “military friend” had wanted it.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, July 10, 2008.

* July 10, 2008. A Colombian National Police captain, charged with being a member of the paramilitaries was captured. He had been assigned to Norte de Santander Province and is believed to have been involved in homicides and terrorist acts, carried out because of his connection to the paramilitaries. After he was transferred to Narino Province, he is alleged to have joined another paramilitary group.

Source: Public Prosecutor’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/seccionales/ScCapitanJul10.htm>

* July 9, 2008. Five Colombian police officers were sentenced to 20 years in prison after being convicted of assault and homicide in the killing of a young man and injuring several young people in Primavera (Valle Province). The investigation showed that, after a dispute, the soldiers followed the victims and shot at the car they were in.

Source: Public Prosecutor’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/CH/DhCondPoliciasJul09.htm>

* July 8, 2008. A Colombian Army soldier was arrested for trafficking weapons and misuse of military issue weapons, including uniforms and insignias. He was stopped at a toll booth and when his car was searched, eight fragmentation grenades, a 40-millimeter grenade, some other equipment, three uniforms and knapsack were found in his car.

Source: Public Prosecutor’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secvillavi/SvSoldadoJul08.htm>

* July 8, 2008. A former director of a division of the Public Prosecutor’s office, Diego Rojas Giron, has been captured. He escaped after being sentenced to three years and 11 months in prison. He



was convicted of aggravated malfeasance in office after he interfered with investigations in order to favor drug traffickers.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, July 8, 2008.

* July 1, 2008. The Attorney General has punished a Colombian Army major and a major in the National Police. They were discharged and will not be allowed to hold any public responsibility for 20 years. The Attorney General found that they had kidnapped and murdered a merchant, Ruben Suarez Lopez in April 2002. Suarez was driving from Chiquinquirá (Putumayo Province) and was carrying a substantial sum of money under his spare tire. He was forced to drive to a military installation in Bogotá. The police major took control of the prisoner, his car and his possessions. He ordered the other police officers to leave the scene. The next day, the merchant's body was found in the road. His vehicle was found in Bogotá, stripped and with the spare tire space open.

Source: *Semana*, Bogotá, July 1, 2008.

* June 26, 2008. At least seven Colombian police officers are linked to drug trafficking in Bogotá. They allegedly keep other officers from interfering, and alert the traffickers when law enforcement is carrying out an operation. The seven officers are in custody and are making their first court appearance.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, June 26, 2008.

* June 23, 2008. The Public Prosecutor's office reveals that more than 100 people were killed in the massacre at El Salado in February 2000. It had been thought that between 38 and 50 had been killed. Demobilized paramilitaries, making their confessions under the Justice and Peace law have provided new information. According to their testimony, some 300 paramilitaries carried out the operation, and they claim that members of the Colombian Armed Forces participated. The paramilitaries tortured their victims cruelly before killing them. A captain in the Colombian Navy is being prosecuted for aggravated murder for his part in the massacre.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 23, and Public Prosecutor's web site, June 27, 2008.

* June 22, 2008. The weekly news magazine *Semana* covers the trial of five Colombian Army soldiers accused of kidnapping and robbery. According to the testimony, police were alerted to suspicious movements at a farm near Giradota. The police moved in carefully, because they suspected a kidnapping by the guerrillas. But when they broke down the door, they discovered that Army soldiers had bound and gagged an 88-year old woman, a priest, a nun, and three other people. The victims testified that the nun had arrived to visit the elderly lady, but found her bound and gagged and was soon bound and gagged herself. The priest also visited the lady regularly, and when he arrived, he found the other two bound and gagged and then was captured as well. The defendants argued that they had not intended to kidnap, but only to rob.

Source: *Semana*, Bogotá, June 22, 2008.

* June 22, 2008. The weekly news magazine *Semana*, reviews the infiltration of Colombia's armed forces by guerrillas and drug traffickers during the last year. It cites the discovery that "Don Diego" the head of the Norte del Valle drug cartel had numerous Army officers working for him. The Army had a network of officers who recruited soldiers and ex-soldiers to provide security and perform other duties for the drug lord.

Then the country became aware that the guerrillas had received classified strategic information, on hard discs and memory sticks, all obtained from the armed forces.



The Colombian Navy was also found to have been infiltrated by the drug traffickers. Rear Admiral Gabriel Arango retired suddenly, but was soon accused of providing information to the drug traffickers, including maps and ship locations, including United States and British ships, among others. Finally, an attractive young woman, working for the guerrillas, was able to take courses in the Colombian War College and was in classes with the colonels who would soon be generals in the Colombian Army. She not only had access to confidential information, but she visited, took pictures, and made videos of Colombia's most important military installations.

Source: *Semana*, Bogotá, June 22, 2008.

* June 20, 2008. For the present, the Public Prosecutor will not arrest the 65 soldiers who are being investigated for their part in the massacre of five adults and three children at San Jose de Apartado. A lieutenant, a 2d lieutenant, and four noncommissioned officers, as well as their captain are under arrest for their part in the massacre. They are charged with homicide and terrorism.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, June 21 and Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/DH/DhApartadojun20.htm>

* June 20, 2008. Colombia's Minister of Defense stated that there might be two more admirals involved in the case of Rear Admiral Gabriel Arango, who is charged with using his position to assist drug traffickers. The Minister emphasized that the case is very delicate and must be studied with great care.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, June 20, and *El Pais*, Cali, June 21, 2008.

* June 20, 2008. Real Admiral Gabriel Arango surrendered yesterday, after a warrant was issued for his arrest. The Public Prosecutor alleges that he was "allied with the mafia" to make it easier for ships carrying drugs to evade capture, and that he received money in return. Witnesses claim to have been present at meetings with Admiral Arango and the drug traffickers. He has denied the charges.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 20, 2008.

* June 20, 2008. A demobilized paramilitary, Jorge Ivan Laverde, alias "El Iguano", making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, testified that the former Deputy Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) Jose Miguel Narvaez was one of "the six" or "the conclave" who planned the actions of the paramilitaries. The witness claimed that Narvaez was one who insisted on the killing of a journalist, Jaime Garzon. Garzon was shot in Bogotá on August 13, 1999.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 20, 2008.

* June 20, 2008. A Colombian military reservist and two local prosecutors demanded millions of pesos from crime victims, claiming that they would recoup what they had lost. Police recorded a conversation in which they demanded six million pesos (about \$1,500) in return for obtaining 22 million pesos (about \$11,000) from the supposed thieves. The Public Prosecutor's office is continuing to investigate because it appears that police are also involved.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, June 20, 2008.

* June 19, 2008. Five Colombian Army soldiers, along with five civilians are being tried for the kidnapping of three people in Girardota (Antioquia Province). They are charged with aggravated



kidnapping, theft, and weapons violations. The prosecutor alleges that they bound and gagged an 85-year old woman, a priest and a nun. When they were captured, they claimed that they were on duty and were searching for arms and guerrillas.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secantioquia/SajuicioMiliJun18.htm>

* June 18, 2008. A former member of the Prosecutor's staff testified that the former Public Prosecutor, Luis Camilo Osorio, was involved with the paramilitaries during his time in office. She identified another prosecutor, now a fugitive, who aided the paramilitaries. She added that those who complained about killings by paramilitaries were killed.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga; *Caracol Radio, Semana*, Bogotá, June 18, 2008.

* June 18, 2008. A Colombian Army Sergeant has been arrested and charged with the murder of a farmer on March 11, 2006. According to the investigation, an officer, four noncommissioned officers and six soldiers shot the farmer, moved his body, and lied about the circumstances of the killing.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secvalle/SvSubofHomijune18.htm>

* June 17, 2008. A demobilized paramilitary, making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, has testified that Jose Miguel Narvaez, former Deputy Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI), urged paramilitary leaders to kill a popular comedian. The murder took place in 1999. The confession also states that Narvaez frequently visited paramilitary camps, allowed paramilitaries to use government vehicles, and talked about the need to kill "communists".

Source: *El Tiempo*, *Caracol Radio*, *El Espectador*, *Semana*, Bogotá, and Public Prosecutor's web site, June 17, 2008.

* June 17, 2008. The Commander of the Colombian Armed Forces, General Freddy Padilla told *Radio Caracol* that 18,000 soldiers are without commanders. He noted that commanders are managing many more personnel than is efficient and that makes it difficult to control their actions. He seeks to train more officers so that disciplinary failures can be reduced.

*Source: *Radio Caracol*, Bogotá, June 17, 2008.

* June 9, 2008. An Inspector of Police is accused of bribery in Cali. She is alleged to have suggested to a noise complainant that, for a payment of two million pesos (about \$1,000) she would see to it that the annoying neighbors would be sent away for good.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticia2008/secvalle/SvConcusionJun09.htm>

* June 8, 2008. The Colombian Supreme Court of Justice has ordered the Public Prosecutor to re-open the investigation of the massacre at La Rochela, and the Prosecutor has arrested retired General Farouk Yanine Diaz for his participation in this and other massacres in the 1980's and 1990's.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, June 6, and *Semana*, Bogotá, June 8, 2008.



* June 7, 2008. The director of the Colombian National Police, General Oscar Naranjo denies the existence of a criminal cartel composed of police officers that use the information they gain in the protection of officials for robbery and extortion. General Naranjo said that it is worrisome, painful, and lamentable that some police personnel have been implicated in crimes such as theft and robbery.

Source: *Radio Caracol*, Bogotá, June 7, 2008.

* June 6, 2008. Rear Admiral Gabriel Arango Bacci defended himself against the Public Prosecutor's charges that he assisted a drug trafficker, Juan Carlos Ramirez, alias "Chupeta" (Lollipop). He expects to be exonerated.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 6, 2008.

* June 6, 2008. A major in the Colombian National Police was arrested and charged with falsifying official documents, conspiracy to commit crimes, and bribery, in connection with the disposition of junked vehicles. He is alleged to have skimmed more than 30 billion pesos (about \$15 million).

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 6, 2008 and Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/seccionales/SdPoliChatarrizajun06.htm>

* June 6, 2008. Two more military officers are charged with the massacre in Magdalena Medio, in Puerto Araujo (Santander Province) in 1987. Two retired majors were arrested. General Farouk Yanine Diaz was arrested previously in the case.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, June 6, 2008.

* June 6, 2008. A Colombian Police Sergeant who pleaded guilty to kidnapping and robbery was allowed to serve his sentence at home, a decision that was criticized by public officials. A representative of the Prosecutor's office said that the sentence might be appealed.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 6, 2008.

* June 5, 2008. A Colombian Police Sergeant was arrested for taking part in a robbery carried out by police officers. One of them pleaded guilty to simple kidnapping and aggravated theft and was jailed.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 5, 2005.

* June 3, 2008. Two Colombian National Police officers, assigned to provide security for the Minister of Commerce and another official, were captured and charged with aggravated theft, illegal use of weapons and kidnapping. They are accused of setting up a roadblock, making a merchant get into their car and forcing him to go to a bank and withdraw 24 million pesos (about \$12,000), which they stole.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, June 3, and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 4, 2008.

* June 3, 2008. The Council of State, Colombia's highest administrative court, ordered the Colombian government to pay damages to a woman whose house was searched "violently and aggressively". The court found that the soldiers, searching for guerrillas, insulted the people in the house, accusing them of collaborating with the guerrillas, and, at gunpoint, made the residents



leave the house. They proceeded to destroy furniture and trunks and, upon leaving, one of them pointed his gun at the resident and promised to blow up the house with a grenade if he found out that she aided the guerrillas.

Source: *El Colombiano*, June 3, 2008.

* June 3, 2008. A Colombian Army soldier has been arrested and charged with sexual abuse of a four-year-old girl. He is being held without bail.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secvillavi/SvSoldAbusoJun03.htm>

* May 30, 2008. A Colombian Administrative Court has ordered the Colombian Government to pay damages for its responsibility in a massacre committed by the guerrillas in Bojaya (Choco Province). The Ministry of Defense, including the Army and the National Police are ordered to pay 1,552 million pesos (about \$1.5 million) to the survivors of the 119 people who were killed. The court found that the government was responsible for the deaths because it failed to protect the population, in spite of early alert from the Public Defender's office, eight days before the attack. The alert warned of a paramilitary incursion. During the confrontation between guerrillas and paramilitaries, the guerrillas threw a bomb against a church where the people were hiding and 119 people were killed.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, May 30, 2008.

* May 30, 2008. The Cauca Regional Council of Indigenous People complained that two tribal members were attacked and killed by soldiers on the reservation. The soldiers had exchanged fire with guerrillas in another part of the village. The brother and sister were eating lunch in their kitchen when soldiers entered the house and killed them.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, Bogotá, May 30, 2008.

* May 29, 2008. A Colombian National Police official has been charged with aggravated torture and false arrest. A citizen was dragged from his home and taken to the station where he was beaten by officers supposedly investigating a murder. Another official has already been found guilty of torture in the case.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/antiterrorismo/TerrointendenteMay29.htm>

* May 29, 2008. Amnesty International reports that Colombian security forces, as well as paramilitaries and guerrilla groups continue to commit grave abuses of human rights.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, May 29 and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, May 28, 2008.

* May 28, 2008. The *Washington Post* reports that demobilized paramilitary warlords were allowed to use cell phones and laptops in their Colombian prison cells and that, when they were suddenly extradited to the United States, their cell phones and laptops were left unsecured for at least 48 hours. Prosecutors said they can't be sure that the equipment was not tampered with before being handed over to judicial investigators. Equipment belonging to Salvatore Mancuso, who has implicated more military officers and politicians in paramilitary activities than any of the other commanders, was apparently sent out for repairs and has not been found.

Source: *The Washington Post*, May 28, 2008.



* May 28, 2008. A Colombian Police lieutenant has been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide. On May 26, in Pereira (Risaralda Province) a police patrol was transporting two of several persons apprehended in a street fight. They were intoxicated and resisting. One of them was shot dead. At first the police reported that a man on a motorcycle had fired the shot. Ballistic tests proved that story to be false, and showed that the police lieutenant had fired the shot.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secpereira/SpPoliHomiMay28.htm>

* May 27, 2008. The demobilized paramilitary commander, alias "HH", testified that members of the Police and the Colombian Army helped his group of paramilitaries carry out their operations. He claimed that the Army officers and noncommissioned officers received between 500,000 and five million pesos (from about \$250 to about \$2,500) monthly from the paramilitaries.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, May 28, 2008 and Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/justiciapaz/JyPHHMay27.htm>

* May 26, 2008. A colonel in the Colombian Police was one of 13 people arrested in a drug raid in Spain. 560 kilos of cocaine were found in their possession.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, May 16, 2008.

* May 25, 2008. *El Tiempo* reports the publication of a book about the Israeli mercenary Yair Klein. Klein is soon to be extradited to Colombia. He trained squads for Pablo Escobar, Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha and Carlos Castano. In the book, the author interviews Klein. In the interview Klein states that he was hired by "people from the police", "people from the Army", and "people from the Ministry of Agriculture", as well as ranchers and cattlemen's organizations. He also notes that when he returned to Colombia, he found that the Colombian Army was using the people that he had trained.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, May 25, 2008.

* May 24, 2008. A committee of the Colombian House of Representatives is investigating whether the former Public Prosecutor Luis Camilo Osorio, now Colombian Ambassador to Mexico, favored paramilitaries during his term. (2001-2005) A former subordinate, now living in exile in Canada, testified that he was fired and threatened because he knew that Osorio had "blocked" efforts to reveal the participation of paramilitaries and Colombian military officers in murders, massacres and attempted assassinations.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, May 24, 2008, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, May 14, 2008.

* May 21, 2008. A 51-year-old noncommissioned officer of the Colombian Army was arrested and charged with holding a group of people hostage in a building in central Bogotá and threatening them with a fragmentation grenade. He demanded to be allowed to read a message and to have access to news reporters and to the Commander of the Armed Forces. He said that he had served many years and was being denied his pension. He claimed to have taken part in attacks on public officials and that he had been trained by the Israeli Yair Klein. He also accused high military officials of being connected to the paramilitaries. He was held without bail and charged with fabricating, carrying and trafficking in weapons and with kidnapping.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, May 21, 2008.



* May 21, 2008. Families of victims of the extradited paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso has asked U.S. Ambassador to Colombia William Brownfield to insist that the U.S. Justice Department help them to find the common graves where the bodies of their family members were buried. Under the Justice and Peace procedure, Mancuso has confessed to some 566 crimes, but investigators believe there are far more. A retired Colombian Army captain was considered Mancuso's "right hand" and his whereabouts are unknown.

Source: *Cambio*, Bogotá, May 21, 2008.

* May 20, 2008. Two Colombian police officers handcuffed a news photographer who was covering a court hearing regarding a traffic death. After he was removed from the hearing room, he was taken to the police station, where he was made to sign a document stating that he had gone there voluntarily.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, May 20, 2008

* May 18, 2008. Two Colombian police officials were discharged after they approved reward payments to informants who did not exist and falsified official records.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, May 18, 2008.

* May 17, 2008. For the first time since the February 2005 massacre in San Jose de Apartado (Antioquia Province) a representative of the Colombian Army has admitted the Army's participation. Captain Guillermo Armando Gordillo confessed that more than 100 soldiers and 50 paramilitaries were patrolling together in the area. He said that the operation had been planned for quite a while, on orders from higher authorities, including a general, a colonel, and a major. In the massacre, three men, two women, and three children were killed. At least one of the children was beheaded and others of the victims were dismembered.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, May 17, 2008

* May 17, 2008. A retired Colombian Army sergeant, employed as a security official by the Mayor of Apartado (Antioquia Province) has been arrested and charged with taking part in the murder of a civilian in Golondrinas, near Cali (Valle del Cauca Province). Prosecutors allege that he and six soldiers and an officer murdered the man and dressed him in a guerrilla uniform. Forensic analysis showed that the victim was shot numerous times in the back while on his knees, with his arms raised.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, May 16, 2008 and *El Pais*, Cali, May 17, 2008, also Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secvalle/SvSubofHomiMay16.htm>.

* May 15, 2008. The United States has requested the extradition of a Colombian Army officer, to be charged with drug trafficking. A witness in the United States will testify to the officer's participation in the Colombian drug trafficking organization headed by "Don Mario". The officer had served as Chief of Security at the Casa de Narino (Colombian White House) during a previous administration

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, May 15, 2008.

* May 11, 2008. Three priests have had to flee southern Bolivar Province because of threats from a new group of paramilitaries, the Black Eagles. The news magazine *Semana* reports that the



civilian population of Magdalena Medio, a vast region that includes various provinces, including southern Bolivar, western Santander and Boyaca Provinces and northeast Antioquia, have suffered many years of violence. They do not feel that the Colombian Army will protect them because they know that some members of the armed forces are friendly with the paramilitaries. The farmers complain that they have had to flee their properties because the Army soldiers, trying to get them to give information about the guerrillas, threaten them with harm from the paramilitaries. They allege that 14 laborers have been murdered by soldiers. The victims are dragged from their houses or stopped on the road and suddenly appear dead, dressed in camouflage and presented to news media as guerrillas killed in combat.

The exiled priests had been educating the farmers about their rights and led a march of 50 priests and some 2,000 persons to urge the government to provide protection. But there has been no response from the government and the three priests had to flee for their lives.

Source: *Semana*, Bogotá, May 11, 2008.

* May 9, 2008. The demobilized paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso, testifying in an investigation of Admiral Gabriel Arango, confirmed that paramilitaries paid Colombian Navy personnel for information on the locations of Navy ships, but said he did not know if Admiral Arango was involved. Mancuso confirmed that members of the Armed Forces collaborated with the paramilitaries and also with “pureblooded” drug traffickers.

Meanwhile, another demobilized paramilitary “El Burro”, testifying under the Peace and Justice Law, stated that it was easy for drug traffickers to get information about the locations of Colombian, British, and U.S. ships in the Caribbean. “You just ask any store or place of business if they have a telephone or a fax. In minutes you have a two or three-page report with the maps” he revealed.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, May 9, 2008.

* May 9, 2008. Three officials of the Colombian Department of Corrections were arrested and charged with extortion. They worked with a prisoner to demand large sums. They worked out of a prison in Cordoba Province.

Source: Public Prosecutor’s web site, May 9, 2008. <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co./PAG/DIVULGA/noticias200/seccosta/SchinpecMay09.htm>

* May 8, 2008. Colombian Army Col. Bayron Carvajal, convicted for leading the massacre of ten police and one civilian in Jamundi, has been sentenced to 54 years in prison. Other participants, including two sergeants, a corporal, and ten soldiers, were sentenced to 50 years in prison. They were found guilty after a trial that lasted 14 months.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá; *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla; *El Pais*, Cali; *El Colombiano*, Medellin; and the Public Prosecutor’s web site.

* May 7, 2008. A Colombian Army Colonel, a Lieutenant Colonel, a Sergeant and a retired noncommissioned officer were arrested and charged with conspiracy to commit crimes, working with illegal armed groups, and homicide. Counting those four, there are 32 military from the battalion in Valledupar (Cesar Province) who are being investigated for various crimes, but most for



“false positives” or killing civilians and labeling them guerrillas killed in combat. Prosecutors allege that between 2002 and 2004, when the colonel was assigned to the battalion, 53 indigenous people were killed. In October 2002, 18 people were killed, allegedly guerrillas. Their bodies were dressed in camouflage and they wore ELN (guerrilla) bracelets, but their underwear was marked with paramilitary initials. A witness has testified that the paramilitary commander “Jorge 40” promised the colonel a salary of 30 million pesos (about \$15,000) a month if the Army would not interfere with the paramilitaries in the area.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, May 6, 2008 and *Semana* and *Radio Caracol*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellín, and the Public Prosecutor’s web site, May 7, 2008.

* May 7, 2008. The former Director of the prison in Valledupar (Cesar Province) has been arrested for taking part in the flight of one of the commanders of the “Black Eagles” a newly formed paramilitary group that operates in Cesar. Prosecutors allege that a number of prison employees assisted in the escape.

Source: Public Prosecutor’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/seccionales/ScDirCarcelMay07.htm>

* May 5, 2008. The Public Prosecutor will re-open the investigation of retired General Rito Alejo del Rio, former commander of the 17th Brigade, headquartered at Arepa (Antioquia Province) after three demobilized paramilitary commanders described his connection with murders and disappearances in Uraba while he was stationed there. The paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso testified that he had met with Rito Alejo to plan paramilitary expansion in the northwest part of Colombia. Another demobilized paramilitary, “HH”, said that the general had supported his men and even allowed them to enter the military base to free some paramilitaries who had been arrested. Another, alias “Diego Rivera” said he had met with General Del Rio to plan military support for paramilitary intelligence efforts.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, May 5, 2008.

* May 2, 2008. The Public Prosecutor will investigate the case of retired General Farouk Yanine Diaz. A military court found him not guilty of the murder of 19 merchants, but he has been connected with the “massacre of La Rochela”, the murder of a group of judicial officers who came to investigate the previous murders. Demobilized paramilitary leaders have testified that General Yanine regularly met with paramilitary leaders to plan the expansion of paramilitary forces and territory and that he worked with a leader known as “Vladimir” to plan the La Rochela massacre.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, May 2, 2008.

May 1, 2008. A Colombian police colonel is under investigation after seven of his subordinates are accused of collaborating with “Don Mario”, one of Colombia’s most wanted drug traffickers.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellín, May 1 and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, April 30, 2008.

* April 30, 2008. According to an op-ed in *El Tiempo*, the paramilitaries first appeared in Cordoba and Uraba (Antioquia Province). They determined to destroy the “social base of the guerrillas”. This initiated a bloodbath, and from the beginning, sectors of the Colombian armed forces supported the illegal organization. Its purpose was to carry out the human rights violations that should not be seen to come from the Army, and thus, from the Government.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 30, 2008.



* April 28, 2008. Fifteen Colombian soldiers have been arrested and held without bail, charged with murdering two civilians and dressing them up as guerrillas killed in combat. The arrests come only two weeks after seven soldiers, including a Lt. Colonel, were arrested for their alleged connections with new paramilitary groups. In another recent arrest an Army sergeant, a former police officer and three civilians were arrested and charged with weapons trafficking after a machine gun, munitions, explosives and other armaments were found in their possession.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 28, 2008.

* April 28, 2008. A Colombian Army Major is under arrest for his part in a kidnapping. He is being held without bail and is under investigation for another kidnapping and murder in 2007.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site, April 28, 2008. <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secvillavi/SvSecGauAbr28.htm>

* April 27, 2008. The Bogotá daily *El Tiempo* investigated the death of a farm leader who was killed by soldiers on February 23, 2008. He had left a friend's farm and was found dead just five minutes away near a newly installed Army checkpoint. According to the soldiers, he refused to stop at the check point and fired at the soldiers with a 9 ml. pistol. They said he was a FARC leader and was out collecting extortion money when he was shot.

His friends told *El Tiempo* that he was a leader in farm organizations, not very interested in politics, and had never owned a gun. He was the president of the Community Action Committee in Pinares de Alegeciras (Huila Province); he had founded a coffee and banana cooperative that had 100 farmers as members and he was a partner in a fruit business. The family's attorney told *El Tiempo* that his body showed signs of torture. No charges have been filed.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 27, 2008.

* April 24, 2008. A Police commander was killed in a gunfight among police officers at the police station in Cundinamarca (Cundinamarca Province).

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, April 24, 2008.

* April 24, 2008. The Attorney General charged two police aides after they beat a citizen, after using hostile and threatening language. The citizen was hospitalized and then jailed.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, April 24, 2008.

* April 24, 2008. The Colombian Petroleum Workers Union complained that two hit men tried to kill Jorge Gambos, the president of the union, and complained that the police helped the two hit men escape. The attempt was made in Yarima (Santander Province). The union alleges that bystanders were able to capture the two armed men, but that the police took them out to the highway where a motorcycle was waiting for them.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, April 24, 2008.

* April 24, 2008. Eight Colombian soldiers and one non-commissioned officer were arrested and held without bail, charged with aggravated homicide. The Public Prosecutor alleges that they



killed a civilian and then claimed that he had been part of a group that fired on them. Forensic and ballistic evidence showed their claim to be false.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, April 24, and Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/DHDMilitaresAbr24.htm>

* April 24, 2008. Two Colombian soldiers from the XVI Brigade in Yopal (Casanare Province) have been arrested and charged with murder. The Public Prosecutor alleges that on January 4, 2007 they killed a civilian and reported that they had killed him in combat. In fact, the Prosecutor charges, there was no combat.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secvillav/SvPersonaAbr24.htm>

* April 24, 2008. The Attorney General of Colombia is continuing to investigate the massacre at Jamundi on May 22, 2006 and has accused a general and 16 more soldiers for their part in the massacre of DEA-trained police officers. Fifteen soldiers, including a colonel, have already been found guilty after a lengthy trial. The Attorney General has accused the head of intelligence for an Army Battalion, the general who commands the Third Brigade, and others who allegedly planned and carried out the massacre, manipulated the evidence at the scene and destroyed evidence.

Source: *Caracol* Radio, Bogota,, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, April 23, *El Espectador*, Bogotá, April 24, and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 24 and 26, 2008.

* April 23. Colombia will ask the United States to extradite the former deputy director of the Department of Administrative Security (DAS) (Colombia's FBI). Javier Alfredo Valle Anaya has received asylum in the United States and is living in New York. Valle is accused of falsifying testimony against a university professor, Alfredo Correa de Andres.. Correa was subsequently murdered by paramilitaries and the Public Prosecutor alleges that Valle included his name and others on a list given to the paramilitaries "to take care of". Valle has denied the charges.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 23, 2008.

* April 22, 2008. The Public Prosecutor has arrested and charged seven Colombian soldiers, a major, a lieutenant, a noncommissioned officer and four others with kidnapping and aggravated homicide. The Prosecutor alleges that on July 27, 2007, they entered an internet café and captured a civilian and forced him into a military vehicle. His body was found the next day, with bullet wounds. The seven are being held without bail.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secvillavi/SvMilitaresAbr22.htm>

* April 21, 2008. An ex-patrolman of the National Police has been arrested and charged with extortion. The Prosecutor alleges that on August 2, 2007, he and several others entered a store in Inirida (Guainia Province), stole some items, gagged the female owner, and demanded that she pay them 10 million pesos (about \$10,000).

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secvillavi/SvExPatrulleroAbr22.htm>

* April 18, 2008. A demobilized paramilitary, alias "Panadero" (The Baker), making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, admitted to the kidnapping, murder and disappearance



of 30 persons outside of Barrancabermeja (Santander Province). He confessed that the victims were captured, five were murdered right in the street, and the other 25 were killed and their bodies either buried or thrown in a lake. He said that he had had the help of a noncommissioned officer of the Colombian Army. Human rights organizations have complained that no soldiers have yet been punished, in spite of the fact that after the massacre, the paramilitaries left by way of an Army checkpoint that controlled access to the town,

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 18, 2008, and Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/justiciapaz/JyPMasacreBarrancaAbr18.htm>.

* April 17, 2008. The Public Prosecutor has determined that a Colombian Army officer, Col. Alvaro Zambrano Gomez, commander of a battalion in Cordoba, alerted a drug trafficking gang of the Army's intelligence operations about the gang. One of the investigators said that, in exchange for the colonel's services, the gang created "false positives" such as the capture of weapons or munitions. Col. Zambrano and another officer, Major Julio Cesar Parga, are also accused of the murder of a rancher near Monteria (Cordoba Province). Five other soldiers were also arrested.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, Bogotá; *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga; *El Mundo*, Medellin, *El País*, Cali, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, April 17, 2008.

* April 17, 2008. A headline in *El Tiempo* states that in the last month, 29 soldiers have been found guilty of murders and massacres. The article counts seven soldiers, including a captain, sentenced to prison for "false positives" (killing civilians and presenting them as guerrillas killed in combat) plus 15 soldiers found guilty in the Apartado massacre and seven in the most recent discovery of Army involvement in a drug trafficking ring. The article lists another 748 soldiers, the equivalent of two battalions, who are being investigated for crimes.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 17, 2008.

* April 16, 2008. Eight Colombian Army soldiers, attached to the Fourth Brigade, have been found guilty of murdering three members of the same family in Dabeiba (Antioquia Province). Their captain was sentenced to 35 years in prison, and the soldiers were sentenced to 34 years and 6 months in prison. They reported the three as killed in combat with the guerrillas, but their families testified that they were dragged alive out of their houses and later found dead. Forensic experts established that their injuries could not have resulted from combat.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secantioquia/SaTribuneAbr16.htm>

* April 15, 2008. Six more soldiers, two lieutenants and four noncommissioned officers, have been arrested for their part in the February 2005 massacre of eight people, including a baby and two other children, in San Jose de Apartado (Antioquia Province). They are being held without bail.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, April 15, 2008.

* April 15, 2008.

* March 28, 2008. Fifteen Colombian soldiers are accused of taking part of the February 2005 massacre at San Jose de Apartado (Antioquia Province). Eight people, including three children, were killed and their bodies mutilated. Thirteen of the fifteen soldiers are in custody and a captain has been in custody since November 2007.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 28, 2008

* March 25, 2008. The Public Prosecutor has charged three Colombian Army officers with battery and aggravated torture of soldiers under their command. The acts were alleged to be part of training at an Army facility in Piedras (Tolima Province).

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, March 25, 2008.

* March 14, 2008. The Council of State, Colombia's highest administrative court, has ordered the direction of the National Police to make a public apology for the murder by police officers of two brothers in 1995. The court found both the Minister of Defense and the National Police guilty of the crime. On January 27, 1995, three men were arrested by disorderly conduct. The next day some family members asked what had happened to them, but they were beaten and forced to leave. Four days later, their bodies were found, bearing signs of torture. They had been beheaded and their hands were cut off at the wrists. The court found that economic damages were insufficient and ordered that the Director of the National Police as well as the municipal authorities in Tulua, where the acts took place, must apologize in a public ceremony.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 14 2008.

* March 14, 2008. A Colombian Army captain, the chief of Army intelligence for the Codazzi Battalion in Palmira (Norte del Valle Province) was captured in possession of five kilos of cocaine. He had hidden the cocaine in dog food.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 14, 2008.

* March 13, 2008. The Colombian Public Prosecutor's office plans to summon two paramilitary commanders who were involved in drug trafficking to testify as to whether they paid Admiral Gabriel Arango for information about the location of ships assigned to intercept drug shipments. A demobilized paramilitary who is in the Colombian Witness Protection Program, was a driver for one of the drug traffickers and testified about the Admiral's attendance at a meeting with them.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 13, 2008.

* March 8, 2008. The demobilized paramilitary commander, alias "HH", making his confession under the Peace and Justice law, testified that retired General Rito Alejo del Rio and Lt. Col. Bayron Carvajal (now convicted of murder in the Jamundi massacre) coordinated operations with the paramilitaries. Specifically, he stated that they "legalized" several murders committed by the paramilitaries. He testified that General Alejo, who commanded the 17th Brigade in Arepa (Antioquia Province) allowed the paramilitaries to enter the Brigade headquarters and kill two men who had been arrested and jailed there. Another soldier lent the paramilitaries an SUV to remove the bodies. He told of receiving information from other soldiers.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, March 8, 2008.

* March 8, 2008. A retired Colombian Army lieutenant worked for the notorious drug lord "Macaco" from 2000 until October 2007. He has surrendered to U.S. law enforcement. From the United States, he gave an interview to Colombian news weekly *Semana*. He described his first meeting with paramilitaries in 2000. They gave him and his companion 400,000 pesos



(about \$200) each and invited them to train with Carlos Castano. Later he became a trainer and a recruiter and a manager in the drug trade. After the drug lords demobilized and were imprisoned, he brought them money to bribe guards and to bring in drugs, alcohol, and under-aged girls. He also related meetings between paramilitary commanders and General Rito Alejo del Rio.

Source: *Semana*, March 8, 2008 and *Vanguardia Liberal*, March 11, 2008.

* March 7, 2008. A demobilized paramilitary commander, alias “El Burro” (The Donkey) making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, testified that it was his job to collect the “tax” from the drug traffickers on their way to the coast, and that the traffickers regularly received faxes from the Colombian Navy, telling them the location of U.S. and British navy ships patrolling the coast.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 7, 2008.

* March 6, 2008. The demobilized paramilitary commander, alias “HH”, making his confession under the Peace and Justice law, testified that retired Col. Danilo Gonzales aided the paramilitaries to enter Buenaventura (Valle Province). “HH” testified that Gonzales was close to Carlos Castano, one of the founders of the paramilitaries.

Source: Public Prosecutor’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/pag/divulga/noticias2008/secvalle/SvcoronelMar6.htm>

* March 4, 2008. A noncommissioned officer in the Colombian Army was arrested and charged with kidnapping, torture and aggravated theft. He and four other soldiers threatened, displaced and tortured several people to make them reveal the location of supposed stores of money and weapons. The other soldiers have already been arrested and charged. All are being held without bail.

Source: Public Prosecutor’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/pag/divulga/noticias2008/secconales/ScsuboficialMar4.htm>*

* February 29, 2008. Two Colombian Army officers and four soldiers were arrested and charged with aggravated homicide in Monteria (Cordoba Province). The Public Prosecutor’s investigation showed that two young men were taken from Cauca (Antioquia Province) with false promises of farm work near Monteria. They were murdered and then reported as guerrillas killed in combat.

Source: Public Prosecutor’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/DH/DhjóvenesFeb29.htm>

* February 22, 2008. Families are demanding an explanation after four bodies were found in “Cano Velez” (Santander Province). There were bullet wounds in various parts of the bodies. Army officials insisted that they were “four terrorists dedicated to drug trafficking”, but there families claimed that they had gone fishing in a small truck, carrying two canoes and equipment. They were wearing short pants. Their bodies were found about several kilometers from where they had gone and they were wearing different clothes and shoes. When their bodies were found, according to a family member, “The clothes they were wearing were not their own clothes.”

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, February 22, 2008.

* February 20, 2008. The Attorney General of Colombia used his power to remove officials by removing General Guillermo Chavez, director of police intelligence at the time the



Colombian National Police carried out illegal telephone taps. Thirty-four persons had their conversations illegally, including a representative of the OAS who was observing the paramilitary demobilization process, two members of the International Committee of Red Cross, two Colombian cabinet ministers and 13 journalists. Besides General Chavez, five other police officials were removed.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, February 20, 2008.

* February 20, 2008. Six Colombian National Police officials have been removed after being charged with defrauding citizens through pyramid schemes.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 20, 2008.

* February 18, 2008. After a trial lasting a year and a half, A judge found 15 Colombian Army soldiers guilty of massacring 20 anti-drug police and one civilian in May 2006. The highest officer, Lt. Col. Bayron Carvajal denied responsibility because he was not on the scene. The other soldiers did not testify.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site; *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, Bogotá; *El Colombiano*, Medellín; *El País*, Cali; *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, February 18, 2008.

* February 16, 2008. A demobilized paramilitary, Edgar Ignacio Fierro Florez was found guilty of the murder of a Colombian union official, the president of the union at Electricaribe. A witness testified that the killing was part of a plan worked out between paramilitaries and the DAS (Colombian FBI).

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, February 16, 2008.

* February 14, 2008. The Attorney General of Colombia has filed charges against Major Alvaro Andres Mejia Giraldo for interfering with an investigation of the drug lord known as "Don Diego" and another drug trafficker, known as "Jabon" (Soap). The charge alleges that he failed to provide information to the Attorney General about the two drug traffickers' activities and that he obstructed a military operation that was supposed to lead to their capture.

Source: *El País*, Cali, February 14, 2008.

* February 14, 2008. The Colombian government was ordered to pay 640 million pesos (about \$320,000) to two survivors of a member of Congress who was assassinated in 1996. Colombia's Department of Administrative Security (DAS) (Colombian FBI) was responsible for his safety.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, February 14, 2008.

* February 14, 2008. Officials at the maximum security prison at Itagui (Cordoba Province), where the demobilized paramilitary commanders are being held, found a 9 millimeter pistol, a fragmentation grenade and more than 11 million pesos (about \$5,500) in a patio at the prison.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellín, February 14, 2008.

* February 13, 2008. A Colombian police officer, extradited to the United States, pleaded guilty in a U.S. District Court in New York City to drug trafficking. Investigators stated that he had bribed



other police officers in order to ship millions of dollars worth of cocaine from Colombia to the United States.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 13, 2008.

* February 13, 2008. A Lt. Colonel in the Colombian Police Department (part of the Colombian Army) was relieved of his command after he was accused of helping a paramilitary commander/ drug trafficker, one of “Los Mellizos” (The Twins) to escape a police roadblock. The National Police Director, General Oscar Naranjo, called it “the worst case of corruption that he had heard of”. The Lt. Colonel denied the charges.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 13, 2008.

* February 11, 2008. A demobilized paramilitary commander, making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, admitted that his group murdered 1,200 civilians in a banana-growing region near Panama. He implicated military officers in the carrying out of some of these murders.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, February 11, 2008.

* February 10, 2008. A demobilized paramilitary commander, making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, testified that four of the five guerrillas reported by the Colombian Army as killed in combat on March 9, 2002, were school children between the ages of 13 and 15.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 10, 2008.

* February 6, 2008. *Cambio* weekly news magazine reports that the capture of a Colombian Army Major, alias “Zeus” is a key part of the investigation of mafia infiltration of the Army. He used his military contacts to recruit retired and active duty military to support a major drug trafficker. He used Military officers to obtain weapons, uniforms, and other military supplies for the drug lord’s security force.

Source: *Cambio*, Bogotá, February 6, 2008.

* February 6, 2008. The Public Prosecutor has charged the Department of Administrative Security (DAS) (Colombian FBI) with abuse of authority, private use of government secrets and aggravated conspiracy to commit crimes. The investigative file remains open and the Prosecutor plans additional charges. A witness who was the director of the DAS public information office has accused his superior of giving paramilitaries a list of activists who were later killed.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, February 6, 2008.

* February 6, 2008. A demobilized paramilitary who was a noncommissioned Police officer, admitted his participation in the killing of three public officials in the municipality of El Playon (Santander Province). He admitted planning the murder of the town’s mayor. The local Secretary of Government and a driver were also killed. He was already sentenced to 39 years in prison for two other murders.

Source: Public Prosecutor’s web site, February 6, 2008: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias200/secantioquia/SaSuboficialFeb06.htm>

* February 5, 2008. The Colombian Army made it a priority to capture the fugitive, a major, alias “Zeus”, but his extensive training made capture difficult. He had previously been sentenced



to 12 years in prison for drug trafficking, but he had been allowed house arrest. He then fled to the headquarters of the drug lord “Don Diego” and used his Army connections to put together a security force for the drug traffickers. When the group was disbanded after Don Diego’s capture, 56 members of the force surrendered. Most of them had previously been soldiers.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 5, 2008.

* February 4, 2008. A Colombian Army major, alias “Zeus”, who had been a fugitive, was arrested. The Public Prosecutor charges that, while on active duty, he was in charge of security for a drug lord, “Don Diego”, who was captured last September. The Prosecutor alleges that the major was assigned to recruit active and retired military for a special group that would rescue Don Diego’s younger brother. The brother was arrested in January 2007.

Source: Public Prosecutor’s web site, *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 4, 2008, and *El Mundo*, Medellín, February 5, 2008

* February 4, 2008. A Colombian Police captain and two noncommissioned officers, attached to the Copacabana Station (Antioquia Province), were sentenced to 28 years in prison for kidnapping and aggravated homicide. A citizen discovered a man stealing material from a recreation center. He was turned over to the authorities and two hours later, a corpse was found in the road. Although the police stated that the corpse was unidentified, he did have identification and the officers were convicted.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellín, February 5, Public Prosecutor’s web site, February 4, 2008: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secantioquia/SaPoliciasFeb04.htm>

* February 4, 2008. Five soldiers from the Colombian Army’s Eighth Mobile Brigade have been arrested and charged with kidnapping, torture, and aggravated larceny. According to the Public Prosecutor’s investigation, they threatened and tortured a group of civilians, trying to make them reveal the location of supposed stores of money or weapons. They are being held without bail.

Source: Public Prosecutor’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/seccionales/ScMilitaresFeb04.htm>

* January 31, 2008. A young man riding on horseback was shot and killed by the Colombian Army near Remedios (Antioquia Province). The local Farmers Association insists that he was killed because both he and his father were active in humanitarian and peace organizations. The Army insists that he was about to kill a soldier and that he had fired several shots. The community claims that he was dressed in civilian clothes and that he never arrived at the Army headquarters because he was intercepted and shot by an Army patrol. They allege that the Army patrol was accompanied by paramilitaries who “target and order the killing of farmers in the area.”

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Barrancabermeja, January 31, 2008.

* January 30, 2008. A demobilized paramilitary, making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, claims that the Colombian Army murdered five teenagers and claimed falsely that they were guerrillas. He said that he had been driving on his way to San Rafael (Antioquia Province) when five teenagers asked him for a ride. He told them to get into the van and started off. Without any warning, he claims, they were ambushed by a military patrol. All of the teenagers were killed and the paramilitary, although he suffered bullet wounds, managed to escape to the hospital in San Rafael. After he was treated, he escaped out a window. He testified that the teenagers were all dressed in uniforms and presented as guerrillas who were planning to blow up a bridge. Based



on this testimony, the Attorney General has inquired as to whether there is any pending military investigation.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 30, 2008.

* January 30, 2008. The chief of Colombian Police operations in Cesar Province was captured when he took part in a caravan of three armored SUV's carrying, among others, one of Colombia's most wanted drug traffickers. The Colombian authorities were waiting for the caravan, shots were exchanged, and the police official was captured. The drug trafficker escaped.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 30, 2008.

January 30, 2008. A Colombian Army sergeant was discharged from the service after he complained to the Attorney General that members of the 15th Mobile Brigade, operating in Ocana (Norte de Santander Province) were killing civilians and claiming falsely that they had died in combat. The Brigade Commander was promoted. The sergeant also told his story to the weekly news magazine *Semana*. He said that in early November a sergeant was collecting 20,000 pesos from each soldier. The money was needed to pay for a pistol that they had placed next to the body of one of the dead civilians. A soldier who killed a guerrilla was to be given five days off.

The discharged sergeant also recounted an incident in mid-October where two civilians were supposed to be killed, but one of the victims escaped. His version coincides with the complaint brought by an NGO working in the area, and with the testimony of the civilian who managed to escape after being shot by the soldiers.

NGO's in the area have complained of 19 separate cases where soldiers have killed civilians and claimed that they were guerrillas killed in combat. The Army has denied the complaints and alleged that the sergeant was fired for disciplinary problems.

Source: *Semana*, Bogotá, January 30, 2008.

* January 28, 2008. A demobilized paramilitary commander, known as "HH" gave an interview to the Cali daily *El Pais* a few days before beginning his confession under the Peace and Justice Law. He promised to provide a list of members of the Colombian Armed Forces, politicians and businesses that supported the paramilitaries in southwestern Colombia. Here are some points he made in the interview:

- The paramilitaries received information from the Colombian Army and Police as to where they were to act and where displacements of civilians should take place. The Army and Police collaborated with the paramilitaries.
- Some people had to be beheaded because the sound of shots would betray the presence of the paramilitaries.
- The Army did assist the paramilitaries in entering and leaving El Naya where he claims that 28 people were killed. Other sources have said there were at least 100.
- One Army colonel is already under arrest for his part in the massacre at La Alaska. He gave the paramilitaries a list of people to be killed.
- The paramilitaries did travel in trucks provided by the Colombian Army.
- He met with Col. Bayron Carvajal and knew that Carvajal was close to the paramilitaries. He went on patrols with Carvajal, patrols where people were killed. (Carvajal was later found guilty of the massacre at Jamundi.)



- The Armed Forces requested the paramilitaries to bury the dead in common graves so as not to show an increase in the number of civilian deaths.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, January 28, 2008.

* January 25, 2008. A demobilized paramilitary testified that he took part in a meeting with a now-extradited drug lord and that Admiral Gabriel Arango of the Colombian Navy was also present at the meeting. The demobilized paramilitary testified that Admiral Arango had been in contact with the drug traffickers since 1997 and that he furnished them with information about the location of Navy ships assigned to capture drug traffickers on the Atlantic coast. The Admiral has denied the allegations.

Source: *El Tiempo*, January 25, 2008.

* January 24, 2008. A Colombian Army General and his nephew, who was a drug prosecutor, were captured along with 24 other members of a drug trafficking ring. Nine of those captured, not including the general and his nephew, are wanted in the United States. The ring is accused of producing ten tons of cocaine every month in their laboratories and using Venezuela to send the drugs to Europe and North America, according to the Prosecutor's office. They are accused of drug trafficking, money laundering, and fraud. The general had served as head of Colombian Army Intelligence and previously commanded the 17th Army Brigade, headquartered in Carepa (Antioquia Province).

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 24, 2008, *El Tiempo*, Bogotá. January 24 and 26, 2008 and weekly news magazine *Semana*, January 25, 2008.

* January 18, 2008. The *Los Angeles Times* reports allegations that during the five-year period that ended in June 2006, extrajudicial killings by the Colombian military increased by more than 50% over the previous five years. It also reports that there have been major security breaches. The Colombian Secretary of Defense said that he had dismissed 360 officers in the last two years. According to statistics from the Colombian Commission of Jurists, the armed forces committed 1,035 extrajudicial killings in the five-year period ending in June 2006, compared with 685 in the previous five years. The *Times* reported a human rights worker's observation that, since the paramilitaries have been demobilized under the Justice and Peace law, the Colombian Army has turned to killing civilians who previously would have been killed by the paramilitaries.

Source: *Los Angeles Times*, Los Angeles, California, January 18, 2008.

* January 18, 2008. A paramilitary commander, "El Alacran" (The Scorpion) is to make his confession almost 18 years after the massacre at Trujillo (Valle del Cauca Province) was carried out at his orders. The Public Prosecutor charges that members of the Colombian armed forces took part in the killing. More than 350 people were murdered, and many of their bodies were dismembered and thrown into the Cauca River.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, January 18, 2008.

* January 17, 2008. In concluding its arguments in the case of the Jamundi massacre by Colombian soldiers of a group of Colombian judicial police, the Public Prosecutor's staff emphasized the fact that the murders were an ambush, not a battle.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secvalle/SvjamuniEne17.htm>



* January 17, 2008. The Public Prosecutor has charged 16 Colombian soldiers, including a captain, three sergeants, a corporal and eight soldiers with murder and obstruction of justice after their patrol reported the deaths of two brothers, who they claimed were guerrillas killed in combat. The victims' families and other witnesses, reported that the two men were food vendors who had been captured by paramilitaries and executed by the soldiers. One of the noncommissioned officers entered into a plea bargain and provided testimony that corroborated the testimony of other witnesses.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, January 19, 2008 and January 17, Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secantioquia/SaMilitaresEne17.htm>

* January 16, 2008. The Colombian weekly news magazine *Cambio* reports that Colombian authorities are responding to international pressure to solve the murders of labor union leaders and activists: 267 murdered in the last five years. The Public Prosecutor's office has prepared a document for the International Labor Organization, containing new information about the murders, much of it obtained from paramilitary commanders making their confessions under the Justice and Peace law. A retired Colombian Army lieutenant related how he had been given a package of photos of persons alleged to be guerrillas. When he was told that a hospital doorman, a union member, was one of those pictured, he ordered him killed, without even opening the package. Later, he said, he opened the package and found that the person killed was not a "military objective" after all.

Source: *Cambio*, Bogotá, January 16, 2008.

* January 15, 2008. The Colombian Attorney General has sought additional action against 15 soldiers being tried for aggravated homicide after they killed ten members of the Colombian judicial police and one civilian at Jamundi (Valle Province). Although they claimed at their trial that the deaths were a combat mistake, the Attorney General pointed out that they lay in wait for their victims, that it was daylight and the victims were in uniform, that the soldiers ignored their pleas not to shoot, that they sought no medical assistance for the wounded, and that they altered the crime scene.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site, January 15, 2008 and *El Pais*, Cali, January 16, 2008.

* January 15, 2008. The Public Prosecutor asked the court to impose sentences of 40 to 60 years imprisonment for the Colombian Army Colonel and 14 soldiers who were found guilty of killing ten judicial police and one civilian at Jamundi. The Prosecutor argued that the killings were planned and that the victims had no chance to defend themselves.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 15, 2008.

* January 14, 2008. Nine Colombian soldiers, attached to the Fourth Brigade in Medellin, were arrested for kidnapping and murder. They were on patrol in a rural area in Granada (Antioquia Province) on July 16, 2004 and they reported that they had killed a guerrilla in combat after they found him with a revolver and three cartridges. His family reported that the young man had been dragged from his house and shot by uniformed soldiers.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secantioquia/SaMilitarEne14.htm>

* January 13, 2008. After a dispute about land ownership, a farmer paid four Colombian soldiers to murder two farm workers. According to a witness, the farmer, who had a criminal record, met



with the soldiers in a store owned by his brother, in place called El Desaguadero (Antioquia Province). The Public Prosecutor alleges that after the two farm workers were killed, the soldiers went to their Sergeant's house and got three Galil rifles and two 9-millimeter pistols and placed them with the bodies. They were paid four million pesos (about \$2,000). An Army lieutenant is also being sought and will be charged with taking part in the crime.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 13, 2008

* January 11, 2008. A former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) now works as a private detective and heads an extortion ring. *El Pais* (Cali) reports that he has been caught threatening to kill a woman and her daughter unless she paid them \$120,000. She reported the threat to police and agreed to pay the detective. He was arrested when he accepted the money. Police believe that there have been other victims.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, January 11, 2008.

* January 9, 2008. A police officer has been charged with the murder of three of his superiors and attempted murder of two other police officers. The murders took place on November 1 in a neighborhood police station in Medellin (Antioquia Province).

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, January 9, 2008 and Public Prosecutor's web site.

* January 9, 2008. A Colombian Army colonel who has been accused in the "disappearance" of four persons is a fugitive. He had been arrested in April, but was released in November based on a technical defect in the warrant. The authorities were unaware that he was being held on another charge that had not been dismissed. At this time, he is being sought.

In January 2006, in the town of Santodomingo (Meta Province) four men had been held as guerrillas, in spite of the fact that no arrest warrant had been issued. They were released in an area known to be under the control of paramilitaries. Witnesses saw two men take them away and they were never seen again.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 9, 2008.

* January 6, 2008. Maria Eugenia Alvarez Martinea, the wife of laborer Parmenio Manuel Hernandez Anaya, claims that soldiers dragged him from their home at 9 pm, when the couple had already gone to sleep. When his body was found in the cemetery in Barrancabermeja (Santander Province) it showed that he had been shot in the chest. Colombian Army officials claim that he was a guerrilla killed in combat. Maria Alvarez has filed a formal complaint with Colombian human rights officials

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, January 6, 2008.

* January 5, 2008. The community of Timba (Cauca Province) has complained that soldiers of the Colombian Army forced their way into the homes of three young men and took them away. The next day they were found dead, with weapons in their hands, in the town of La Ventura. The Colonel in charge of the Army Battalion insisted that his troops were searching for guerrillas and that there was a confrontation between the soldiers and the guerrillas. A source told *El Tiempo* that the Army's informant was a child. The mayor of the town said that the young men were workers, not guerrillas. The community has asked the Public Defender's office to investigate.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 5, 2008.



* December 30, 2007. A dropped grenade apparently caused an explosion in an ammunition storage facility in Medellin. Six soldiers were killed and six soldiers and four firefighters were injured. More than 50 % of the installation was destroyed and live grenades were found in a school and a convent in the neighborhood. Windows, doors and ceilings were destroyed in numerous buildings and hundreds of families in ten neighborhoods were evacuated. Soldiers were still searching damaged buildings in the neighborhoods for unexploded ammunition.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *El Pais*, Cali, *El Mundo*, Medellin, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, December 30, 2007.

* December 27, 2007. A Colombian Police official was sentenced to 42 years in prison for the kidnapping of a businessman in Medellin. On February 14, 2006, two officers on a police motorcycle seized the victim, held him in a motel and demanded money. Five other officers who were part of the extortion scheme have already been sentenced.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/secantioquia/SaSuboficialDic27.htm>

* December 27, 2007. Jorge Enrique Calero, Director of the Early Warning System of Colombia's Public Defender Office, warns that the "Black Eagles", a new paramilitary group, are increasingly dangerous to civilians and that Colombian military authorities are ignoring the threat. There are increasing reports of extortion, drug trafficking, murder, and recruiting of children into the armed group. Calero said that community leaders and labor union leaders are at greatest risk of being killed by the new group.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, December 27, 2007.

* December 26, 2007. Three Colombian Army soldiers and their lieutenant have been charged with participating in the murder of a farmer in the municipality of Argelia (Antioquia Province). On October 5, the victim was detained by the four and the next day was found dead, supposedly a guerrilla killed in combat. They are charged with kidnapping and homicide.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/secantioquia/SaCampesinoDic26.htm>

* December 21, 2007. Diego Egidio Pinzon Gomez had been charged with obtaining Colombian Navy navigation charts for use by drug traffickers and his extradition was sought by the United States. Pinzon was an important witness in the Public Prosecutor's investigation of drug traffickers' infiltration in the Colombian Navy. He was murdered on November 17, 2007 by a hit man who onlookers thought looked like a soldier. Officials in the Public Prosecutor's office say that there have now been three murders related to the investigation. Seven persons, including both active and retired Colombian military, are in custody. United States authorities seek extradition to press charges of espionage in addition to drug trafficking.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, December 21, 2007.

* December 21, 2007. Two Colombian Police officers, a colonel and a major, along with the wife of one of them and three other persons, were arrested and charged with human trafficking and aggravated fraud. They were captured after a three-month investigation by the Public Prosecutor's office. The Prosecutor alleges that they offered political asylum, visas and jobs in Spain and Canada, charging whatever they determined the victim would pay. As many as 360 individuals



had paid them more than 600 million pesos (about \$300,000). They never furnished any visas. One of the defendants has pleaded guilty to the charges. They are being held without bail.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, December 21, 2007 and Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/CTI/CtiVisasDic21.htm>

* December 20, 2007. Seven members of the Colombian Army have been charged with kidnapping and aggravated homicide after a merchant was dragged out of a café and taken away in a military vehicle. The merchant's body was found the next day. It had been presented to a police inspector as a guerrilla killed in combat. The seven are being detained in military custody.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, December 21, 2007 and Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/secvillavi/SvCasanareDic20.htm>

* December 20, 2007. A Colombian police officer was found guilty of aggravated homicide, conspiracy and drug trafficking, and was sentenced to 35 years and six months in prison. Another police officer was found guilty of conspiracy and drug trafficking and was sentenced to 6 years and 4 months in prison. The two were charged with killing a noncommissioned police officer on October 6, 2006, in order to impede the investigation. Two other officers have already been sentenced after pleading guilty to their part in the crimes.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/secantioquia/SaPoliciasDic.20.htm>

* December 19, 2007. A demobilized paramilitary commander confessed to his part in the January 17, 2001 massacre at Chengue (Sucre Province). He has admitted to 14 other massacres. He told the court that paramilitary leader Carlos Castano had ordered the killings at Chengue. He testified that 60 men traveled in 3 trucks and that Castano had sent them rifles in a helicopter. They passed through several towns, but the armed forces just looked at them as they went by.

At one point they encountered armed Colombian troops, but their leader got out of the truck and talked to them. Then they went on. Castano had given them a list of 28 people that were to be killed. They went to their houses, seized them and took them to the park. They had been ordered not to make noise, so they bludgeoned the men to death with mortars. Others had their throats cut.

The paramilitaries had to flee because the armed forces came after them and attacked. They buried the rifles later. He described several other massacres but said that the bodies would be hard to find because they had thrown most of them into a canal.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, December 19, 2007.

* December 18, 2007. The Public Prosecutor has filed charges against eight members of the Colombian military, and one member of the DAS (Colombian FBI). The charges are aggravated conspiracy, aggravated murder, aggravated kidnapping and extortion and illegal use of the armed forces. The complaint alleges that on August 14, 2006, the soldiers that six people were killed in an action in which the soldiers were trying to stop the kidnapping of a young man and his cousin. Nevertheless, the investigation uncovered irregularities in the procedure followed in the action, and determined that the soldiers were responsible for the civilian deaths. The evidence revealed



that the action was staged in order for the two young men to avoid some debts. A major, a captain, two sergeants, four soldiers and a detective have been charged and are being held without bail.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/DH/DhVelerodici18.htm>

* December 15, 2007. An opinion writer in the business section of *El Espectador* criticizes the Colombian military for excessive spending. He notes that the military budget has increased from 2% of gross domestic product in 1990 to 6.3% of GDP in 2008. The 2008 budget calls for \$22.2 billion and of this, the United States pays 5.4%, or about \$1.2 billion. The writer complains that the military is buying "expensive toys", more useful for "military pride" than for fighting the guerrillas in the jungle. He states that defense costs exceed all those for health, education and sanitation.

Out of a total of 566,000 public employees in Colombia, 460,000, or 81.2% are engaged in military and police work. This will mean a significant increase in pension costs in the future. Meanwhile, according to the writer, while there were 20,000 armed guerrillas in 2002, there are now only about 12,500. Thus, in the period from 2002 to 2007, 160,000 soldiers were fighting 20,600 guerrillas and 12,175 paramilitaries, a total of 32,775, or about 4.5 soldiers per illegal armed actor.

Source: Jose Fernando Isaza, Rector, and Diogenes Campos, Dean of Natural Sciences, Jorge Tadeo Lozano University. *El Espectador*, Bogotá, December 15, 2007.

* December 13, 2007. Two Colombian soldiers have been arrested and charged with robbing a civilian of his cell phone, his car radio and some cash, and then tying him up and throwing into a ravine. The victim survived and reported the crime. Witnesses testified that they heard the victim begging for his life, because he had small children. One of the soldiers has pleaded guilty to attempted murder and will be sentenced to at least nine years in prison.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, December 13, 2007 and Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/secvalle/SvPrecipicioDic12.htm>

* December 13, 2007. A former paramilitary who is confessing his crimes under the Justice and Peace demobilization program revealed the site of a common grave with the remains of three former Colombian soldiers who were killed by the paramilitaries. The three, a lieutenant, a corporal, and a soldier joined the paramilitaries after they retired from the Army. But they began extorting money from people and businesses in the name of the paramilitaries and then keeping the money for themselves. They were executed by the paramilitaries.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, December 13, 2007.

* December 10, 2007. The Attorney General of Colombia has undertaken a formal disciplinary investigation against a general, three lieutenant colonels, a major and a civilian administrator of the Colombian police, based on their unauthorized recording of telephone conversations of high Colombian government officials in the years 2005, 2006, and 2007. Some of the overheard conversations were then leaked to the media.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, Bogotá; *El Colombiano*, Medellín; *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla; and *El Pais*, Cali, December 10, 2007.

* December 10, 2007. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, based in Washington, D.C., will hear a charge against the Colombian Government based on a 2001 massacre in



Chengue (Sucre Province). The petitioners allege that the Colombian Armed Forces “acquiesced and participated” in the massacre and that the Colombian government has done nothing to investigate and charge those responsible. On January 17, 2001, some 80 paramilitaries entered the village of Chengue and killed 30 people and sacked and burned more than 20 homes, resulting in the displacement of 104 families.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, December 10, 2007.

* December 10, 2007. A demobilized paramilitary, John Jairo Esquivel Cuadrado, has been connected to 272 murders and 34 massacres, primarily in Cesar province. He testified at his Justice and Peace hearing that at first they just killed people and left them on the ground. But their commanders told them that that would attract the attention of law enforcement, so they cut the bodies in pieces and threw them in the Cesar River. Esquivel had formerly been a soldier in the Colombian Army. He testified that he joined the paramilitaries in 1997 because he heard that the guerrillas were planning to capture and kill ex-soldiers.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, December 10, 2007.

* December 8, 2007. Three Colombian police officers were sentenced to 28 years in prison after being convicted of aggravated homicide. The evidence showed that on April 4, 2002, they arrested a young man accused of stealing tools from a recreation center in Copacabana (Antioquia Province). A few hours later, the young man’s body was found a few kilometers away.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, December 8, 2007 and the web site of the Public Prosecutor: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/secantioquia/SaincautadosDic06.htm>

* December 4, 2007. In the ongoing trial of a former Army officer, Byron Carvajal, accused of leading a massacre of Colombian police in order to protect a drug trafficker, a demobilized paramilitary, Ever Veloza Garcia, testified that Carvajal regularly patrolled with the paramilitaries. Veloza testified that the Army supported the paramilitaries in their efforts to combat the guerrillas.

Source: Web site of the Public Prosecutor: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/secvalle/SvjamundiDic4.htm>

* December 4, 2007. A captain in the Colombian Navy has been sentenced to 17 years in prison for espionage, conspiracy and drug trafficking. The sentence was upheld by an appellate court after the captain was convicted of furnishing classified naval documents to drug traffickers and of aiding the shipment of 400 kilos of cocaine to Mozambique. The cocaine was packaged to look like parcels of food.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, December 4, 2007.

* December 3, 2007. An attorney for the victims’ families charged that six Colombian Army officers, including the Commanding General of the Colombian Armed Forces, will be charged with dereliction of duty in the Cajamarca (Tolima Province) massacre of April 10, 2004. Six soldiers and one noncommissioned officer have already been charged in the case. Members of the Colombian Armed Forces killed six members of the same family, including a six-month-old baby, and the killings were claimed to be a “military mistake”.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, December 3, 2007.



* December 3, 2007. The Colombian Government will have to pay 71 million pesos (about \$35,500) to a young farmer who was forced to serve a second period of military service when he had already served the period required of all Colombian men. He was forced to commence a second tour five years after being discharged from his first tour. By that time he had a wife and two small children. His earnings were their only support.

The Government was also ordered to pay 107 million pesos (about \$53,500) to the family of another soldier who was killed in an accident with heavy equipment. The Council of State, Colombia's highest administrative appeal body, ruled that he had not received training necessary to operate the equipment.

Another recruit had already received orders for a 12-month tour when he was stopped at an army checkpoint and required to "volunteer" for a 24-month tour. The Council also ordered a remedy in this case.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, December 3, 2007.

* November 30, 2007. A Colombian general, Jaime Humberto Uscategui, who was just acquitted of charges of dereliction of duty in failing to prevent the massacre at Mapiripan, claims that another general, Rito Alejo Del Rio, does have responsibility. General Uscategui told *El Tiempo* that the paramilitaries who carried out the massacre took off in bright daylight from airports where the 17th Brigade, commanded at that time by Del Rio, had troops on duty. He said that the paramilitaries were in uniform and carrying weapons. The Mapiripan massacre took place in 1997.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, November 30, 2007

* November 28, 2007. During the trial of Colombian Army Officer Byron Carvajal, accused of being paid by a drug trafficker to carry out a massacre of Colombian police, a major in the National Police testified that the defendant Carvajal was close to a drug trafficker named Wilson Figueroa. The police officer also testified that Figueroa had other connections with the Colombian Army.

Source: Web site of the Public Prosecutor: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/secvalle/SvCarvajalNov28.htm>

* November 27, 2007. Two Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested for robbing a taxi driver in Barrancabermeja (Santander Province). They threatened the driver with a knife and took all his money, but he was able to use his radio and other taxi drivers called police. The two were released on bail and discharged from the Army. They will be charged with theft.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, November 27, 2007.

* November 26, 2007. A demobilized paramilitary commander, Ever Veloza Garcia, alias "HH" testified at his hearing that Col. Byron Carvajal, charged with the massacre of Colombian police at Jamundi, regularly provided him and other paramilitaries with information.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, November 16, 2007.

* November 26, 2007. The Public Prosecutor has charged seven members of the Colombian Armed Forces, a captain, a lieutenant, a 2d lieutenant, a noncommissioned officer, and three soldiers with aggravated homicide, aggravated kidnapping, aggravated theft, and carrying



explosives. On August 20, 2006, in a rural area near Saravena (Arauca Province) the seven shot and killed a civilian who worked as a vendor. They claimed falsely that he had aimed explosives at their patrol.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, November 26, 2007 and Web site of the Public Prosecutor: <http://fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/DH/DhjuicioNv26.htm>

* November 25, 2007. Soldiers from the Colombian Army's Fourth Brigade killed five persons and injured one seriously in what they claimed was combat with the guerrillas. Members of the local community, however, insist that the victims were ordinary farmers and that one was the president of the local Community Action Commission. The soldiers claimed that they were armed, but the local citizens denied that. The municipal clerk was quoted as saying that they appeared to be civilians but that he would seek more information from the military authorities.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, November 25, 2007.

* November 23, 2007. A Colombian Army captain has been arrested for his part in the 2005 massacre of 8 people, including 3 children, in the community of San Jose de Apartado (Antioquia Province). He is charged with being a party to homicide, conspiracy and terrorism. Witnesses told the Public Prosecutor's office that Captain Gordillo regularly patrolled along with paramilitaries. When the massacre took place in 2005, the Army insisted that soldiers had not been present at the massacre, but witnesses said that soldiers were present when the killings took place.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 23, 2007.

* November 19, 2007. The European Union Council of Foreign Ministers issued a report that recognizes progress made by Colombia in demobilizing paramilitary forces. The report expresses, however "real concern" about the persistence of human rights violations "by certain members of the armed forces, and in particular, the extrajudicial executions."

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 19, 2007.

* November 17, 2007. The Colombian Navy is investigation the killing of a civilian in Buenaventura (Valle del Cauca Province) by a navy patrolman. The civilian was killed by the patrolman's service weapon.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, November 17, 2007.

* November 16, 2007. The Attorney General has sanctioned Jorge Noguera, the former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) for the following offenses:

1. He received 10 million pesos (about \$5,000) in kickbacks from an information services contractor.
2. Connections with and exchange of information with paramilitaries.
3. Drug trafficking.
4. He knew that criminal files were being erased from the DAS database and failed to investigate it or prevent it.

Noguera will not be allowed to hold any public position for 20 years and will have to pay a fine. One of his bureau chiefs was also sanctioned for sharing confidential information with the paramilitaries.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Pais*, Cali, November 16, 2007.



* November 14, 2007. Captured computers belonging to guerrilla forces reveal that other guerrillas, besides the female guerrilla, Marilu Ramirez Baquero and the five persons captured along with her, have infiltrated the Colombian armed forces. According to *El Tiempo's* investigation, at least one other female guerrilla has been in contact with high military officers. Army Intelligence has discovered an Air Force noncom who was selling information to the guerrillas, so that they knew exactly when and where the Colombian Air Force would bomb their encampments. Marilu Ramirez Baquero has been charged with planning a car bomb attack on the Colombian War College.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 14, 2007.

November 13, 2007. In Colombia, an elevated number of extrajudicial executions are committed with absolute impunity, thanks to the complicity of Colombian government authorities. This denunciation is contained in the preliminary report of an international observers' mission, issued in Paris. The mission is composed of jurists, anthropologists, journalists and human rights experts and is sponsored by the Colombian-European Union Coordination and is supported by the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights in Colombia.

The report emphasized that the victims are often persons who are community leaders, indigenous people, or workers captured illegally and conveyed to a place where they are executed. The report also charges that the Colombian Government encourages this by rewarding every "positive", a term that refers to the death of a guerrilla, whether real or simulated. The report also criticizes the military's investigations, pointing that the perpetrators investigate themselves. The mission visited Colombia in October, 2007, and consisted of five members from Spain, two from the United Kingdom, two from the United States, one from France, and three from Germany.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, November 13 and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, November 12, 2007.

* November 13, 2007. The former director of the Colombian Army's War College admitted that he had recommended the admission of a woman, Marilu Ramirez Baquero, who turned out to be a guerrilla infiltrator. She was arrested on October 25, 2007 and charged with rebellion, terrorism, and conspiracy. As a journalism student in the '90's, she interned at the Army broadcasting station. After she left college, she sold insurance and later automobiles. She made use of the military contacts she made and visited numerous military installations, eventually securing admission to the War College.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 13, 2007.

* November 13, 2007. The Public Prosecutor announced the capture and arrest of two soldiers in connection with the deaths of two civilians who had been reported as killed in combat. Three other defendants were arrested in the previous week in connection with the killings. All are being charged with aggravated homicide and are being held without bail. The Prosecutor's office determined that, on February 17, 2006, the two young men were traveling to Monteria to work on a nearby ranch. On February 18, they were reported as killed in combat.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/DH/DhMonteriaNov13.htm>

* November 11, 2007. Two Colombian Army soldiers, assigned to the Intelligence Unit, have been arrested and charged with extortion. They allegedly infiltrated a criminal gang and demanded 2,500,000 pesos (about \$1,250), threatening to kill the gang members and their families.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, November 11, 2007.



* November 11, 2007. General Freddy Padilla de Leon, the Commander of the Colombian Armed Forces, admitted that Marilu Ramirez Baquero, a guerrilla, managed to infiltrate the most important course in the Army's War College. The course is limited to future generals and a select group of civilians such as judges, business and industrial leaders, and lawyers. General Padilla conceded that she had penetrated the selection system and had obtained classified information, such as routes and movements of government officials and other functionaries in business and the media. She has been charged with rebellion, conspiracy, and terrorism and is believed to be the planner of the car bomb attack at the War College on October 19, 2006.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, , *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, *Semana*, Bogotá, November 11, 2007 and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, November 12, 2007.

* November 10, 2007. Six Colombian Army personnel have been accused of killing two teenagers and reporting them as guerrillas killed in combat. The Public Prosecutor alleges that on February 17, 2006, one "Carmelo" went to a car wash where two young men were working to pay school expenses. "Carmelo" offered them jobs on a farm in Monteria (Cordoba Province) and promised good pay, plus a motorcycle. One of them jumped at the idea, but the other was suspicious and declined. Another young man took his place and they were last seen taking a taxi to Monteria.

Five and one-half hours later they were found dead on the highway, dressed in camouflage and with weapons at their sides. The Army reported them as guerrillas killed in combat. The young man who had declined the offer of a job described "Carmelo" and he was caught the next day. He confessed that he worked as an informant for the Cauca Rifles Battalion and that he was given money to buy the weapons found with the two bodies, and that the Army lieutenant had told him to find 2 young men "to serve as informants". The Public Prosecutor is examining other operations in the area, because there has been at least one similar instance.

The Army has denied the charges, but admitted that "Carmelo" was used as an informant and given money.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá,

* November 9, 2007. A demobilized paramilitary, Ever Veloza, in his hearing under the Justice and Peace law, has described the way in which the banana industry in Uraba financed the paramilitaries and the way in which the Colombian armed forces cooperated. He testified that Army officers told his paramilitary unit to just "disappear" people and bury them, because Army higher-ups had complained about the increasing number of recorded homicides in the area.

He admitted to some 1,200 to 1,500 murders in Uraba between 1995 and mid-1996, and to responsibility for the massacres in Naya, Alaska, El Palo and Zabaletas in Cauca and Valle.

He testified that his group was aided by Army soldiers, police and DAS (Colombian FBI) and that he coordinated operations with General Rito Alejo Del Rio and Captain Bayron Carvahal. He claimed that Army Col. Jaime A. Vargas redirected his troops so that the paramilitaries could commit the massacre at Naya, and that Col. Jorge Amor gave him a list of 35 people to be killed in the massacre at Alaska.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 9, 2007.

* November 8, 2007. A demobilized paramilitary, Diego Martinez Goyeneche, alias "Daniel", in his hearing under the Justice and Peace law, testified that he received information from the



Colombian Police. He identified Col. Danilo Gonzalez, who was murdered in 2004, and Col. Ciro Chitiva, who had commanded the Colombian Police in Tolima Province.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 8, 2007.

* November 8, 2007. Four Colombian soldiers have been arrested for the killing of a civilian on July 16, 2004 in the municipality of Granada (Antioquia Province).

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/DH/DhProtegidaNov08.htm>

* November 7, 2007. Colombia will have to pay 11,727 million pesos (more than \$5 million) to the families who were displaced by paramilitaries in Filo Gringo (North Santander Province) in March of 2000. A lower court had absolved the Colombian government of responsibility, but the Council of State, Colombia's highest administrative court) reversed that decision and ordered the payment. It found the government responsible because the paramilitaries had announced their intention to take over the town and the citizens had asked the Police and the Army to protect them, but both entities refused. There was some evidence that some members of the armed forces had assisted the paramilitaries and helped coordinate the attack.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 7, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, November 8, 2007.

* November 7, 2007. Two Colombian soldiers have been arrested and charged with aggravated extortion and arms trafficking. They are accused of threatening a couple with illegal criminal charges unless they paid them 100 million pesos (about \$50,000). When the soldiers were captured they were dressed in civilian clothing and carrying a pistol, a revolver, and a fragmentation grenade.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site, November 7, 2007.
<http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/secvillavi/SvMilitaresNov07.htm>

* November 5, 2007. A member of the Colombian Attorney General's staff was discharged after he pleaded guilty to theft. He belonged to a criminal gang that included police officers and members of the Public Prosecutor's staff. The gang carried out illegal searches for the purpose of stealing money and valuables.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, November 5 and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, November 6, 2007.

* November 3, 2007. An informant sought out the DEA office in Cartagena and revealed how secret navigation maps, charting the routes of Colombian, U.S. and British warships, were sold to drug traffickers by Colombian naval officers, including Rear Admiral Gabriel Arango Bacci. Rear Admiral Arango has denied any connection with drug trafficking.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 3, 2007.

* November 2, 2007. The commanding officer of the Colombian Army headquarters in Casanare was arrested yesterday and charged with kidnapping and murder. A lieutenant, a corporal, and three other soldiers were also arrested and charged. They are accused of kidnapping and murdering a merchant in Villavicencio (Meta Province). They have pleaded not guilty and are being held without bail. The Public Prosecutor alleges that on July 27, 2007, four uniformed men, identifying themselves as attached to the Army headquarters, dragged the merchant out of an



internet café. He was put into an SUV with darkened windows and the incident was captured on the surveillance cameras installed in the neighborhood by the authorities. Ten hours later, the merchant's body was buried as an unidentified guerrilla killed in combat.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 2, 2007; *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla; *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga; *El Pais*, Cali; and *El Mundo*, Medellin, November 3, 2007.

* November 2, 2007. The Public Prosecutor has arrested and charged a Colombian Army lieutenant and five soldiers with aggravated homicide. The six are being held without bail. The Prosecutor charges that on February 17, 2006, two young men were traveling to a ranch near Monteria (Cordoba Province) where they had been offered jobs. The next day they were found dead and reported as killed in combat with the guerrillas.

The Prosecutor charges that a civilian, who has pleaded guilty, had been hired to identify low-income men and offer them jobs on ranches near Monteria. Once they were on their way to Monteria, they would be captured and killed by the soldiers, who would then claim credit for killing guerrillas.

Source: Public Prosecutor web site:

<http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/DH/DhMilitaresNov02.htm>

* November 2, 2007. Colombia's Public Prosecutor may re-open cases in which Army officials were suspected of aiding the paramilitaries in massacres and assassinations. The previous Public Prosecutor had closed the cases, but the demobilized paramilitary commanders have offered new evidence. The current Public Prosecutor has appointed a committee to study the connection between the paramilitaries (identified by the U.S. State Department as a terrorist group) and the Colombian Army. The committee is studying the cases of 20 officers in the Army, the Navy, and the Police (part of the Army). The group includes six generals identified by Salvatore Mancuso, a paramilitary commandant and drug trafficker.

Another demobilized paramilitary commander, who has been convicted for his part in a massacre, has identified retired General Rito Alejo Del Rio as one who met with and aided paramilitaries. Alejo has also been accused of ordering the killing of people he thought were guerrilla collaborators and helping paramilitaries carry out murders, "disappearances", and forced displacement of civilians.

Other high-ranking officers named are General Ivan Ramirez, Admiral Lis Eduardo Penuela and two others who have died.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 2, 2007.

* November 2, 2007. Rafael Garcia, the former information officer of the DAS (Colombian FBI) testified that paramilitaries had infiltrated not only the DAS, but also the offices of the Public Prosecutor and the Attorney General. He is giving testimony to a congressional committee. He said that his supervisor, the director of the DAS, told him that the (former) Public Prosecutor also cooperated with the paramilitaries. He testified that the paramilitaries were given details of confidential investigations, including investigations of drug trafficking activities.

Garcia testified under oath that the DAS director had told him that the agency would give total collaboration to the paramilitaries and that his (Garcia's) main job was to see that the paramilitaries received all confidential investigation information.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga and *El Pais*, Cali, November 2, 2007.



* November 2, 2007. A former paramilitary commander, making his confession under the Peace and Justice paramilitary demobilization law, claimed that Colombian Army Col. Byron Carvajal was a “principal collaborator” with the paramilitaries. Carvajal and 15 others are on trial for the murder of ten Colombian police and one civilian at Jamundi. The killings are alleged to be related to drug trafficking. The former paramilitary, Ever Velosa, alias “HH”, recounted instances when Col. Carvajal had provided information and assistance to the paramilitaries. Col. Carvajal, who is in custody, denied the allegation.

Source: *El Pais, Cali, November 2, 2007*

* November 1, 2007. Colombia’s Public Prosecutor announced that a criminal court judge has found a Police Commander and four police officers guilty of “forced disappearance” and sentenced each of them to 40 years in prison. They will also have to pay fines and make restitution to the families of the men they killed. On October 5, 1988, three residents of the town of El Llano (Caldas Province) were fishing in the Guarinocito River. As they went back to the road to get on a public bus, officers in a police patrol vehicle captured two of them. The third one escaped. The two men were never seen again and their bodies have not been found.

Source: Public Prosecutor web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/pag/divulga/noticias2007/secvalle/Svdesaparicion1nov.htm>

* November 1, 2007. Colombia’s Attorney General has asked the Supreme Court to find four police officers guilty of failing to carry out their duty to protect the public. They are accused of standing by while paramilitaries entered a town and systematically gathered civilians thought to be guerrilla sympathizers and killing them. Seven civilians were killed in the massacre.

A lower court had found an Army officer guilty of murder and the four police officers not guilty but the Attorney General has appealed,

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal, Bucaramanga, November 1, 2007.*

* October 24, 2007. A noncommissioned officer retired from the Colombian Army and two civilians were sentenced to 40 years in prison for their part in the 1997 massacre at Mapiripan (Meta Province) where 36 civilians were killed. They were convicted of aggravated homicide and aggravated kidnapping.

Source: *El Mundo, Medellin, October 24, 2007.*

* October 23, 2007. A drug trafficker and an Army captain believed to be involved in drug trafficking were captured in Cartagena. They are charged with conspiracy and espionage. Counterintelligence officials believe the drug trafficker was the contact between the drug ring and the Army and Navy officials who worked for the ring. He is charged with espionage because he arranged the purchase of classified naval maps for the use of the drug traffickers.

Source: *El Tiempo, Bogotá, El Mundo, Medellin, October 23, 2007.*

* October 22, 2007. A former member of the DAS (Colombian FBI) was found guilty in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida of immigrant trafficking, terrorism, and money laundering. DAS agents captured him in Colombia in 2006 and he was extradited to Florida. The defendant used his DAS contacts to traffic immigrants through the Bogotá airport.

Source: *El Heraldo, Barranquilla, October 22, 2007.*



* October 19, 2007. The Attorney General has required the discharge of a Colombian Army corporal who forced a juvenile to drive him and four other soldiers in an SUV to an area where guerrillas were present. According to the Attorney General, the corporal informed his sergeant that he had found three guerrillas in the area he was patrolling. The sergeant ordered him to go to the area in a civilian vehicle.

The young boy earned a living by transporting farmers and produce in the SUV. While he was obeying the soldiers' orders, the vehicle entered a minefield. The boy and one of the soldiers were killed. The sergeant was suspended for 60 days.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, October 19, 2007.

* October 18, 2007. The weekly news magazine *Cambio* reports on the Attorney General's investigation of the May 22, 2006 killing by Colombian soldiers of ten DEA-trained police officers and one civilian informant at Jamundi (Valle Province). *Cambio* claims it had access to the Attorney General's file, including photographs of the dead police officers. The Army first claimed that the deaths resulted from "friendly fire", but the investigation shows that the shootings were at close range. The Attorney General also concluded that the bodies had been moved in order to interfere with the investigation. Col. Byron Carvajal, in command of the Army squadron that carried out the killing, is in custody and standing trial, as are the soldiers involved. Carvajal is charged with carrying out the massacre in order to protect drug traffickers who were paying him.

Source: *Cambio*, Bogotá, October 18, 2007.

http://www.cambio.com.co/paiscambio/746/ARTICULO_CAMBIO-3770651.html

* October 18, 2007. Seven detectives from the DAS (Colombian FBI) have been arrested and charged with embezzlement after they seized 76 cases of champagne and cognac from a private shipment. The detectives deny the charge.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, October 18, 2007.

* October 17, 2007. A Colombian police officer in Cordoba has been arrested attempted rape after he dragged a young teenage girl to his room and attempted to rape her. She was able to escape and complained to the authorities.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, October 17, 2007.

* October 17, 2007. A human rights group complains that there have been 13 "extrajudicial executions" in eastern Antioquia Province in 2006. The figures were announced by the Human Rights and Development Commission for Eastern Antioquia. They show that the number of murders has decreased from 820 in 2003 to 363 in 2006. The Human Rights Commission defines "extrajudicial executions" as "homicides carried out by agents of the Government where the victims are defenseless." A representative of the Commission stated that accurate numbers are difficult to obtain. This report only covers 10 of the 23 municipalities in eastern Antioquia Province.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, October 17, 2007.

* October 14, 2007. The Colombian news weekly *Semana* opines that the Colombian Navy was not the only military to be infiltrated by drug traffickers. *Semana* suggests that even US officials may have sold maps to the traffickers. The evidence indicates that more than one drug ring infiltrated the Colombian military. A Colombian Navy officer who was captured in August had a computer that contained a file of 50 navigation maps containing the positions of Colombian, U.S.,



French and Chilean ships. A Colombian drug lord known as “Chupeta” (“Lollipop”), captured recently in Brazil, also had a computer that contained such maps. Colombian Navy investigators now believe that the drug traffickers’ infiltration has been in place for several years.

Source: *Semana*, Bogotá, October 14, 2007.

http://www.semana.com/wf_imprimirArticulo.aspx?idArt=106884&Ver=PT24qng72yvRR72Tt18amijrk5q4deq2ZBE9G1nPjdg68XQ66

* October 13, 2007. An Inspector of Police and an agent of the Public Prosecutor’s office were captured, along with four others, and charged with aggravated homicide and criminal conspiracy. They are alleged to be part of a new criminal group called the “Black Eagles”, taking up where the demobilized paramilitaries left off. The group engages in murder, drug trafficking and extortion.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, October 13, 2007.

* October 12, 2007. Two Colombian soldiers and a noncommissioned officer admitted that they had murdered a 19-year old youth and dressed him up as a guerrilla in order to obtain five days off. The young man left a church service on the night before Easter 2004 and set off walking toward his home. His body was found the next day. He had been shot and a carbine and a fragmentation grenade were found next to his body. The soldiers pleaded guilty to the charges but have appealed the sentences 20 years in prison for the noncommissioned officer and 16 years each for the soldiers. A fourth soldier was sentenced to 12 years. He denied taking part in the shooting, but admitted he helped take up the collection to buy the weapon they planted with the young man’s body.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, October 12, 2007.

* October 11, 2007. Colombia’s Public Prosecutor has charged 11 members of the armed forces, part of the 2nd Artillery Battalion in Valledupar (Cesar Province) with kidnapping and aggravated homicide in the death of an indigenous leader in October 2004. The Prosecutor alleges that one victim was traveling from his mother’s house to his sister’s when men who wore military uniforms and ski masks kidnapped him. That night people heard shots and the next day the local radio stations announced that the Army had killed a guerrilla in an armed clash. The body was that of the murder victim.

Later this month, eight more soldiers from the same battalion will be tried for the murder of a farmer in February 2004. The Prosecutor alleges that the soldiers stopped a vehicle at a checkpoint and the driver was later found dead and presented by the soldiers as a guerrilla killed in battle.

Source: *Vanguardia Valledupar*, Valledupar (Cesar Province) October 11, 2007.

* October 10, 2007. A soldier in the Colombian Army shot and killed three fellow soldiers in a dispute over a blanket. Five other soldiers and a civilian were wounded by the gunfire.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, October 10, 2007.

* October 9, 2007. Fourteen members of a narcotics ring were captured in Bogotá and Cali. Six of them were police officers. One of the police officers was connected to the national police headquarters and three were assigned to the Bogotá airport. The group obtained cocaine in Colombia and Ecuador and shipped it to Panama, Spain and the United States.

Source: Public Prosecutor’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/unaim/UnaimAgentesOct09.htm>. And *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, *El Espectador*, Bogotá, October 10, 2007.



* October 8, 2007. The Colombian Public Prosecutor, the Public Defender, the Attorney General, and the Human Rights Office of the United Nations are investigating 53 cases of murder by Colombian Armed Forces in Meta Province. In each case, investigators allege, a civilian is killed by soldiers and later presented as a guerrilla killed in combat. Authorities fear that the situation is similar to the one experienced in Antioquia province in 2005 and 2006. (See below, April and May, 2007) Just as happened in Antioquia, families complain that unarmed civilians are kidnapped and killed and their bodies later found with weapons and uniforms. For example, when one victim's husband returned from work, neighbors told him that his wife had been killed and taken away. When he went to Army headquarters to inquire, he was told that she was a guerrilla killed in combat. "They gave me her body dressed in a uniform. A housewife with a uniform ...! he complained.

A number of these cases have already been investigated:

August 15, 2006. The manager of a ranch was killed and reported as a guerrilla.

May 7, 2006. A farmer was reported killed in combat.

October 27, 2006. Three farmers were supposedly killed in combat in a small town.

March 22, 2006. People thought to be paramilitaries dragged two farmers out of their house.

Later both farmers were reported as guerrillas.

February 8, 2007. Another farmer was reported as a guerrilla killed in combat.

February, 2007. Three farmers were presented as guerrillas killed in combat. Their family says this happened after they went to Army headquarters to inquire about three head of cattle that had disappeared.

March 2007. Two young farmhands were killed and presented as guerrillas.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, October 8, 2007.

* October 5, 2007. Two former DAS (Colombian FBI) officers and two forensic technicians from the Public Prosecutor's office were sentenced to 17 years in prison for aggravated drug trafficking.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/unaim/UnaimexOct05.htm>

* October 5, 2007. Three Colombian Army soldiers were killed and nine were injured when a soldier dropped two grenades and they exploded inside the truck that was carrying them. The accident happened in the town of El Penol (Antioquia Province).

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellin and *El Pais*, Cali, October 5, 2007.

* October 4, 2007. The computer belonging to the Colombian drug kingpin "Chupeta" ("Lollipop"), recently captured in Brazil, contains extremely detailed records of bribery and corruption. For example, in 2002, he paid a Colombian judicial official \$10,000 to resolve a case and another \$25,000 to another such official to close another case. In December of the same year, he paid \$100,000 to corrupt Colombian government officials.

There are many more such payments detailed in the computer record, along with payments to members of the news media and to the police. "Chupeta" made payments almost monthly to the Colombian highway patrol to avoid checkpoints and permit the passage of drug shipments. He paid \$24,000 on one day, July 6, 2004 to the Colombian highway patrol in Valle, Cauca and Narino provinces. He paid around \$60,000 to police in Tolima province and later made monthly payments. He also paid other Colombian law enforcement agencies for information.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, October 4, 2007.



* October 4, 2007. A demobilized paramilitary known as “El Descuartizador” (“The Man Who Cuts People To Pieces”) made his open confession about some 200 murders committed in Mariquita, Armero-Guayabal and Fresno (Tolima Province). He said that he and his men had killed 11 hunters because a member of the Colombian Army told them that the hunters were connected to the guerrillas. He also admitted to killing six fishermen after Army soldiers told him that the fishermen were connected to the guerrillas. He said that the killings carried out by the paramilitaries in the northern part of Tolima Province were part of a “social cleansing of thieves, drug addicts, and guerrilla collaborators.”

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, October 4, 2007.

* October 2, 2007. Radio Caracol revealed some details from the investigation of the computer files of the drug kingpin “Chupeta” (“Lollipop”) captured recently in Brazil. The files reveal large sums of money he paid to Colombian Navy officers, prison officials, and members of the media.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, *El Pais*, Cali, October 2, 2007.

* October 1, 2007. The web site of Colombian newsweekly *Semana* reports that two United States prosecutors from New York have arrived in Bogotá to investigate the infiltration of drug kingpin Diego Montoya into the Colombian Navy. U.S. investigators are concerned about security because it is alleged that officers in the Colombian Navy sold Montoya maps and other classified information about the location of U.S. ships in the Pacific and the Caribbean. Based on the investigation five more naval officers will be arrested and their extradition is expected to be sought. This would bring to 20 the number of Colombian Navy officers arrested, including a Colombian Rear Admiral.

Source: http://72.35.86.196/wf_ImprimirArticulo.aspx?IdArt+106567&Ver+3RltrH3CjFlpl.TixwzPxsZrd685bNpf6NS3GbSoydzl466

* October 1, 2007. The Public Prosecutor has charged twelve soldiers, one officer, and one noncommissioned officer with murder in the killing of four civilians. On May 8, 2004, a special squad supposedly clashed with guerrillas. Four day laborers and three guerrillas were killed. The guerrillas had hidden in the laborers’ residence, threatening to kill them.

Source: Public Prosecutor’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/DH/DhMilitaresOct01.htm>

* September 30, 2007. The Colombian newsweekly *Semana* reports that the computer belonging to the drug kingpin “Chupeta” (“Lollipop”) contains records of payments he made to numerous members of the armed forces, prosecutors, registrars, and judges.

Source: *Semana*, Bogotá, September 30, 2007.

* September 24, 2007. A group of Labor Party members of the British Parliament formally requested the Prime Minister to end all military aid to Colombia. They claimed that the Colombian military is allied with paramilitaries and is a consistent violator of human rights.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, September 24, 2007.

*September 23, 2007. The Public Prosecutor has proof that there is a band of demobilized paramilitaries that continues to murder, extort money and influence politics in the provinces of



Atlantic, Bolivar, and Sucre. Intelligence reports indicate that jailed paramilitary commanders continue to direct their illegal activities. Ninety-six members of the band are under arrest, including lawyers, city council members, mayors and government bureaucrats, as well as police officers, members of the DAS (Colombian FBI) and the prosecutor's forensic unit.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, September 23, 2007.

* September 21, 2007. A Bogotá judge has determined that three Colombian Air Force officers are guilty of negligent homicide in the killing of 17 people in 1998 in the village of Santo Domingo (Arauca Province). Eighteen people were also injured when the three officers dropped a cluster bomb out of their helicopter and the bomb exploded in a crowded bazaar in the village. In December 2002, the then-U.S. Ambassador to Colombia recommended ceasing military aid to the Colombian air base because of the Colombian Air Force refusal to cooperate in the investigation of the incident.

* September 21, 2007. A demobilized paramilitary commander, carrying out the provisions of the Justice and Peace demobilization law, provided Colombian government officials with the locations of common graves and the time, method, and circumstances of the nearly 3,000 killings attributed to him. He insisted that he had not ordered all of the killings in Santa Marta, and that a police officer nicknamed "Justicia Loca" ("Mad Justice") had carried out "social cleansing" in Santa Marta and had killed many people.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, September 21, 2007.

* September 18, 2007. A non-commissioned officer and four Colombian Army soldiers pleaded guilty to murder in the death of a civilian on April 10, 2004 in the town of Hondita (Antioquia Province). The victim, a young man who was mildly mentally retarded, disappeared after leaving church services. His body was found next to a shotgun and to fragmentation grenades, and the Army reported him as a guerrilla killed in combat. One of the soldiers confessed that they had taken up a collection to buy the shotgun so they could report a guerrilla killed in combat and receive four days off. The non-commissioned officer was sentenced to 20 years in prison and the soldiers were each sentenced to 16 years and 8 months in prison. Earlier, another soldier had been sentenced to 12 years for the same crime.

Source: Public Prosecutor's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/secantioquia/SaPeno/Sep18.htm>

* September 15, 2007. The Colombian drug lord Diego Montoya, one of the FBI's ten most wanted, was captured on Monday, September 10, after undercover officers tapped telephone calls between him and Colombian Army officers who were in his pay.

Source: Colombian news magazine *Cambio*, Bogotá, September 15, 2007.

* September 14, 2007. A demobilized paramilitary commander, Jorge Ivan Laverde Zapata, alias "El Iguano", making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, admitted that he and one of his subordinates were responsible for the murder of a candidate running for governor of the province. He stated that he intends to explain some 2,000 murders committed by his troops between 2000 and 2004 and denied allegations by an NGO that they had actually killed more than 5,000 people. He reiterated that his paramilitary group always acted in concert with the Colombian Army and Police forces. He stated that he had turned over to authorities a list of the military officers and soldiers he had worked with and who had furnished the paramilitaries



with information. He also identified a member of the Public Prosecutor's staff who had provided information and worked closely with the paramilitaries.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, September 14, 2007.

* September 14, 2007. Another demobilized paramilitary commander, Isaias Montes Hernandez, alias "Junior", also making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, admitted that he had taken part in the massacre of civilians at El Aro, in Ituango, and that he and the other killers who had taken part were later decorated by paramilitary leaders Carlos Castano and Salvatore Mancuso. He said that two Colombian Army officers had aided his troops in entering Ituango.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, September 14, 2007.

* September 6, 2007. The Colombian news web site *Semana.com* reviews a recent book published by a Colombian NGO, supported by a Swedish-based development organization. The book is entitled *Parapolitica; The Path to Paramilitary Expansion And The Political Agreements*. The book identifies the years 1997-2002 as the period in which the paramilitaries gained power and cites the fact that the Colombian armed forces actually delegated military authority to the paramilitary organizations. But the book states that more information is needed in order to know why the paramilitaries were allowed to massacre the poor and the defenseless.

Source: http://www.semana.com/wf_InfoArticulo.aspx?idArt=106073

September 6 and 7, 2007. Two more Colombian Army officers are being charged in connection with bombings planned for the inauguration of President Uribe in 2006. The officers allegedly intended to explode the bombs in order to show that guerrilla attacks were a threat, that they were effective in fighting the guerrillas and should be rewarded or promoted. As the investigation continues, a general may also be charged.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, September 6 and 7, 2007.

* September 7, 2007. The Public Prosecutor's office accused two noncommissioned officers and three soldiers in the death of a farmer in the town of Sonson (Antioquia Province). A Colombian Army patrol reported a laborer as killed in combat with the guerrillas. The victim's 12-year-old son told authorities that his father had been shot in cold blood by the soldiers, who also threatened his 14-year-old daughter. The Prosecutor's office found contradictions in the testimony of the members of the patrol and has charged them with murder and torture.

Source: Web site of the Public Prosecutor's Office: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2007/secantioquia/SaSansep07.htm> Retrieved September 10, 2007.

* September 6, 2007. The first female paramilitary commander gave her testimony as part of the "Justice and Peace" paramilitary demobilization process. She claimed that the Colombian government authorities in Santa Marta were aware of the paramilitary activities. "The police aren't blind. The authorities aren't blind. They knew very well who was part of the paramilitary organization," she said. She also claimed that the paramilitaries never extorted contributions from merchants and business owners, but that they donated money and supplies voluntarily, to help the paramilitaries.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, September 6, 2007.



* September 2, 2007. A former subordinate has accused the former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) of covering up his role and the participation by DAS agents in two bomb attacks, supposedly against the President. The ex-director is already charged with helping paramilitaries commit other, unrelated, crimes. According to the new accusation, the ex-director facilitated the bomb attacks that he publicly attributed to the guerrillas.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, September 2, 2007.

* September 2, 2007. The Barranquilla newspaper *El Heraldo*, in its Sunday, September 2 edition, recounts an incident in 2002 when two tons of cocaine were found by a group of Colombian police officers. According to the *El Heraldo* story, the police returned their find to the drug traffickers in exchange for money. Of the 23 officers prosecuted in that incident, three were found guilty. One former police officer who allegedly took part in the 2002 incident, and was found not guilty, became a paramilitary commander who, according to *El Heraldo*, controlled the drug routes and criminal gang activity on the Atlantic coast. He has been in custody since April of this year. More members of the gang have recently been captured. See below.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, September 2, 2007.

* September 1, 2007. Colombian authorities have captured a criminal gang, known as “The 40” after a nine-month investigation. The members of the gang included at least 18 active police officers, two DAS (Colombian FBI) agents, and one agent from the Colombian Public Prosecutor’s office. The gang was involved in drug trafficking, extortion, and killing. Arresting authorities found weapons and 60 million pesos (about \$30,000) in cash.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, September 1, 2007; *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, September 1 and August 31, 2007.

* August 31, 2007. Of the 36 members of a criminal gang captured yesterday, 11 were police officers on active duty. Another was a member of the Public Prosecutor’s staff, and six were retired police officers. The gang was connected with demobilized paramilitaries and operated in drug trafficking, extortion, and contract killing.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 31, 2007.

* August 31, 2007. The 9-month investigation of the infiltration of the Colombian Armed Forces by drug traffickers was almost derailed when two Army colonels who were helping the traffickers warned others about the investigation. Both of the colonels are among those arrested after the infiltration was discovered.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 31, 2007.

* August 30, 2007. The Public Prosecutor’s office announced that two Colombian Army officers and two soldiers were convicted in Medellin Superior Court of the forced disappearance of a businessman.

Source: Official web site of the Public Prosecutor of Colombia, August 30, 2007. <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co>.

* August 29, 2007. Two Colombian soldiers were sentenced to 40 years in prison for the massacre of six civilians on June 10 of this year. The two soldiers were part of the 9th Brigade, stationed in



Neiva (Huila Province). They murdered a school principal, a child, his parents, and two workers at the school.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 29, 2007.

* August 27, 2007. A Colombian trial judge has found a Colombian Army officer, three soldiers and a civilian informant guilty of murder in the killing of three labor leaders in Arauca Province on August 5, 2004. All five were sentenced to 40 years in prison. This case is one that has been followed closely by members of the U.S. Congress and labor organizations in the United States. The judge's sentence recounts that, after committing the murders, the soldiers placed guns in the hands of the victims and arranged the site to look as if there had been a gun battle. The court and the Attorney General's office are still investigating the responsibility of higher-ranking officers in planning and ordering the killings.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 27, 2007.

* August 27, 2007. The Commander in Chief of the Colombian Army is being summoned to testify before the Colombian Congress about the June 10, 2007 murder of six civilians by two Army soldiers who appeared intoxicated. The Congress also intends to call the Minister of Defense and the head of the national police (part of the Army) to ask for explanation of Army killings of civilians and fellow soldiers, including incidents in Guaitarilla, Jamundi, Cajamarca and San Jose de Apartado. Congressional representatives want to know what steps have been taken to avoid such incidents.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 27, 2007.

* August 26, 2007. Columnist Robert Novak reports that the forced resignation two weeks ago under pressure from President Uribe of three prominent officers accused of drug trafficking will be followed by more dismissals. Novak expresses the view that the purge of corruption in the Colombian military is long overdue and reminds that he warned a year ago that the Army's 3d Brigade was infiltrated by drug cartels. (See below, September 28, 2006).

Source: *Houston Chronicle* and other newspapers carrying Novak's column. August 26, 2007.
<http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/editorial/outlook/5082869.html>

* August 25, 2007. *El Tiempo* reports that the paramilitary leader and drug trafficker Diego Montoya (see below) paid millions of dollars to Colombian Army and Navy officers in return for protection of his drug shipments. "Don Diego" controlled both Atlantic and Pacific routes, from the coasts of Ecuador, Panama, Colombia and Venezuela. The investigation began in 2006 when captured drug runners were found to have Colombian Navy maps in their possession.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 25, 2007.

* August 25, 2007. The news magazine *Cambio* reveals that an alleged drug trafficker, soon to be extradited to the United States, will give evidence that shows that a Colombian Army colonel, Bayron Carvahal, charged with the massacre of police at Jamundi on May 22, 2006, was part of an extensive drug trafficking infiltration of the Colombian Armed Forces, revealed only recently. Prosecutors charge that a number of high-ranking officers were in the pay of and working closely with a paramilitary leader, Diego Montoya, "Don Diego", who controlled the drug traffic in a large area of Colombia.

Source: *Cambio*, http://www.cambio.com.co/paiscambio/738/ARTICULO-WEB-NOTA_INTERIOR_CAMBIO-1685120.html, Retrieved August 25, 2007.



* August 24, 2007. A Rear Admiral in the Colombian Navy was arrested for alleged connections with drug traffickers. He had retired two months earlier after the Navy's internal investigation.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá; *El Colombiano*, Medellín; *El País*, Cali; ; El Espectador, Bogotá; and news magazine *Semana*, August 24, 2007 and *El Heraldo*, Baranquilla, August 25, 2007.

* August 24, 2007. The Attorney General ordered 141 Colombian Army members discharged for their part in the April 2004 theft of \$19 million that they discovered in a guerrilla hiding place in the jungle.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellín, and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 24, 2007.

* August 24, 2007. A demobilized paramilitary commander, testifying under the "Justice and Peace" process, stated under oath that he had formerly been in the Army, had left the service, and had been approached by several Army officers and asked to become an Army informant. He was paid for his services and, given arms and uniforms, he fought beside the Army. He named a retired Army General as the one he worked with as a paramilitary.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 24, 2007.

El Heraldo, Baranquilla* August 22, 2007. Two Colombian Army officers are being investigated for their part in the car bomb attack in Bogotá at the time of President Uribe's second inauguration. They have already been charged with fraud and the illegal transportation of explosives for their plan to make it appear that guerrillas were attacking the President. A Colombian investigative judge is gathering evidence to support additional charges of terrorism and conspiracy.

Source *El Colombiano*, Medellín, August 22, 2007.

* August 21, 2007. Colombia's Interfaith Commission on Justice and Peace has submitted a report in which it identifies numerous attacks by the 17th Brigade of the Colombian Army on farmers and civilians in the town of La Balsita (Antioquia province). The report will be sent to Colombian Vice President Francisco Santos, to the Minister of Justice and Interior, Carlos Holguin, the Foreign Minister, Fernando Araujo, the Public Prosecutor, Mario Iguaran, the Attorney General, Edgardo Maya, and the Public Defender, Volmar Perez.

The crimes reported include beatings, torture, death threats, and theft of farm animals and food. The soldiers are also accused of taking over a school and driving out teachers and children, and taking over houses for their own cooking and shelter, leaving the residents homeless. The report includes names, dates, and times for the offenses. The Commission asks that the crimes be prosecuted and punished.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 21, 2007.

* August 21, 2007. A Colombian Army colonel resigned his post as Assistant Director of Military Industries, a position he had held for a year, when it was revealed that he was wanted by the Public Prosecutor for his role in the 1999 massacre of five people at Tibu (North Santander Province). The Prosecutor charges that in 1999 the colonel was aware of the planned massacre by paramilitaries and did nothing to stop it or to inform his superiors.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, (Santander Province), *El Colombiano*, Medellín, August 21, 2007.



August 20, 2007. A Colombian Army captain is accused of paramilitarism and homicide for his part in the murder of two civilians in June 2003. The two worked in a market and were arrested as paramilitaries. They were later found dead, shot in the back and wearing paramilitary uniforms. The military unit reported that they had killed two paramilitaries. According to the charges, the captain regularly gave the paramilitaries lists of people who were “guerrilla collaborators” and these people were later killed, tortured, and “disappeared.”

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 20, 2007.

* August 19, 2007. One Captain Pinzon has been the key witness in the Public Prosecutor’s investigation of infiltration of the Colombian Army by paramilitary drug trafficker Diego Montoya, alias “Don Diego”. However, notebooks captured with Capt. Pinzon have also provided evidence. The notebooks led, as of August 19, 2007, to the capture of 17 members of the ring, most of them active and retired military. Montoya was the “capo” of the North El Valle drug cartel.

El Pais, Cali, reports that representatives of School of the Americas Watch (SOA) say that seven of the Colombian Army officers implicated in the scandal had received training at the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation in Fort Benning, Georgia. According to SOA, one of the officers is a colonel who taught classes in peace operations and support for democracy at the Institute in 2003 and 2004. Another is Colonel Bayron Carvajal who was trained in combat weaponry at the Institute, then known as the School of the Americas, in 1985. (Col. Carvajal has been on trial for the murder of DEA-trained police at Jamundi in 2006.)

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, August 19, 2007.

* August 19, 2007. The Attorney General of Colombia ordered the discharge of an Army major who worked with paramilitaries and allowed them to carry out murders and other crimes in and around Argelia (Antioquia Province). The discharged officer will not be allowed to hold any public office or employment for 20 years.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, August 18, 2007 and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, August 19, 2007.

* August 19, 2007. The online news magazine *Semana.com* describes the investigation that uncovered the infiltration of the Colombian armed forces by drug lord “Don Diego”. The investigation began on January 22, 2006, when the Colombian Coast Guard stopped a launch used to transport cocaine. The inspectors discovered that the crew had navigation charts that contained the exact location of warships of the Colombian, United States, British, and Dutch navies. Colombian Navy counterintelligence worked with the Public Prosecutor to investigate. They found meetings involving Colombian Navy personnel and representatives of the cartel and evidence of payments from the cartel to Navy personnel.

Source: www.Semana.com/wf_imprimirArticulo.aspx?IdArt=105672&Ver=UPml168mKn72KvTn72jBKycEI2SEo2l8WgoPTHL8WoASTI66

* August 18, 2007. The Colombian Army confirmed reports that two generals had been allowed to retire after it was discovered that drug traffickers had infiltrated the forces under their command in Cali. As of this date, they are not charged with wrongdoing, but two colonels, two majors and two noncommissioned officers in their units have been charged.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, August 18, 2007.



* August 18, 2007. A police captain, who has been linked to the 2001 massacre at Chengue, is accused of taking part in a plot that ended in the murder of a Mayor, and, subsequently, of a witness to the murder.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 18, 2007.

* August 16, 2007. A paramilitary commander, testifying under the Justice and Peace demobilization law, insists that, on two occasions, when the guerrillas threatened to take over a town, the police stationed there asked the paramilitaries for troops and equipment to help them. He testified that the police furnished his paramilitary troops with new rifles, but that the guerrillas never attacked the town.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 16, 2007.

* August 16, 2007. General Oscar Naranjo, Director of the National Police, revealed that, throughout Colombia, 962 police have been discharged, including 62 officers. In Cali and Valle del Cauca, 31 have been discharged but 1,000 are under disciplinary investigation. Officers stated that all complaints are investigated. In Cali, in January 2007, officers noticed that police were making frequent visits to a certain house. Investigators found \$19 million in cash in the house, and in six other houses, a total of more than \$80 million in cash.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, August 16, 2007.

* August 16, 2007. An editorial in *El Pais*, Cali, expresses concern about the number of members of the Colombian Armed Forces who have been involved in mistreatment of civilians and in supporting drug traffickers and paramilitaries. The writer points out that citizens can no longer accept the excuse that these are isolated cases. There are too many for that, and the mission of the Armed Forces is being affected. He believes that, particularly with the police, who encounter ordinary citizens every day, their training in human rights is crucial. Those who violate citizens' rights must be punished severely; otherwise we will be living in an empire of arbitrariness and corruption.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, August 16, 2007.

* August 16, 2007. Online news magazine *Semana.com* provides a "Who's Who" of the infiltration of the Colombian armed forces by drug lord "Don Diego." Thirteen Army officers are accused of working for "Don Diego". The magazine lists the following:

Col. Javier Escobar Martinez, the Chief of Operations of the Third Brigade in Cali. He is accused of organizing the network.

Col. Alvaro Quijano Becerra, Commandant of Special Forces Commandos. He is accused of furnishing information to the drug lord.

Capt. Manuel Enrique Pinzon. He is one of the principal witnesses. He is alleged to have claimed, "I paid a lot of money to a lot of people, civilians, active and retired military. But it wasn't my money ... It came from "Don Diego".

Majors Juan Carlos Rodriguez and William Ortegon. Rodriguez had been sentenced to prison for drug trafficking and weapons violations, but was released early. He is alleged to have been Don Diego's chief of security. Ortegon had been the second in command of a battalion in Tuluá. He is accused of helping Rodriguez. Both are fugitives.



Majors Carlos Gilberto Gil and Wilmer Mora Daza, Gil commanded an Counter-guerrilla Battalion and Mora was his second in command in Commando School in Zarzal. They are both accused of collaborating with the drug cartel.

Major Javier Isaza Munoz and Fernando Morales. They are being investigated for collaboration with the cartel. They are fugitives.

Rear Admiral Gabriel Arango Bacci. He had a distinguished career and was to be promoted to Vice Admiral. According to the Minister of Defense, he is being investigated for drug trafficking. He denies all charges and there is no warrant for his arrest.

Source: http://www.Semana.com/wf_ImprimirArticulo.aspx?IdArt=105614&Ver=leUrVHuGnfuybYmXa6Qk3Txv2hE72sEWA6PD4sNmjVsY66

* August 15, 2007. *El Tiempo* announces new evidence tying a retired Rear Admiral of the Colombian Navy, Gabriel Arango Bacci, to drug traffickers who infiltrated the Colombian military. Colombian Navy Counter-Intelligence found a receipt for \$115,000 that bears his fingerprint. The receipt allegedly covers his services to the drug ring for April, May and June of 2006. The drug trafficking ring was found to possess maps with the locations of Navy ships in waters that were used to ship cocaine from Colombia.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 15, 2007.

* August 14, 2007. *El Mundo*, Medellin, reports that the Colombian Navy is shaken by allegations that Rear Admiral Gabriel Arango Bacci is connected to drug traffickers. The Minister of Defense confirmed that the allegation is being investigated. Arango was recently given a “discretionary retirement”, but denies any wrongdoing. *El Mundo* notes that in the last year, more than 200 members of the armed forces have received “discretionary retirements”.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, August 14, 2007.

August 13, 2007. Eight police officers who beat up a taxi driver in Bogotá will be suspended until internal and criminal investigations are completed. The eight found a taxi driver who was operating his taxi while intoxicated and repeatedly hit and kicked him. At least one used a nightstick. A bystander videotaped the attack and the tape was shown on the TV news.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, August 13, 2007.

* August 13, 2007. The Colombian Secretary of Defense, Juan Manuel Santos, confirmed that the retirement of Rear Admiral Gabriel Arango Bacci was related to the ongoing investigation of participation by the Colombian Navy in drug trafficking. Rear Admiral Arango has had a distinguished career and denies any such participation.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 13, 2007.

* August 13, 2007. The Colombian Secretary of Defense, Juan Manuel Santos, admitted that in the last year 150 military officers and 300 soldiers have been allowed to retire because of suspected connections to drug trafficking. One of the retirees was a Rear Admiral (See above). At this point in the investigation of the infiltration of the military by a drug kingpin, 4 officers, 2 noncommissioned officers and at least 20 active and retired soldiers have been arrested.



One of the arrested officers, who is cooperating with authorities, has said that the drug lord could have been captured on several occasions, but was allowed to escape.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, August 13, 2007.

* August 11, 2007. Investigations carried out as part of the ongoing trial of Colombian Army Colonel Bayron Carvajal, accused of being in the pay of drug traffickers and leading the massacre of ten Colombian drug agents at Jamundi in May 2006, have now led to revelations of the drug traffickers' infiltration of the Colombian Army. Phone calls that were legally recorded as part of the massacre investigation involved at least six other officers who have now been arrested for aiding the drug traffickers.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, August 11, 2007.

* August 11, 2007. Col. Carvajal insists on his innocence of the massacre charges, but his wife supports the testimony of the main witness against him. She will testify that there was frequent contact between Col. Carvajal and the witness, contact that the Colonel has denied. She has been granted witness protection for herself and her children, including location out of the country. It appears that the threats have come from Col. Carvajal's mistress.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 11, 2007.

* August 11, 2007. Several months of investigation by the Colombian National Police and the Public Prosecutor's office have resulted in the arrest of 21 "hit men", contract killers who were part of a drug trafficking and extortion gang in the provinces of Atlantico and Bolivar. Four of the gang members arrested are Colombian police officers on active duty. The gang was believed to have been formed by demobilized paramilitaries.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 11, 2007.

* August 11, 2007. "Corrupt to the Core" headlines the Colombia news magazine *Semana*, in detailing results of a long investigation into a drug kingpin's infiltration of the Colombian Army. (See below.) The article states that numerous officers were part of the drug trafficking organization and that Colombian Army battalions, operational plans, logistics, communications and other resources were at the organization's disposal. And the rewards to the officers were so generous that none have been tempted to betray the drug lord, Diego Montoya, known as "Don Diego", although a \$5 million reward has been offered.

As of the date of publication, 12 officers are implicated. One of them, captured last week, headed a battalion that had been created two years ago to combat Montoya's organization. The writer believes that this is the most serious infiltration ever to take place in Colombia. Montoya has "a regular mountain highway" to transport drugs. And the armed forces who were expected to find and close down his laboratories were under his control. A Police source told *Semana* that Army officials prevented other security personnel from entering these corridors, on the pretext of nonexistent military operations.

Source: *Semana*, August 11, 2007.

* August 10, 2007. The commanding general of the Third Colombian Army Division was relieved after an investigation revealed that paramilitary and drug trafficker Diego Montoya "Don Diego" had infiltrated units under his command. So far, four officers in the region (Norte del Valle) have been implicated. The commander of the Colombian Armed Forces, General Freddy Padilla,



announced that the Public Prosecutor's office had assisted in the investigation. He commented that the infiltration would explain the Army's lack of success in slowing the drug traffic in Norte del Valle, an area known to be controlled by "Don Diego".

El Tiempo also reported statements by a source that "Don Diego" had attempted to contact the DEA in order to discuss possible surrender to the United States. The source claimed that DEA agents had made contact with an Army officer who was in the pay of "Don Diego" in order to meet with him to discuss surrender. U. S. sources confirmed that "Don Diego" had taken some such steps, and a spokesman for the U.S. Embassy confirmed that U.S. authorities had been seeking "Don Diego" for some time. The spokesman had no comment on whether contact had been made and stated that drug traffickers have never infiltrated U. S. security organizations.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá; *El Colombiano*, Medellín; *El País*, Cali, August 10, 2007.

* August 10, 2007. A retired Colombian Army lieutenant who was running for mayor of Soraca (Boyaca Province) was arrested and charged with taking part in drug lord Diego Montoya's infiltration of the Colombian Armed Forces. Two active duty colonels and two majors were arrested yesterday on similar charges. One of the majors was accused of formulating a plan to break Montoya's brother out of the Colombian prison where he is being held.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 10, 2007.

* August 10, 2007. Another Colombian Army officer, the commandant of the counter-guerrilla battalion in Cartago (Valle del Cauca Province) was taken into custody. He is accused of helping plan the rescue of a drug trafficker, Eugenio Montoya, who is in a Colombian prison awaiting extradition to the United States. Montoya is the brother of Diego Montoya, "Don Diego", who is alleged to have infiltrated the Colombian armed forces. *Vanguardia Liberal*, the Bucaramanga daily newspaper, outlines developments in the infiltration scandal, including other arrests and a claim by guerrillas that they have also infiltrated the Colombian Army.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, August 10, 2007.

* August 10, 2007. The Commander of the Colombian Armed Forces, General Freddy Padilla called the infiltration of drug traffickers into the Armed Forces "shameful and lamentable" in a statement on the Caracol radio station. He is confident that the investigation will find all the facts and emphasized that action was taken as soon as the infiltration was discovered.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellín, *El País*, Cali, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, August 10, 2007.

* August 10, 2007. The Inter-American Court for Human Rights, part of the Organization of American States, based in Costa Rica, found the Government of Colombia guilty of the kidnapping and murder by members of the Armed Forces of the indigenous leader German Escue Zapata in 1988. The finding was published yesterday on the Court's web site. The Court found that soldiers had dragged Escue from his house, beaten and murdered him, and that higher military officials attempted to impede the investigation.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellín, August 10, 2007.

* August 10, 2007. Three Colombian Army soldiers were arrested and charged after they were riding in a taxi in Bogotá and argued with the taxi driver about the route to take. They began



beating him and made him get out of the taxi. They were reported to be intoxicated.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, August 10, 2007.

* August 10, 2007. The Public Prosecutor has charged ten Colombian Army soldiers with torturing four young men in western Medellin. They have been charged with trespassing, false imprisonment and torture. It is alleged that in December 2006, believing that the men had committed a sexual assault, the soldiers broke into a residence and took them to their military headquarters and beat them up.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, August 10, 2007.

* August 9, 2007. Another high-ranking Colombian Army officer, the former commandant of Special Forces, was arrested and charged with being part of the network of military officers who worked for the drug kingpin Diego Montoya. As of this date, five high-ranking officers are also under arrest, as investigators learn more about the operation. The officers who worked for Montoya acted as a security force to protect him and to protect drug trafficking routes.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 9, 2007.

* August 8, 2007. The Colombian Council of State (Colombia's highest administrative court) ordered the Colombian government to pay four billion pesos (about \$2 million) to the families of the 34 men and 1 woman who were murdered by guerrillas in the La Chinita neighborhood in Apartado (Antioquia Province) on January 23, 1994. The court found the Army, the Defense Ministry, and the Police guilty of failing to protect the people who had been displaced by internal fighting between two guerrilla factions.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 8, 2007.

* August 7, 2007. Two demobilized paramilitaries, confessing under the provisions of the Justice and Peace law, have claimed that they worked closely with the Colombian Army colonel who commanded military troops in their area. They testified that they would drive their SUV into brigade headquarters and that the guard on duty would recognize them and say, "The colonel is expecting you." They said that their meetings involved coordinating operations and that the Army furnished the paramilitaries with weapons, uniforms and even communication equipment. The agreement, they said, was that the Army would "legalize" as "guerrillas killed in combat" any murders that the paramilitaries carried out in the province.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 7, 2007.

* August 7, 2007. The Colombian Minister of Defense announced that, while he could not reveal their names, because of the ongoing investigation, three Army colonels will be arrested for their connections with drug kingpin Diego Montoya, alias "Don Diego".

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, Bogotá; *El Mundo*, Medellin, and *El País*, Cali, August 7, 2007.

* August 7, 2007. The Inter-American Court for Human Rights, an organ of the Organization of American States (OAS), ordered the Colombian Government to pay 460 million pesos (about \$230,000) to the family of an indigenous leader murdered by Colombian Army soldiers. A counter-guerrilla unit of the Army, claiming that he was a guerrilla and had weapons stored in his house, dragged him out of his house, tortured and shot him on February 1, 1988. The investigation



of the killing lagged in the military justice system for more than ten years before being turned over to the civilian criminal justice system, a lapse that the Court called “notoriously unreasonable.”

This case marks the sixth time in three years that the Inter-American Court for Human Rights has ordered the Colombian Government to pay damages for human rights violations by the Colombian military.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, Medellín, August 7, 2007.

* August 6, 2007. One of the Colombian Army officers arrested and charged with being in the pay of drug kingpin Diego Montoya claimed that a U.S. DEA agent was also part of the ring. Allegedly, he told the others which telephones were being monitored. After that, the witness claimed, Montoya’s agents began using false names and calling from different locations, in order to avoid detection.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, August 6, 2007.

* August 5, 2007. A demobilized paramilitary, Ever Veloza, alias “HH” or “Caraepollo”, told the news magazine *Semana*, that, when General Rito Alejo del Rio was in charge of the area, the Colombian Army and the paramilitaries worked together closely. They carried out joint operations and on a number of occasions, the Army officers would give the paramilitaries lists of people to be killed. General del Rio denied the allegations as he did a month ago when paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso made similar allegations.

Veloza made similar claims about Col. Bayron Carvajal who is on trial for the massacre of ten police officers at Jamundi in March 2006.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 5, 2007.

* August 5, 2007. In a column entitled “The Untouchables”, *El Tiempo* columnist lists a series of accusations against Colombian Army generals and wonders why they have not been punished. She lists the events at the Palace of Justice, the murders of prominent politicians, and the present infiltration of the Army by the drug kingpin Diego Montoya. In spite of the fact that the Attorney General ordered the firing of General Arias Cabrales, who directed the disastrous retaking of the Palace of Justice, General Cabrales became the Commander of the Army and the Rector of the Military University. She identifies Col. Plazas who was responsible for the operation that resulted in the disappearance of persons who walked out of the Palace alive. He was active in politics and named Director of the Anti-Drug Agency, although he is now in custody.

Even though the demobilized paramilitaries continue to say they worked hand in hand with the Colombian Army, only one general has been named, and he is dead. They also claim that they worked with General Rito Alejo del Rio. The then-Public Prosecutor refused to investigate his activities and the now-President attended a ceremony praising him.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 5, 2007.

* August 4, 2007. *El Tiempo* reports that in the last eight months the drug trafficker Diego Montoya has several times escaped capture at the last moment. On one occasion he was encircled but managed to drive off with three vehicles, accompanied by Colombian military.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 4, 2007.



* August 2, 2007. Captain Manuel Enrique Pinzon, under arrest and now the “star witness” in the recently discovered infiltration of Colombian armed forces by a drug kingpin, stated that it was his job to contact the active and retired soldiers recommended by Major Juan Carlos Rodriguez. Major Rodriguez is alleged to have been the head of the drug kingpin’s security forces. The security force, made up of active or retired Colombian military, trained at a farm in the region where Diego Montoya, “Don Diego”, was in command.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 2, 2007.

* August 2, 2007. A demobilized paramilitary, making his public confession under the provisions of the Justice and Peace law, admitted that he and other paramilitaries, with the help of Colombian Army soldiers, had massacred six civilians in San Jose de Apartado (Antioquia Province) on July 8, 2000. He claimed that he and other paramilitaries joined in patrols with Colombian Army soldiers stationed in the vicinity.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, August 2, 2007.

* July 31, 2007. The Attorney General issued charges against eight members of the Colombian Army, alleging their involvement in the murder of a civilian on January 12, 2006 in a small town near San Jose de Apartado (Antioquia Province). The Army reported that he was killed in an exchange of fire with guerrillas. Neighbors reported, however, that the victim had been in his house with one of his children when the soldiers took him away and killed him.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, July 31, 2007.

* July 30, 2007. The *Washington Post* reported the admission (see below) by the Colombian Minister of Defense that cocaine smugglers and leftist rebels have infiltrated senior levels of the Colombian Army.

Source: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/07/30/AR2007073001084_pf.html

* July 30, 2007. The Colombian Minister of Defense, Juan Manuel Santos, admitted that infiltration of the Colombian Army by drug traffickers and guerrillas is very serious because it appears that they have had access to relatively high levels in the officer corps. *Semana.com* quoted TV news station *Noticias Uno* as reporting that the “brains” behind the operation was retired major Juan Carlos Rodriguez Agudelo, who had retired from the Army to become part of the powerful drug trafficker’s security forces. The *Semana.com* web site also quoted the current edition of the weekly news magazine *Semana*, reporting that guerrilla leaders had been informed of planned Army operations against their forces.

Source: http://www.semana.com/wf_InfoArticulo.aspx?idArt=105312, July 30, 2007, Retrieved August 1, 2007.

* July 28, 2007. The news web site *Semana.com* reports that on July 15, a Colombian Army troop overran a guerrilla camp and found memory storage equipment, containing significant top-secret military information. The classified information covered operational plans, training materials that were used only for a select group of special forces, and names of officers who would be leading operations against the guerrillas. The equipment also contained information about other security



agencies. Military sources admitted to *Semana.com* that the Army had been infiltrated by guerrillas as well as by drug traffickers.

Source: http://www.semana.com/wf_InfoArticulo.aspx?IdArt=105260, July 28, 2007, Retrieved August 1, 2007.

* July 26, 2007. A secretary who worked in the personnel office of the Colombian Army, as well as seven retired officers have been arrested by the Public Prosecutor's Office for their connections with Diego Montoya, "Don Diego", a drug kingpin. It is alleged that the retired officers were making cocaine deals, opening drug transportation routes and working security for him, while the secretary was providing him with information about any retired officers who might also be interested in working for him. Sources told the news magazine web site *Semana.com* that four colonels and two majors, active and retired are also working with Montoya but have not yet been arrested.

Source: http://www.semana.com/wf_InfoArticulo.aspx?idArt=105312, July 26, 2007 Retrieved August 1, 2007.

* July 25, 2007. Colombian Army counter-intelligence officers became suspicious when a noncommissioned officer made regular trips to headquarters without having any duty-related purpose. He admitted that he went there to obtain information from a secretary who was helping identify officers who would join the drug trafficker's forces. (See above.)

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, July 25, 2007.

* July 17, 2007. A demobilized paramilitary, Jose Adriano Cano, confessed to taking part in a massacre at the Peace Community of San Jose de Apartado (Antioquia Province) on July 8, 2000. Six farmers were killed and community leaders have alleged that the Colombian Army was involved in the killing. Cano testified that he regularly went on patrol with Colombian Army troops.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, July 17, 2007.

* July 13, 2007. A former paramilitary commander, testifying as part of the "Justice and Peace" demobilization process, stated that the paramilitaries killed 32 civilians "by mistake" in the massacre of El Campin, (Santander Province) in May, 1998. The paramilitaries believed the civilians to be guerrillas, but the commander, in his testimony, admitted that they were not guerrillas. The newspaper has learned that the police commander and ten police officers had been punished by the Attorney General for their part in the massacre, but that no criminal charges have been filed against them. Seven soldiers and three prosecutors are thought to have been involved, but they have not been charged.

Source *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga (Santander Province), July 13, 2007.

* July 13, 2007. A former Army captain who became a paramilitary commander surrendered to authorities. He is charged with forming a new illegal paramilitary organization, the "Black Eagles", after the paramilitary organization he headed had demobilized under Colombia's "Peace and Justice" law. He will be jailed in Barranquilla until his trial.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, July 13, 2007.



* July 12, 2007. A former paramilitary commander, giving testimony as part of the “Justice and Peace” demobilization process claimed that his group trafficked weapons into Colombia with the help of the Colombian Army. He also said that they had paid 150 million pesos (roughly \$75,000) in bribes to the Colombian Customs Police.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, July 13, 2007.

* July 10, 2007. The Attorney General of Colombia ordered a Colombian Army captain and 8 soldiers discharged from the Army and prohibited from holding any public job for 20 years because they were responsible for the “unwarranted killings” in May 2005 of two people, a farmer and a Rural Development coordinator in La Esperanza (North Santander Province). (The Attorney General does not have authority to bring criminal charges—that is the responsibility of the Public Prosecutor.)

Source: *El Pais*, Cali; *El Espectador*, Bogotá, July 10, 2007.

* July 9, 2007. *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, reports that when the Colombian national police headquarters learned that their illegal wiretapping was being investigated, an officer ordered that the electronic records be deleted. After the wiretapping was discovered, the President replaced the commander of the national police and a number of officers. See below.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, July 9, 2007.

July 7, 2007. The former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) was re-arrested and taken to jail. He had been arrested in February 2007 and charged with providing paramilitaries with lists of labor leaders and activists whom they were to kill. He was freed in March on a procedural technicality and had been free until re-arrested on July 6, 2007.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, July 7, 2007.

* July 4, 2007. Sixteen Colombian Army soldiers from the Fourth Brigade (Medellin) were arrested for the murder of two young civilians on May 26, 2004. The two were returning home from visiting their aunt in Medellin when they disappeared. Their bodies were found dressed in camouflage and with a fragmentation grenade and a rifle beside them. The sixteen arrested for the murders include a captain and a sergeant, a corporal and six soldiers. Another sergeant and six soldiers are arrested for their part in covering up the murder. A human rights group has recently reported 264 similar cases involving the Fourth Brigade, alleged to have occurred between mid-2004 and May 2006 in Antioquia Province.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, July 4, 2007.

* July 4, 2007. A young Colombian soldier died of burns in a hospital in Cali on June 16. Before he died, he called home from the hospital and told his family that his fellow soldiers had tied him to a chair and were tossing burning papers at him. The horseplay is called “the dragon game.” Army sources claimed that the burns were produced when a spark ignited gasoline he was using for maintenance work. An unnamed source told the newspaper that the horseplay had caused the burns.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, July 4, 2007.

* July 3, 2007. The recent *Amnesty International* report entitled “Killings, Arbitrary Detentions and Death Threats; The Reality of Trade Unionism in Colombia”, issued Tuesday, July 2, claims that



in September, 2006, labor organizer Alejandro Uribe was killed by the New Granada Battalion of the Colombian Army.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, July 3, 2007.

* July 1, 2007. The National Security Archive at George Washington University published a previously classified document that links the current Colombian Army Commander and other Colombian Army officers to the creations of a terrorist paramilitary group. The document claims that the “American Anticommunist Alliance” was secretly created and staffed by members of Colombian military intelligence in a plan authorized by then-army commander General Jorge Robledo Pulido, and that the current commander, General Mario Montoya Uribe, helped create the terrorist group. The group was responsible for a number of bombings, kidnappings and assassinations against leftist targets.

Source: Michael Evans, Director, Colombia Documentation Project, The National Security Archive, www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB and at the web site of Colombian weekly news magazine *Semana*, <http://www.semana.com>.

* June 30, 2007. The Bogotá newspaper *El Espectador* publishes a preview of testimony that will be offered in U.S. District Court in Alabama. Survivors of murdered labor leaders are suing the Drummond Corporation, alleging that Drummond managers paid Colombian paramilitaries to carry out the killings. The survivors will claim that Rafael Garcia, a former high official of the DAS (Colombian FBI) took part in planning the killings. Garcia will testify that his agency delivered to the paramilitaries a list of civilians who were to be killed.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, June 30, 2007.

* June 29, 2007. The demobilized paramilitary leader known as “Don Antonio: continued his testimony. (See June 26, 2007, below.) He admitted to committing, ordering, or taking part in 200 murders and that he had purchased weapons from the Second Brigade of the Colombian Army and that he had not turned those over to authorities as required by the Colombian paramilitary demobilization law.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, June 29, 2007.

* June 27, 2007. The Attorney General announced arrests and prosecutions of Colombian military in two separate cases. In the first case, an indigenous leader was kidnapped by paramilitaries and turned over to a counter-guerrilla battalion of the Colombian Army in Santa Marta Province. He was killed and presented as a guerrilla killed in combat. A second lieutenant and a corporal are charged with the murder.

In the second case, in El Castillo (Meta Province), two farmers were kidnapped by soldiers of the Brigade stationed in Villavicencio. They were shot to death and presented as guerrillas killed in combat. Two soldiers have been charged with the crime.

Source: *El Espectador*, June 27, 2007.

* June 27, 2007. News reporters complained that they had been beaten and tear-gassed by police while they were taking pictures of a taxi drivers strike. One reporter was treated at a clinic and another was hospitalized.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 27, 2007.



* June 27, 2007. Reporters for the Ecuadorian paper *Equavisa* complained that they were arrested and interrogated by the DAS (Colombian FBI) and forbidden to enter Colombia for five years. According to one of the reporters, a soldier told him “they had been sent by the guerrillas to make the Colombian Army look bad.” The reporters were investigating the incident on Thursday, June 21, where four farmers, three Colombian and one Ecuadorian were shot and killed by Colombian soldiers. Relatives stated that the dead men were farmers and that the soldiers had dressed their bodies in guerrilla uniforms and placed rifles in their hands after they were dead. Agencies of both countries were investigating.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, June 27, 2007.

* June 27, 2007. Three noncommissioned officers in the Colombian Army are in custody, charged with torturing 21 soldiers under their command in Piedras (Tolima Province).

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, Medellín, June 27, 2007.

* June 26, 2007. A demobilized paramilitary leader, known as “Don Antonio” testified that he had given 80 million pesos (about \$40,000) to a high official in the DAS (Colombia’s FBI) in return for a list of names of persons to be killed by the paramilitaries. The list included community leaders, teachers, and labor leaders, all thought to be communists. According to Colombia’s demobilization law, “Don Antonio” will receive a brief prison sentence and certain benefits if he testifies truthfully and makes reparations to victims.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, June 26, 2007.

* June 26, 2007. Three Colombian Police colonels have been suspended after they tried to delete evidence sought by the Attorney General in his investigation of illegal wiretapping by the Police. The information was removed from a server and later recovered through computer forensics. One source told *El Tiempo* that a noncommissioned officer was tortured to make him reveal who had leaked information about the illegal wiretaps.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 26, 2007 and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, June 26, 2007.

* June 25, 2007. In a story datelined Quito, Ecuador, *El Heraldo* newspaper reports that Colombian police shot and killed four farmers as they were planting corn. Three of the farmers were Colombian and one was Ecuadorian. The Governor of the Ecuadorian province of Sucumbios reported that the police claimed that the four were guerrillas who were planting land mines. The relatives of the dead men insisted that they were well known in their community and were not guerrillas and ought not to have been dressed in guerrilla uniforms after being killed. Some witnesses have said that their bodies were hitched to horses and dragged to another location.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, June 25, 2007.

* June 25, 2007. The Colombian Attorney General’s office has opened an investigation of seven police officers accused of illegally tapping telephone conversations of reporters and politicians. The officers include a general, three lieutenant colonels, two majors, and another officer.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 25, 2007.

* June 23, 2007. A Colombian police patrolman revealed that he was required to testify in the nude and otherwise mistreated in the hours after the weekly news magazine *Semana* broke the



story about illegal police wiretapping. He said that Police counterintelligence officers accused him of leaking the story. He also stated that officials tried to erase the wiretapping evidence.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, June 23, 2007.

* June 18, 2007. The newspaper *El Pais*, Cali, reports that there were eight cases in the last ten years in which the Inter-American Court for Human Rights has held the Colombian government responsible for paramilitary massacres. The Government's responsibility is based on evidence that the Colombian military took part in the massacres, or furnished assistance to the killers, or failed to do anything to stop them. The most recent finding involves the killing of a government official in Cauca Province. All in all, *El Pais*, via Colprensa news service, reports that Colombia has been ordered to pay 50 billion pesos, approximately \$50 million so far. There are some half dozen cases waiting to be decided.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, June 18, 2007.

* June 16, 2007. A noncommissioned officer currently serving in the Colombian Army and a female employee of the 18th Brigade of the Army, headquartered in Arauca Province, murdered a radio executive. The female had formerly worked for the murdered executive. Both of the killers are in custody.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 18, 2007

June 16, 2007. Four Colombian soldiers in full uniform and with military weapons carjacked two brothers who were on their way to a business appointment. The soldiers searched the two victims and kept them prisoners while two of the soldiers drove off in the car. The soldiers robbed them of a ring, their cell phones, and a debit card, forcing them to reveal the PIN. After the two soldiers who had taken the car returned with a million pesos in cash, they demanded more money, but allowed the victims 24 hours to obtain it. They told the victims that they were guerrillas and needed the money for the war. The two brothers reported the crime and the authorities determined that the robbers were not guerrillas, but Colombian soldiers on active duty.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 16, 2007.

* June 16, 2007. *El Tiempo* reports that Colombian Army soldiers have been charged with crimes in four separate incidents in one week. Ten soldiers have been dishonorably discharged for murder, extortion and drug trafficking. In one case, a female complainant was able to identify two soldiers who had attempted to extort money from her. Two noncommissioned officers were discharged in that case. Besides the murder of six civilians (see below) there are two cases in which military counterintelligence is investigating the involvement of Colombian soldiers in the trafficking of drugs and weapons in Guaviare and Antioquia provinces.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 16, 2007.

* June 12, 2007. Two Colombian soldiers from the 9th Brigade of the Colombian Army, based in Caqueta province, murdered six civilians. One of those killed was a nine-year-old boy.

Source: *Excelsior*, Mexico, D.F., June 12, 2007, page 23.

* June 8, 2007. The Inter-American Court for Human Rights found the Colombian Government responsible for a 1989 massacre by paramilitaries in Puerto Boyaca. The Government was ordered to pay damages to the survivors and to carry out a thorough criminal investigation. The Court held



the Government responsible because there was evidence that government officials took part in the massacre and that military authorities, with knowledge, failed to prevent the massacre.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 8, 2007, *El Pais*, Cali, June 9, 2007.

* June 7, 2007. Colombian police arrested two members of a new paramilitary group, the Black Eagles, and one of those arrested was a police officer. The two were found trafficking weapons and had in their possession rifles, pistols, revolvers, more than 100 grenades and thousands of packages of ammunition.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, June 7, 2007.

* June 6, 2007. The Colombian Attorney General is re-opening 131 disciplinary investigations where Colombian soldiers are accused of killing civilians and claiming that they were guerrillas killed in combat. An official of the Attorney General's office told the AP news agency that the military investigations had only questioned the soldiers involved.

The Attorney General's office states that the cases have three things in common: it appears that the victims were falsely presented as being killed in combat; the soldiers manipulated the evidence at the crime scene; and the military investigation appears superficial. The office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights stated last March in its annual report that soldiers have killed more civilians than last year in 21 of 32 provinces.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá and *Semana*, Bogotá, June 6, 2007.

* June 6, 2007. A Colombian woman, allegedly aligned with the guerrillas, is being tried for helping two Colombian Army officers plan and carry out a car bombing at the Military School last August. The two officers apparently wanted it to appear that they were successfully fighting off a guerrilla attack.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 6, 2007.

* June 6, 2007. A military appeals court ordered 147 Colombian Army staff (3 officers, 15 non-commissioned officers, and 129 soldiers released from prison where they were serving sentences for stealing more than 40,000,000,000 pesos (about \$20,000,000) they had found in a cache left by the guerrillas. The appeals court held that they had been denied due process when they were questioned without legal advice. They will be retried.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 6, 2007.

* June 2, 2007. The Colombian weekly news magazine *Semana* reviews testimony before the Inter-American Court for Human Rights, at hearings last week in San Jose, Costa Rica on the responsibility of the Colombian government for the 1989 massacre of lawyers and judges at La Rochela (Santander Province). The lawyers and judges had gone to investigate a previous massacre. Witnesses have testified that two Army Generals and at least eight other officers aided the paramilitaries who carried out the massacre. In a related proceeding, the Colombian government has already admitted responsibility for the massacre that was being investigated by the judges who were killed.

Source: *Semana*, Bogotá, June 2, 2007.

* June 2, and May 30 2007. Two columnists writing in the Bogotá daily newspaper *El Tiempo* call upon the general newly appointed to head the Colombian national police force (a branch



of the Army) to put an end to police corruption and human rights violations. A few weeks ago the discovery that police had been performing illegal wiretaps of officials, politicians and news reporters resulted in the firing of twelve police generals (see below). The columnists also point out that police should cut their ties to paramilitaries and drug traffickers. They mention thefts, killing of civilians, and general disrespect for law and urge the new general to use his reputation and leadership to rebuild and reform the Colombian police.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, Carlos Castillo Cardona, May 30, 2007 and Leon Valencia, June 2, 2007.

May 30, 2007. Two non-commissioned officers, now retired from the Colombian Army, have been arrested and charged with taking part in the kidnapping, torture and killing of civilians who were present in the Bogotá Palace of Justice when it was attacked by guerrillas and retaken and set afire by the Colombian Army in 1987. A number of Supreme Court Justices were killed, and the Army had claimed that the civilians were also killed in the fire. Photographs now show that the civilians were alive when they were removed from the building. They have never been found.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, May 30, 2007.

* May 28, 2007. *El Tiempo* reports that seven Colombian Army soldiers who were beaten by a superior officer for training mistakes (see below) are still incapacitated fifteen days after receiving the injuries.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, May 28, 2007.

* May 25, 2007. The Colombian Army will discharge an officer who struck soldiers with a piece of wood after they made mistakes in target practice. The commander of the 9th Brigade in Huila province made the announcement after medical staff determined that thirteen soldiers had bruises on their legs after being punished.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, May 25, 2007.

* May 24, 2007. The current human rights report of Amnesty International contains the following conclusion in the section on Colombia: "Paramilitary groups continued to commit human rights violations in collusion with or with the acquiescence of members of the security forces."

Source: Amnesty International, <http://thereport.amnesty.org/eng/Regions/Americas/Colombia>. Retrieved May 24, 2007. Also see *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, May 23, 2007.

* May 18, 2007. Two soldiers from the 7th Mobile Brigade, out on patrol came upon a farmer with a mule loaded with bundles of coca. Instead of turning the farmer over to the police, the soldiers decided to divide up their find. They found 90 packages of cocaine and decided to hide 70 of them in the weeds near a local airstrip. They distributed a few packages to neighbors nearby, asking them to keep it a secret. Then they went back to headquarters and turned in the remaining 12 packages, receiving congratulations. But the farmer filed a complaint and both the farmer and the soldiers were arrested, charged, found guilty and sent to prison.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, May 18, 2007.

* May 15, 2007. A local politician (a retired police official) and a Police Inspector have been charged with "rebellion" and criminal conspiracy. They are accused of being part of a network of guerrilla supporters.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, May 15, 2007.



* May 15, 2007. All of Colombia's major newspapers report that the Minister of Defense has fired the general who heads the Colombian police (a branch of the Army) along with several subordinate generals. The weekly news magazine *Semana* revealed that police intelligence officers have been illegally listening to and recording telephone conversations of cabinet ministers, opposition politicians, news reporters and others. The Attorney General states that recording telephone conversations of others without a court order is a crime under the Colombian penal code.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellín, *El Espectador*, Bogotá, May 15, 2007.

* May 14, 2007. The Public Ombudsman (Procurador) has charged 1 officer and 13 soldiers of the Colombian Army with illegally arresting, torturing and killing five civilians on May 25, 2005. They are alleged to have killed the five men and presented them as paramilitaries they had killed in combat. In fact, according to the charges, there was no combat.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellín, May 14, 2007.

* May 12, 2007. *El Espectador* reports that the Colombian Attorney General's office is studying "an explosive document" that details the 2002 takeover by paramilitaries of the regional Attorney General's office in Cucuta (Boyaca Province). (The Attorney General at that time is now the Ambassador to Mexico.) The document points to high officials of the Colombian Army, the DAS (Colombian FBI) and the police (part of the army) who collaborated with the paramilitaries in Cucuta.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, May 12, 2007.

* May 10, 2007. A Colombian Army soldier was shot by a fellow soldier who was on guard duty. The Colonel in command of the 6th Brigade, headquartered in Ibagué (Tolima Province), explained that the victim was leaving by the back way in order to go into town. The sentinel shot him when he failed to answer to the command to halt.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, May 10, 2007.

* May 10, 2007. A Colombian Army soldier fired on news reporters who were attempting to cover a guerrilla attack that killed ten soldiers. No reporters were injured.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, May 10, 2007.

* May 8, 2007. Two noncommissioned officers of the Colombian Army were detained after being caught prowling near the residence of relatives of Colombian opposition Senator Gustavo Petro. Senator Petro has received numerous threats on his life and the Colombian government is protecting him and his family. When the security force stopped the two soldiers, they claimed that they were members of the DAS (Colombian FBI). Later they admitted that they were really with the Army. The Commander in Chief of the Army has said that they were performing a counterintelligence activity related to three other soldiers who were not part of the security force.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellín, *El País*, Cali, May 8, 2007.

* May 7, 2007. Three Colombian Army soldiers were arrested and charged with murder. They are alleged to have killed a farmer in April 2004 and then claimed to have killed a guerrilla. Two of the soldiers admitted that they committed the murder in order to receive the several days' leave that was offered to any soldier who killed a guerrilla.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellín, May 7, 2007.



* May 5, 2007. The Colombian Attorney General has re-opened 890 cases that had been closed without any action. Based on the evidence in the files, he issued 20 arrest warrants, including several for members of the Colombian military. Three former soldiers were arrested for the murder of five labor union leaders and five more members of the military were arrested for the murder of three union leaders in August 2004.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, May 5, 2007.

* May 5, 2007. The Inter-American Court for Human Rights will take up the issue of damages against the Colombian government for the massacre at La Rochela in January 1989. A group of paramilitaries, with the cooperation of government agents, murdered 15 court officers while they were carrying out an investigation. The Colombian government has admitted its responsibility in a document submitted to the court on September 11, 2006. The Inter-American Commission for Human Rights, prosecuting the case, alleges that the Colombian government agents responsible for the massacre, both civilian and military, have not been investigated or punished by the Colombian authorities.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, May 5, 2007.

* May 3, 2007. The Inter-American Court for Human Rights has ordered the Colombian government to pay 1,421 million pesos (more than \$700,000) in compensatory damages and 281 million pesos (roughly \$150,000) in punitive damages to the survivors of a human rights lawyer who was murdered in 1998. Jesus Maria Valle Jaramillo was killed after he complained publicly about the relationship between the Colombian Army and paramilitary groups. The Court ordered the Army, the Police, the DAS (Colombia's FBI) and the Interior Ministry each to pay 25 percent of the damages. All of the agencies had been informed of the threats on Valle's life, but refused to take any action to protect him.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, May 3, 2007.

* May 1, 2007. The Attorney General of Colombia, visiting Washington D.C. to request financial support for his office to investigate and prosecute criminal connections between a terrorist group (paramilitaries) and public officials, admitted that in the past, members of the Colombian Armed Forces had participated in the murders of labor activists. In 2006, 72 labor leaders were murdered in Colombia, two more than in 2005, according to Human Rights Watch.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, May 1, 2007.

* April 30, 2007. A nongovernmental organization in Medellin has completed a study reporting the methods used by the Colombian police between 2003 and 2006, working together with "demobilized" paramilitaries, to violate the human rights of Medellin residents in a community consisting mostly of displaced persons. The paramilitaries would decide who could live in a neighborhood and who could not, and the police enforced their decision. Community leaders were arrested without warrants, and on false charges and some were "disappeared" or murdered.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, April 30, 2007.

* April 30, 2007. An agent of the Administrative Department of Security (Colombian FBI) and a Judicial Police official, both working as security officers at the U.S. Embassy in Bogotá, were caught charging Colombian citizens up to ten million pesos (roughly \$5,000) to obtain U.S. visas. One has been sentenced to six and one-half years in prison and the other is awaiting sentencing.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, April 30, 2007



* April 29, 2007. A sergeant in the Colombian Rapid Deployment Force has been arrested for trafficking weapons to the guerrillas. Another sergeant has fled and is believed to have joined with paramilitary forces. The trafficking ring was discovered when a missing weapon was found in the possession of the guerrillas. In the last several months, the Colombian Army has found several caches of weapons believed to belong to the guerrillas. The Army is attempting to determine whether some of these stored weapons were being trafficked to the guerrillas by members of the Rapid Deployment Force. As of this date, 35 members of the Colombian Armed Forces are in prison, either convicted or awaiting trial, for trafficking weapons to the guerrillas and/or the paramilitaries.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 29, 2007.

* April 28, 2007. The weekly news magazine *Semana* reports that the most senior paramilitary chieftain, Ramon Isaza, is expected to make his confession in the coming week. He is expected to identify the Army generals he worked with. *Semana* reports that Isaza founded the first group of paramilitaries in 1978, and since that time has directed narcotics trafficking and at least 600 murders. The Colombian Armed Forces supported them unreservedly, in particular the Barbula Battalion and the 14th Brigade.

Isaza has already testified before a judge that his son carried out a massacre ordered by a general who at that time commanded the 4th Brigade and a major who was known as “the commander of the paramilitaries.”

Source: *Semana*, Bogotá, April 28, 2007.

* April 26, 2007. A demobilized paramilitary has confessed that he served as a guide for the 17th Brigade of the Colombian Army. He testified that the Army furnished him with a uniform and weapons so that he could take part in operations. This happened near the same time as the massacre of eight persons near San Jose de Apartado in February 2005. The Colombian Prosecutor's Office is investigating the participation of 69 members of the 17th Brigade in the killings.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 26, 2007.

* April 19, 2007. One of the highest-ranking demobilized paramilitary commanders, Ernesto Baez, testified in court that he had helped plan the murder of presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galan in 1989. He testified that agents of DAS, (Colombia's FBI), of Colombian military intelligence and of the Army's 13th Brigade helped by providing the killers with false identification so that they could approach the platform where Galan was speaking at a political rally. Baez testified that another paramilitary leader continued to remain in contact with the director of the DAS agency.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, April 19, 2007.

* April 18, 2007. Demobilized paramilitary commander Ernesto Baez testified in court that Colombian military intelligence officers planned and carried out the kidnapping of Senator Piedra Cordoba. She was later released.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 18, 2007.

* April 18, 2007. The International Labor Federation (Spanish acronym CSI) reported to the International Labor Organization that members of Colombia's DAS collaborated with



paramilitaries in the deaths of Colombian labor leaders. CSI reports that for a long time the DAS has maintained lists of Colombian labor leaders. They were stalked and a number of them were murdered. CSI appeared before the European Parliament in Brussels to urge the international community to pressure Colombia to investigate the deaths of some 2000 labor leaders between 1991 and 2006.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, April 18, 2007.

* April 16, 2007. The Colombian Attorney General has charged that in 2004, in El Limon, in the municipality of Chaparral (Tolima province) a noncommissioned officer and four soldiers of the 17th Infantry Battalion of Montana, part of the 6th Brigade of the Colombian Army, killed an unarmed civilian. They threw his body in a truck and left the scene, later reporting him as killed in combat.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, April 16, 2007.

* April 14, 2007. A witness who has fled Colombia told an *El Tiempo* reporter how in 2002 the paramilitaries “cleaned out” a neighborhood in Medellin, with the help of the Colombian Army and Police. The operation was known as “Orion”. He witnessed several killings and saw the paramilitaries cut up a body. He was shot several times but escaped.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 14, 2007.

*April 14, 2007. A spokesman for the Inter-American Human Rights Commission stated that all the armed groups in Colombia, including the Armed Forces, are carrying out sexual abuse and torture. He noted that the Commission had established that the paramilitaries work together with the Armed Forces.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, April 14, 2007.

* April 8, 2007. A Colombian Army colonel and a captain, currently a commander of Special Forces, were ordered arrested and charged with crimes after they detained 11 civilians. Nine had no arrest warrants but were arrested anyway. After two days of detention, the nine were released at a location that paramilitaries controlled. Only one hour later, four of them were taken away, presumably by paramilitaries. They have never been seen again. The Prosecutor pointed out that the officers were well aware that the paramilitaries controlled the area.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, April 8, 2007.

* March 30, 2007. Seven investigators attached to the CTI (Colombia’s CSI) were arrested and charged with arson. They are alleged to have set fire to a storage unit that contained evidence related to homicides in the last four years. Computers, desks and documents were destroyed.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 30, 2007.

* March 26, 2007. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that the CIA has obtained new intelligence alleging that the head of Colombia’s army, Gen. Mario Montoya, collaborated extensively with the paramilitaries, including a group headed by one of Colombia’s leading drug traffickers. A CIA report says that Montoya and a paramilitary group jointly planned and conducted the “clean-up” of neighborhoods in Medellin. At least 14 people were killed during the operation. It has been alleged



that up to 46 people “disappeared” during the operation, but there have been no prosecutions. The Colombian government denied the *Times* report.

Source: *Los Angeles Times*, March 26, 2007.

* March 19, 2007. One Colombian soldier was killed by Colombian police fire when units of both agencies were searching for an illegal armed group. An Army driver was injured by the “friendly fire.”

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 19, 2007.

* March 19, 2007. The latest United Nations report on the situation of the Colombian Armed Forces in connection with human rights is one of the harshest in recent history, reports the Colombian weekly news magazine *CAMBIO*. The report suggests that some units of the Army are presenting innocent civilians as guerrillas killed in combat, just to give the impression that their operational results have improved. The report also points to an increase in the number of complaints of sexual assault and other injuries to civilians.

Source: *CAMBIO*, March 19-25, 2007.

* March 16, 2007. *El Tiempo* also reported on the issuance of the United Nations document reporting killings by the Colombian Army. The report states that the majority of the victims were indigenous and African-Colombian people, social leaders, defenders of human rights, farmers, women, children, labor leaders, news reporters and displaced people.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 16, 2007.

* March 16, 2007. A judge in Medellín found two Colombian Army officers, a captain and a lieutenant, and 2 soldiers guilty in the disappearance of a merchant on June 1, 2006. No trace of the merchant has been found.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 16, 2007.

* March 14, 2007. Three police officers from the traffic section in Medellín were discharged “for the illegal arrest and subsequent murder of a man apparently involved in the theft of a vehicle.”

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellín, March 14, 2007.

* March 6, 2007. The Colombian Government accepted its responsibility before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights for the August 9, 1994 murder of Manuel Cepeda, at that time a Colombian Senator. The Government announced that it will seek an amicable settlement of the case. Two members of the military were sent to prison for the murder, but the members of the Senator’s family are urging further investigation to determine who planned and ordered the assassination.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El País*, Cali, March 6, 2007.

* February 23, 2007. Colombian newspapers report a corrected figure for the number of Colombian Army troops alleged to have been involved in the massacre of eight persons at San Jose de Apartado in February 2005. Sixty-nine soldiers, including 2 officers, 9 non-commissioned officers, and 58 soldiers will be called to an investigating court in connection with the massacre.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá and *El Espectador*, Bogotá.



* February 22, 2007. The Colombian Prosecutor's office has opened an official investigation of 56 Colombian Army soldiers suspected of having taken part in the massacre of eight persons, including three children, on February 21, 2005. The victims were members of the Peace Community of San Jose de Apartado (Antioquia Province). At the time, neighbors of the victims stated that the Army had carried out the killings, but Army and other Colombian government officials insisted that guerrillas were responsible. Continuing investigation has revealed evidence that demonstrates the Army's responsibility for the massacre.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *El Pais*, Cali, *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 22, 2007.

* February 20, 2007. A Colombian soldier has been arrested in Venezuela, after he shot and killed a woman who was traveling in a vehicle with her husband. The soldier was part a squad of six Colombian soldiers stationed at the frontier with Venezuela. The Venezuelan Interior Minister announced the arrest, pending an investigation. The shooting is alleged to have been a mistake.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, February 20, 2007.

* February 9, 2007. A captured paramilitary commander, who has confessed to two homicides, testified that he had paid two Colombian Army officers for information about military operations in his area.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, February 9, 2007

* February 6, 2007. The Prosecutor's office has issued warrants for the arrest of a retired Colombian Army colonel and two majors on active duty. The three are charged with multiple aggravated homicides, forced displacement, aggravated kidnapping, forced "disappearances", terrorism and aggravated conspiracy.

The Prosecutor alleges that between February and March of 2003, in Viota, (Cundinamarca Province) they tortured, murdered, "disappeared", and forced the displacement of peasant farmers in the community, in concert with paramilitary groups. The two officers on active duty are in custody, and the retired colonel is a fugitive.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 6, 2007.

* February 6, 2007. In connection with the foregoing charges, and with other reports of wrongdoing by the military, the Prosecutor's office conducted a search of its records and concludes that there are charges to be brought against some eighty (80) members of the Colombian military, some active and some retired. The charges range from support of the paramilitaries to kidnappings, "disappearances", forced displacement and murders over the past four years. There is another group of about eighty (80) whose cases have been partially investigated, but charges have yet to be brought. The records search also uncovered unfilled charges against police, detectives and officers in the DAS (Colombian FBI).

In October of last year a judge sentenced an Army captain and another officer to 34 years in prison for the murder of a peasant farmer in the community of Viota (Cundinamarca Province). According to the evidence, the officers asked the paramilitaries for help in "cleaning up" guerrillas in the community, so that they could demonstrate success to their superiors. They then kidnapped and murdered the farmer, claiming that he was a guerrilla.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 6, 2007.



* February 2, 2007. A high school girl who was working at a military base as part of her studies was killed when a soldier was handling another soldier's gun and the gun discharged accidentally.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 2, 2007

* January 26, 2007. For the first time in history, the Colombian Minister of Defense announced at a press conference that a much-decorated Army colonel had been relieved of his command and would be turned over to civilian prosecutors for investigation of claims that he worked closely with the Colombian paramilitaries. The Colombian paramilitaries have killed thousands of Colombian civilians and have been designated by the U.S. State Department as a terrorist organization. Witnesses claim that the colonel met with paramilitary commanders regularly and furnished them with Army weapons, and that they paid him 30 million pesos (about \$20,000) monthly for his assistance.

According to witnesses, the colonel regularly presented dead civilians as guerrillas killed in combat, whether they had been killed by soldiers or by the paramilitaries. He is also accused of torturing and killing two soldiers under his command and of killing a paramilitary leader who fell out of favor with a more powerful paramilitary commander.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 26, 2007; *Semana*, Bogotá, January 28, 2007.

* January 24, 2007. A driver was killed and three children were injured when Colombian Army soldiers mistook the noise of the vehicle for an armed attack.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá; *El Colombiano*, Medellín; *El Pais*, Cali; *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 24, 2007.

* January 21, 2007. A Colombian Army soldier shot and killed a 23-year-old laborer who started to run when he was asked to show his identity documents.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga (Santander Province) January 21, 2007

* January 19, 2007. A police lieutenant and eight police officers in Neiva (Huila Province) are accused of trying to steal part of a large store of cocaine base that had been discovered by police officials.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellín, and *El Pais*, Cali, January 19, 2007.

* January 16, 2007. All of Colombia's largest daily papers today carry reports of paramilitary leader Salvador Mancuso's confession to an investigating court. He stated that he had planned the massacre at El Aro in 1997 with 4th Brigade General Alfonso Manosalva in the General's office. The General is now dead. Mancuso told the court that General Manosalva had furnished routes, maps and battle plans to the paramilitaries. Fifteen civilians were tortured and killed at El Aro (Antioquia Province).

Mancuso said that in 1997 he relied on a Colombian Army Colonel and the Colombian Air Force to help carry out the massacre at Mapiripan (Meta Province). Some 50 civilians were killed there. Mancuso also testified that he and other paramilitaries paid a billion pesos monthly (about \$4.5 million) to the Colombian police for "information and intelligence" and to "guarantee their cooperation."



The Commander of the Armed Forces, General Freddy Padilla, told *El Colombiano* that as of now he is not aware of any case in which any man in uniform is connected to the paramilitaries.

Sources: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá; *El Espectador*, Bogotá; *El Colombiano*, Medellín; *El País*, Cali.

* January 15, 2007. An opinion columnist insists that the tradition of brutality in the Colombian military has to change. He cites the recent burning deaths of two soldiers in the Third Brigade and the insistence of the Third Brigade general that he had no idea this was going on. He urges the Commander of the Armed Forces, General Freddy Padilla, to “take the bull by the horns.”

Source: *El País*, Cali, January 15, 2007.

* January 14, 2007. A Colombian news service, *Colprensa*, prepared a long article detailing the hazing that has been a way of life in the Colombian Army. Soldiers with seniority impose torture and punishment on the new recruits as “initiation”. Then, when the recruits achieve seniority, they repeat the conduct. For example, a recruit may be hung by his feet and hit with a board, one blow for each year of seniority owned by the person dealing the blows. This is a long article and there are many other examples of brutality. Responsible officials are quoted as denying any knowledge of this custom, although soldiers claim that it is a “tradition”.

Source: *El País*, Cali, January 14, 2007 and *El Colombiano*, Medellín, January 15, 2007.

* January 8, 2007. In a New Year’s column, *El Tiempo* columnist Natalia Springer writes: “My first wish for this year is that the Army undertake a profound institutional purification. Paramilitaries, guerrillas, mafias and organized crime have managed to infiltrate and weaken the Armed Forces, and that’s why today a good part of the enemy is within the ranks ...”

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 8, 2007.

* January 6, 2007. As a “joke”, soldiers put papers between the toes of a recruit who was sleeping. Then they set fire to the papers. In the ensuing fire, two soldiers were killed and three more were badly injured. The story in *El Tiempo* reports last year’s episode when recruits were tortured as part of their training, that noncommissioned officers beat and burned 18 recruits for missing an exercise, that two soldiers from the Presidential Guard were badly burned by muriatic acid poured on them by a sergeant, that a soldier committed suicide after being mistreated by another noncom, and that a soldier drowned when made to take “the alligator test” (staying under the water)..

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 13, 2007.

* January 5, 2007. Bogotá newspaper *El Espectador* reports that 30 soldiers belonging to the Alta Montana de Fundación battalion (Magdalena Province) complained they were made to continue working under difficult conditions, with poor food and housing, even when they were sick.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 5, 2007.

* January 5, 2007. An Army captain was filmed hitting a corporal with a board from a folding cot. One of the other soldiers filmed the scene with his cell phone and furnished the video to a TV station. Army officials insisted that the blows were part of a bet, all in fun, but the soldier who was hit claimed that it was punishment for a mistake made while he was on watch.

Source: *El País*, Cali, January 5, 2007.



* January 3, 2007. Thirteen soldiers from the Third Brigade (Cauca Province) deserted on December 22, claiming that they had worked under difficult conditions for six days without any food and that they had been denied promised leave. Their commandant denied their charges and placed them under arrest. They face an Army disciplinary procedure and, depending on the results, may face incarceration.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, January 3, 2007.

* December 30, 2006. Nineteen Colombians were extradited to the United States to be tried for drug trafficking and money laundering. One of them was a police major who is accused of using his access to Bogotá's main airport to facilitate the shipment of cocaine to Mexico and from there to the United States. It is alleged that he helped ship 409 kilos of cocaine, worth some \$10 million.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, December 30, 2006.

* December 30, 2006. Two Colombian newspapers printed end-of-year, month-by-month rundowns of Colombian armed forces scandals. They mentioned the 30 soldiers who were tortured as part of their training, the accusation that high officials of the DAS (Colombian FBI) assisted the paramilitaries, the massacre of ten police officers at Jamundi, and a series of events in which soldiers killed civilians and dressed them as guerrillas killed in combat. Details are provided below.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, December 20, 2006 and *El Pais*, Cali, December 29, 2006.

* December 26, 2006. A rancher who helped found the paramilitary organization (designated by the U.S. State Department as a terrorist organization) in the 1980's was interviewed by *El Meridiano de Cordoba* (Cordoba Province). The rancher told reporter William Acero that, after a meeting with military commanders in Medellin, he and other cattlemen met with Fidel Castano, an early organizer of the paramilitaries. He said that when the Colombian Army formed a Mobile Brigade to fight the guerrillas, the paramilitaries worked closely with the armed forces. "We had a common enemy," he said, "so it was inevitable that they would work together."

"The Army covered the backs of the paramilitaries," he continued, "and the paramilitaries did the same for the Army."

Source: *El Meridiano de Cordoba*, Monteria, December 26, 2006

* December 18, 2006. The Chief of Police of the town of San Alberto (Cesar Province) is under arrest for his part in planning the murder by paramilitaries of a mayoral candidate and her 13-year-old daughter on June 21, 2000. A former mayor and the winning candidate, as well as alleged killers, are also under arrest. The murder victim was the leader of the Women's Network in San Alberto.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, December 18, 2006.

* December 18, 2006. The Colombian weekly newsmagazine *Semana* states that 2006 was a "black year" for the Colombian Army. It identifies as the worst events the episode last February where recruits were tortured as part of their training; the incident at Jamundi (Valle Province) on May 22 when soldiers annihilated an elite group of ten U.S.-trained drug police, on orders from drug traffickers; the reports that soldiers from the 4th Brigade regularly killed innocent civilians and presented them to their superiors as guerrillas killed in combat; and the events in August where soldiers set off car bombs, killing one civilian, so that they could claim that they were fighting



guerrillas. There were other incidents. *Semana* suggests that the bad year was caused by too-rapid growth in the Army and a shortage of trained officers.

Source: *Semana*, Bogotá, December 18, 2006.

* December 7, 2006. Two Colombian Army soldiers were sentenced to 13 years in prison for the killing of two civilians on April 2, 2006 in the town of Los Gorros (La Guajira Province). The soldiers lured a young couple to Los Gorros by promising them jobs. Instead they killed them and presented them to their superiors as guerrillas killed in combat.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, December 8, 2006.

* December 5, 2006. A corporal in the Colombian Army was sentenced to 20 years in prison for the rape of a young girl.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, December 5, 2006.

* December 4, 2006. A group of Colombian police officers in Alban (Cundinamarca Province) rented their uniforms and equipment to a criminal gang. The gang used them to set up roadblocks and rob trucks and cars that passed through the roadblocks. The proceeds of the robberies were shared with the police officers. One of the victims told authorities that truck drivers had reported the robberies to the authorities but that nothing had been done. The police officers have been charged with robbery, illegal use of weapons, and illegal use of uniforms and insignia.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, December 4, 2006.

* December 2, 2006. Three farmers were working on their farm near the town of Maracaibo (Santander Province) when there was a firefight between soldiers of the Colombian Army and FARC guerrillas. The three farmers were killed and their bodies were removed by the soldiers to the Battalion Headquarters without the usual investigation required by law. Local residents are suspicious because they have recently filed a complaint about the disappearance of another farmer, apparently killed by soldiers from the Eighth Mobile Brigade.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga (Santander Province) December 2, 2006

* December 1, 2006. Headline: "Seventeen soldiers are killed near Ocana in the fourth major military blunder of this year". *El Tiempo* reports that, because of the commanders' overconfidence, a troop of some 80 soldiers was operating in a mountainous area at night when they were ambushed by FARC guerrillas near Villacaro (Santander Province). Seventeen soldiers were killed, two injured and one is missing. The newspaper identified two previous military blunders:
-April 20, 2006. Apparently because of a strategic error, ten detectives and seven soldiers died when they entered a minefield near Hacari.
-July 31, 2006. Fifteen soldiers were killed when they attempted to de-activate a car bomb on the road between Tibu and La Gabarra. The Army was unaware that the guerrillas controlled the area.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, December 1, 2006.

* November 27, 2006. A noncommissioned officer was killed and two soldiers were injured in a "friendly fire" incident in Venadilio (Tolima province). Two Colombian Army units confronted each other in an operation directed at guerrilla forces.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 28, 2006.



* November 19, 2006. *El Tiempo*, a Bogotá daily paper, reports that Colombian soldiers killed a young family by mistake. The father, mother, and 3-year-old daughter had traveled by motorcycle to the town of Garzon (Huila province). They made arrangements with the priest for the child's baptism and purchased her white dress and shoes. On their way home, soldiers of the 9th Brigade of the Colombian Army killed them. The autopsy disclosed that the father had been hit by 18 bullets, the mother by six and the child by two. They had five other children, now orphans.

The newspaper detailed three other fatal errors by the Colombian Army:

(1) On December 13, 1998, a Colombian Air Force helicopter dropped a bomb on the village of Santo Domingo (Arauca province). Seventeen civilians were killed.

(2) On August 15, 2000, six children who were walking down the road in Pueblo Rico (Antioquia province) were killed by soldiers who mistook them for guerrillas.

(3) On April 10, 2004, soldiers mistakenly shot and killed four farmers and a 6-month-old baby in Potosi (Cajamarca province).

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 21, 2006.

* November 19, 2006. *SEMANA*, a weekly news magazine published in Bogotá, reports that investigators have received evidence that in Barranquilla and Soledad, the paramilitary chieftain had a bribe payroll for Colombian police and members of the Army. The payroll was between 32 and 40 million pesos (about \$20,000) monthly.

The evidence shows that the paramilitaries would receive from the DAS (Colombian version of FBI) a list of names of people who ought to be killed. The lists were detailed, including name, address, telephone, physical description, location of family, etc. The paramilitaries would take the list to police who would carry out the murders. Investigators have found detailed "operations reports" maintained by the paramilitaries. The reports included references to government officials who aided in the killings.

The evidence also indicates that members of the Army alerted the paramilitaries to raids that were planned, and that both the Army and the police collected "debts" for the narcotraffickers.

Source: *Semana*, Bogotá, November 19, 2006

* November 2, 2006. The Free Press Foundation (FLIP is the Spanish acronym.) complained that two police officers forced reporters from the newspaper "El Diario del Otun" (Pereira province) to delete the photos they had taken of the police evicting a vendor from his stand. On October 31, the police were clearing out vendors from a public square when the photos were taken. According to witnesses, several people took photos with their cell phones and they were all forced to delete the photos.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, November 2, 2006.

* October 12, 2006. A judge found three Colombian customs officials guilty of permitting the illegal entry of 3000 machine guns and 5000 packages of ammunition for the paramilitaries.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, October 29, 2006.

* October 22, 2006. Soldiers of the 4th Brigade killed a driver and wounded his passenger, a nun, near Chorritos (Antioquia province). The Army reports that the killing was a mistake.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, October 22, 2006.



* October 21, 2006: Ten police officers in the Uraba region (Antioquia province) were discharged and arrested. They are accused of drug trafficking.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, October 21, 2006.

* October 10, 2006: *El Tiempo*, Colombia's largest newspaper, expresses concern in an editorial that the Colombian Army and Police may be out of the civilian government's control.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, October 10, 2006.

* October 8, 2006: A judge has ordered the arrest of 31 police officers for bribery, falsification of documents and destruction of evidence in a case involving some 400,000 pirated movies. In Colombia, the police are not a local agency as in the United States, but are a branch of the Army.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, October 8, 2006.

* October 5, 2006: The Attorney General of Colombia filed charges of murder and obstruction of justice against four soldiers who killed three labor leaders on August 5, 2005 in the province of Arauca. The Army claimed that the three had opened fire on the soldiers but forensic evidence demonstrated that the dead men had no weapons.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, October 5, 2006.

* October 5, 2006: A representative of a Norwegian NGO told *El Tiempo* that indigenous people in the province of Guaviare are being displaced by the armed conflict and that teenage girls in the indigenous community are being raped and sexually abused by paramilitaries, by guerrillas, and by soldiers of the Colombian Army. The U.S. State Department has declared Colombia's paramilitaries a terrorist group.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 5, 2006

* October 4, 2006: The Observers of Peace and Reconciliation of Eastern Antioquia, a Colombian NGO, complained to the Antioquia representative of Colombia's Interior Ministry that there is still a very close relationship between the Army and the paramilitaries. The spokesman for the organization stated that citizens don't like to see demobilized paramilitaries patrolling right alongside Army soldiers. His organization reported twelve cases of sexual abuse of civilians by Army soldiers.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, October 4, 2006

* October 2, 2006: The bishop of the diocese of Magangué (Bolívar province), along with other members of the community, complains that on September 19, 2006, a young man who was a community leader and a member of the miners union was murdered by soldiers of the Colombian Army, on orders by their commanders.

Source: Communication from the Diocese to Colombia Support Network and Radio Nizkor, October 2, 2006.

* September 28, 2006: U.S. columnist Robert Novak's column criticizes U.S. policymakers for soft-pedaling the Colombian Army's acts of terrorism and murder. He identifies the massacre on May 22 at Jamundi where Colombian soldiers, allegedly paid by a drug lord, murdered 11 of Colombia's anti-drug police.



Novak also identifies the arrest on September 15 of a Colombian Army major for the killing of six innocent people in a fake rescue operation.

Finally, he cited several car bombings in Bogota in August, then alleged to be attacks by the FARC guerrillas. One civilian was killed and ten civilians were wounded. In September it was disclosed that the Army was responsible for the bombings. Each of these three events was reported extensively in the Colombian news media.

Source: *Chicago Sun-Times* and other US newspapers carrying Novak's column, September 28, 2006.

* September 26, 2006: The Army ignores a court order to dismantle trenches it had dug around the town of Toribio (Cauca Province). The citizens dismantle the trenches after a stray explosive kills a 10-year-old child. A citizen told *El Tiempo* that the residents of the community were tired of the soldiers raping women, blocking roads, and stealing food.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 28, 2006,

*September 20, 2006: The Public Prosecutor issued warrants for the arrest of two Colombian Army officers, three noncommissioned officers and nine soldiers for the murder of three persons. The murders took place on October 12, 2005 and February 6, 2004. In each case, civilians were murdered by soldiers who later claimed that the bodies were those of guerrillas killed in combat.

The same news story also refers to another situation where one Army officer, one noncommissioned officer and five soldiers have been arrested for the kidnapping and murder of a civilian and then claiming that he had been fighting as a guerrilla. This occurred on August 29, 2003.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 21, 2006

* August 10, 2006: Three Army officers, fifteen noncommissioned officers and 126 Colombian soldiers were convicted of stealing a large cache of money that had been hidden by the FARC in 2003. They claimed that General Reynaldo Castellano had approved their action. (Castellano was removed in February, 2006 after 21 soldiers were tortured as part of their training. See below.)

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 10, 2006.

* July 1, 2006: The Inter-American Court for Human Rights issued a decision finding that Colombian soldiers had taken part in the massacres by paramilitaries of some 19 people at La Granja and El Aro near Ituango (Antioquia). The paramilitaries destroyed homes and businesses and stole a large number of cattle, besides killing men, women and children. The Court found that the army did nothing to deter the killing and, in fact, took part in it.

Source: Decision Series C. No. 148, Case of *Massacres of Ituango v. Colombia*, dated July 1, 2006, Inter-American Court for Human Rights. This court decision is cited in an article that appeared in *Semana*, a Colombian weekly news magazine on January 14, 2007. The article states that on October 27, 1997, the Colombian Army sent a helicopter to supply the paramilitaries with weapons and ammunition.

* May 16, 2006. Headline: "They led him away in his undershorts and his body was found dressed as a guerrilla". The news story recounts that on February 14, 2006 at 2 AM, one Victor Molina, a campesino in the province of Antioquia, was dragged out of his house in his undershorts,



protesting that there was no warrant for his arrest and he was not guilty of anything. On February 20, his body was found in a grave where members of the 11th Brigade of the Colombian Army had buried him as a guerrilla. He was dressed in camouflage and his bridgework and gold fillings had been removed. He had no bullet wounds and appeared to have been strangled.

This news story contained five other similar examples of civilians being carried off by the Army and later found dead and dressed as guerrillas. Approximately 40 such cases have been discovered this year in the province of Antioquia.

The news story also states that the Minister of Defense will investigate all similar allegations and issue a report no later than July 5, 2006. As far as can be ascertained, no such report has been issued.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, May 16, 2006

* May 10, 2006. A member of the 4th Brigade of the Colombian Army, headquartered in Medellin, admitted that, while there was no official incentive for soldiers who kill or capture a guerrilla, commanders are allowed to give such incentives. He was quoted as saying that some soldiers receive 5 days off for each killing or that they sometimes are rewarded with paid trips. This creates an incentive for soldiers to kill civilians and dress up their bodies as guerrillas killed in combat.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, May 10, 2006.

* May 5, 2006. Headline: "Twenty-four 'disappeared' were presented by the Army as guerrillas killed in combat." The office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the government of the province of Antioquia, the Attorney General, and the government of the City of Medellin complained to the Vice President of Colombia about the number of killings of ordinary citizens by soldiers who later claimed that the victims were guerrillas killed in combat.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, May 6, 2006.

* March 8, 2006: The U.S. State Department Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Colombia finds that there has been "insubordinate military collaboration with paramilitary groups", arbitrary arrests, and that security forces were responsible for unlawful killings. Some of these are detailed in the State Department Report. The Report notes that the Colombian Army is accused of killing and dismembering eight people at San Jose de Apartado. This massacre included one teenager and two young children.

Source: U.S. State Department Country Report on Human Rights, issued March 8, 2006.

* February 21, 2006: The chief of the Colombian army, Gen. Reynaldo Castellano, was removed by President Uribe after press reports that 21 soldiers had been tortured as part of their "training".

Source: *El Pais*, Coli February 21, 2006.

* January 31, 2006: The Inter-American Court for Human Rights, in the case of the Pueblo Bello (Cordoba Province) Massacre, issued a decision finding that the Colombian Army was guilty of omission, acquiescence, and collaboration in a massacre by paramilitaries that resulted in 6 deaths and 37 "disappearances". The massacre took place in January 1990.

Source: Decision in *Case of the Massacre at Pueblo Bello v Colombia*, dated January 31, 2006.



* September 15, 2005: The Inter-American Court for Human Rights issued a decision in the case of *Massacre at Mapiripán v Colombia*. The Court found the Colombian Army guilty of aiding paramilitaries who massacred 49 people at Mapiripán (Meta province). The paramilitaries tortured and killed them, dismembered the bodies and threw them in the river. The Army's assistance included allowing the paramilitaries to use a military airport to land troops, transporting paramilitary troops in Army trucks, furnishing supplies, equipment and communications, and ordering Army troops away from the location so that the massacre could be carried out. The Court also found that the Colombian Army failed to cooperate with authorities by obstructing the investigation.

Source: Inter-American Court for Human Rights decision, *Case of Massacre at Mapiripán v Colombia*, Serie C, No. 122, dated September 15, 2005.

* The 1997 Human Rights Report by the U.S. State Department stated “... Government and military officials give credence to reports of isolated killings during the year conducted by at least one army unit, the 20th Intelligence Brigade.” ***General Nelson Freddy Padilla, who headed the 20th Brigade at that time, was appointed chief of Colombia's armed forces in August 2006.***