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

Colombian ex-President Alvaro Uribe's policy of democratic security was based on building confidence in public institutions. That is as it should be, and many millions in U.S. taxpayer dollars have supported and continue to support the policy. Unfortunately, the Colombian institution that has received most of the U.S. millions, (more than \$8 billion to date) 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 an outline that dates back to 2006. It covers 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>.

* February 5, 2012. Colombia's Minister of Interior, German Vargas Lleras, complains that members of the Colombian National Police are aiding criminal gangs. Juan Carlos Pinzon, Minister of Defense, insists that every such allegation will be investigated and corrective measures taken.

Source: *Vanguardia*, Bucaramanga, February 5, 2012.

* February 5, 2012. Colombian animal rights groups complain about photos showing Colombian Navy sailors apparently eating live animals and others showing the sailors roasting a live dog on a grill. Military authorities promise to investigate.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, *RCN Radio*, and *El Espectador*, Bogota, February 5, 2012.

* February 2, 2012. Retired Colombian Army General Rafael Alberto Neira, former commandant of the Army's 18th Brigade, testifying in the trial of 2d Lt. Raul Munoz Linares for sexual assault of two young girls, and the murder of one of the girls and her two young brothers in October 2010, stated that when he asked his men for information, two of them told him that, after the first sexual assault, the mother of the victim came to the headquarters to complain. Apparently nothing was done to investigate the complaint. The General's records also showed that witnesses had seen the defendant leave the encampment with his rifle and a machete and return, agitated and sweaty and demanding an immediate haircut. The General's testimony is in



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addition to physical evidence showing that the defendant's semen was found on the dead girl's body.

Source: *Semana*, and Attorney General's web site, Bogota, February 2, 2012.

* January 28, 2012. A Colombian Army noncommissioned officer, retired, has been arrested and charged with bribery. Prosecutors allege that he and a civilian demanded money in exchange for the processing of government document in Manizales (Caldas Province) early in 2010. Authorities are investigating other similar instances.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, January 28, 2012.

* January 28, 2012. Diego Fernando Murillo Bejarano, alias "Don Berna", convicted drug trafficker and paramilitary commander, testifying under oath from his prison in the United States, asserted that Captains Fernando Tabares and Jorge Alberto Lagos, chiefs of intelligence and counterintelligence at the DAS (Colombian FBI) met regularly with paramilitary commanders in 2005 and provided them with protection and assistance. "The DAS was almost in the service of the paramilitaries", he said, stating that the DAS gave them bodyguards, facilitated movements and gave them information.

Source: *Semana*, Bogota, January 28, 2012.

* January 24, 2012. Four Colombian National Police Officers have been jailed after prosecutors charged that they failed to report their capture of a large cache of cocaine in Medellin. They have admitted to the offense and returned part of the cocaine. They are accused of aggravated drug trafficking, filing a false complaint, and abuse of authority. A civilian alleged to be the owner of the cache is charged with drug trafficking.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, January 24, 2010 and Attorney General's web site, January 23, 2012

* January 13, 2012. Four Colombian Army soldiers and one noncommissioned officer, all now retired, have been formally charged with taking part in the disappearance and murder of five men, three women, and a child on February 23 and March 1, 2006. . The defendants presented the bodies of five of the victims as guerrillas killed in combat in a rural area of Aracataca (Magdalena Province). Remains of the others have not been found. The defendants are charged with aggravated kidnapping, torture, homicide, forced disappearance and criminal conspiracy.

Source: *El Espectador*, *Caracol Radio*, and Attorney General's web site, Bogota, January 13, 2012.

* January 13, 2012. Colombia's Supreme Judicial Council has decided that the murder charge against a Colombian Police Officer who killed his fiancé must be heard in civilian



courts, since it was not committed “in the line of duty” and thus is not eligible to be heard in a military court.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, January 13, 2012.

* January 13, 2012. Retired General Mario Montoya Uribe, former Commander of the Colombian Army, in a three-hour interrogation by officials of the Supreme Court, denied that he had collaborated with paramilitaries in return for money. Montoya is also facing two other charges, including a charge that in 2006 he hired street people to pretend that they were guerrillas surrendering to his forces.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, and *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, January 13, 2012, *RCN Radio*, Bogota, January 12, 2012, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, January 11, 2012.

* January 12, 2012. Retired General Mario Montoya Uribe, former Commander of the Colombian Army, is scheduled to respond to charges by demobilized paramilitary commanders that he worked with them in a bloody “clean-up” of alleged guerrillas in Medellin in 2002. He was then commander of the Army’s Fourth Brigade in Medellin. Another demobilized paramilitary commander has testified that he paid Gen. Montoya 1,500 million pesos (about \$750,000) to help him defeat an internal rival. Some of his former subordinates, a captain and three colonels, have also alleged that Montoya knew about paramilitaries working with the Army in the 2005 massacre of eight (8) people in San Jose de Apartado.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Semana*, Bogota, January 12, 2012.

* January 11, 2012. *Semana*’s *verdadabierta.com* section offered more evidence of General Montoya’s connections with the paramilitaries. *Semana* reports, along with the other claims, that the Centaurs Bloc of the paramilitaries gave Montoya 500 million pesos (about \$250,000) in 2004 and that deceased paramilitary leader Miguel Arroyave gave him an apartment worth 400 million pesos (about \$200,000). Another demobilized paramilitary commander claimed that General Montoya helped his group in Antioquia Province and that he was on the payroll of a criminal group based in Medellin. Finally, extradited paramilitary alias “Diomedes”, testifying from the United States, stated that in April 2002 Montoya had personally delivered seven rifles and a van to his troops.

Source: *Semana*’s *verdadabierta.com*, January 11, 2012.

* January 11, 2012. Colombian Army Lt. Marco Fabian Garcia Cespedes has been sentenced to 22 years in prison for ordering the murder of a farmer in the town of Tamara (Casanare Province) in December 2006. The victim was first dressed in a Colombian Police uniform, then killed and his body presented as a guerrilla killed in combat. The defendant was convicted of homicide and falsifying a public document. The court also ordered an



investigation of the responsibility of General Henry William Torres Escalante and Colonel Carlos Alirio Buitrago Bedoya of the Army's Fifth Division in connection with the murder.



Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, January 11, 2012, and Attorney General's web site, Bogota, January 10, 2012.

* January 11, 2012. Two Bogota police officers have been arrested and charged with drug trafficking, preparing and carrying illegal drugs and falsifying public documents. Prosecutors allege that on March 2, 2010, the two attempted to place illegal drugs with a street vendor in Bogota.

Source: *Radio Santa Fe* and Attorney General's web site, January 11, 2012.

* January 10, 2012. Three Colombian Army soldiers have been charged with murder in the deaths of two farmers, Saul Ortiz Munoz and Danilo Yepes Pineda, on March 22, 2006 in the town of Bruselas (Huila Province). Their bodies, accompanied by a pistol and a revolver, were presented as guerrillas killed in combat. An investigation revealed that there had been no combat and one of the guns was inoperable.

Source: *Caracol News* and Attorney General's web site, Bogota, January 10, 2012.

* January 10, 2012. Colombia's highest administrative court, the Council of State, has ordered the Colombian government to pay 570 million pesos (about \$318,000) in damages to the families of two young men from Medellin who were killed and two others who were injured by Colombian National Police. On August 15, 1992, the four were stopped by Police in Medellin, beaten up, tied up, and taken to be shot. Two of them were badly injured but managed to escape. The two survivors were later murdered by hit men. A military court absolved the Police who took part in the murders. The Council ordered the Police to make a public apology, to publish the decision, and to accept it formally in a proceeding by top Police officials. The Council also determined that the action was a crime against humanity and thus could be prosecuted criminally in spite of the statute of limitations.

The Council also imposed a similar order against the Colombian Army. It found that on May 21, 1994, seized a restaurant owner, tied him up and killed him, later presenting his body as guerrilla killed in combat. This crime will also be turned over to prosecutors for criminal proceedings.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, January 10, 2012.

* January 8, 2012. Two Colombian Highway Patrolmen in Magdalena Province have been charged with extortion after they demanded 15 million pesos (about \$8,000) from a truck driver who was stopped at a checkpoint. They accused the driver of transporting contraband. When the driver stated that he did not have the money, the defendants said that he could have until the end of the week to pay the money and retrieve his documents.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, January 8, 2012

* January 7, 2012. Colombian Army Colonel Oscar Orlando Gomez Cifuentes is accused of killing street people and stealing corpses from a cemetery in order to convince authorities that he had killed the second in command of paramilitary commander and drug trafficker alias “Cuchillo” (“The Knife”). Prosecutors claim that he faked an armed confrontation and claimed to have killed Dumar de Jesus Guerrero, “Cuchillo”’s second in command. One of his soldiers revealed the scheme.



Source: *Noticias Uno*, Bogota, January 7, 2012.

* January 6, 2012. Colombian Army Lt. Col. Oscar Orlando Gomez Cifuentes has been bound over for trial in the case of two “false positives” in Vichada Province in December 2006. He is charged with homicide, criminal conspiracy, and falsifying a public document. Under his command, civilians John Jairo Rodriguez and Mauricio Alvarez Aza were killed and their bodies presented as “guerrillas killed in combat”. An investigation showed that there had not been any combat. Retired Capt. Jair Arturo Aguilar Restrepo and five soldiers are also being investigated in the incident.

Source: *El Espectador*, *Caracol Radio*, and Attorney General’s web site, Bogota, January 6, 2012.

* January 6, 2012. Retired Colombian National Police Col. Alfonso Rueda Celis has been charged with malfeasance in office after prosecutors found that, while he was in charge of National Police funds, he demanded damages from a contractor whose work had been completed and accepted. The Attorney General’s Office is investigating his activities in relation to two other contracts.

Source: *El Espectador*, January 6, 2012.

* January 5, 2012. Colombia’s Supreme Judicial Council has referred two possible “false positive” killings to prosecutors. Two Colombian Army soldiers killed two men in a rural area of La Uribe (Meta Province). The soldiers claimed that the two victims were “guerrillas killed in combat” and that one of them had attacked them with an AK-47. The Council found insufficient evidence to conclude that the two were guerrillas. Neighbors testified that at least one of them was a day laborer from the community.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, January 5, 2012.

* January 4, 2012. After a confession and a plea agreement, Colombian Army Lt. Col. Luis Fernando Borja has been sentenced to 21 years and 8 months in prison for the disappearance and subsequent murder of ten men. Their deaths were reported as criminals killed in combat. This is the fourth time that Lt. Col. Borja has been convicted and sentenced for similar actions. He has previously received prison sentences of 21, 23, and 25 years in separate cases. The evidence showed that between July and August of 2007, ten young men from Toluviejo (Sucre Province) were promised nonexistent ranch jobs. Instead they were killed by Army soldiers and reported as “criminals killed in combat.” Prosecutors showed that there was no combat.

Last July Borja was sentenced to 21 years in prison for the murder of two men on the Caribbean coast in November 2007, and at the end of August he was sentenced to 23 years for killing a man and reporting falsely that he was a “guerrilla killed in combat.” In September he was sentenced to 25 years for killing a young farmer in a town in Sucre Province. The Attorney General’s Office has received evidence that more than 2,700 Colombians have been murdered and their bodies presented as “guerrillas killed in combat.”



Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, January 4, 2012.

* January 4, 2012. Twelve Colombian soldiers have been indicted for murder in the deaths of two farmers on October 5, 2007 in a rural area of Montelibano (Cordoba Province). Troops from the Colombian Army’s 11th Brigade reported that two alleged extortionists had been killed in combat. The evidence showed that the two victims were local farmers who had been murdered by the soldiers. Captain Hernan Aguinaga Zapata and Corp. Juan Dario Barragan Rodriguez have also been arrested and charged with taking part in the killing.

Source: *Semana*, *El Tiempo*, and Attorney General’s web site, Bogota, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, January 4, 2012.

* January 4, 2012. Colombia’s Attorney General has filed formal charges against imprisoned paramilitary commander Henry Loaiza Ceballos, alias “El Alacran” (“The Scorpion”) for his responsibility in the kidnapping, displacement, and murder of 45 people in the massacre at Trujillo in 1990. Colombia’s National Commission for Reparation and Reconciliation (CNRR) states in a report that soldiers, police, drug traffickers and guerrillas took part in the massacre. Loaiza has been in prison since 1995, serving a sentence for criminal conspiracy and theft by fraud.

Source: *Semana* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, January 4, 2012.

* January 2, 2012. A Colombian Army officer, a noncommissioned officer and three soldiers have been arrested and charged in the deaths of two teen-aged boys between March 22 and March 23, 2011 in Vistahermosa (Meta Province). The soldiers reported the two victims as “guerrillas killed in combat”, but prosecutors allege that there was no combat and the two boys, aged 15 and 16 years, were farm laborers.

The Attorney General’s Human Rights Unit reports that it is conducting 8,295 investigations of human rights violations, and that 1,598 of those incidents involve homicides possibly committed by Colombian armed forces.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, January 2, 2012.

* December 29, 2011. Fifteen Colombian Army soldiers attached to the Army’s 11th Brigade have been arrested and charged in the deaths of two civilians, Luis Armando Penas Grandeth and Eduardo Enrique Urango Pineres, on December 16, 2007. The soldiers claimed that the two victims were extortionists killed in combat. Prosecutors do not believe there was

any combat. The soldiers will be charged with homicide, falsifying a public document and destroying a public document.

Source: *Caracol Radio* and Attorney General's web site, Bogota, December 29, 2011.



* December 28, 2011. An Associated Press story carried in *The Washington Post* reports that seven Colombian soldiers have been charged with killing a soldier who had deserted from their unit in 2006 and reporting him as a “guerrilla killed in combat” in Majagual (Sucre Province). Prosecutors reported earlier in the year that at least 368 soldiers and police officers have been convicted and an additional 700 face charges of “false positives”.

Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., *El Espectador* and Attorney General's web site, Bogota, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, December 28, 2011.

* December 28, 2011. Two Colombian Army soldiers, Dairo Jose Palomino Ballesteros and Sgt. Sandro Mauricio Perez, under investigation for their part in the Soacha (Cundinamarca Province) “false positive” scandal, have apparently fled to Venezuela. They are being sought in connection with the death of Farid Leonardo Porras Bernal, whose body they presented as a “guerrilla killed in combat”. They were assigned to the Army's 15th Mobile Brigade, headquartered in Ocana (Norte de Santander Province). A “recruiter” hired by the Army to recruit young men from Soacha for nonexistent jobs so that soldiers could kill them and present their bodies as “guerrillas killed combat” has testified that the two fugitives were involved in this and other “false positive” killings.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, *RCN Radio*, and *El Espectador*, Bogota, December 28, 2011.

* December 28, 2011. A former paramilitary, Edilson Antonio Cardona Ramirez, alias “Sapa Armado” (“Toad with a Weapon”) has entered into a plea bargain, accepting a sentence of 20 years in prison and confessing that he took part in the Pueblo Bello (Antioquia Province) massacre of 43 farmers on January 14, 1990 in Valencia (Cordoba Province). The defendant testified that after the massacre, the paramilitaries passed through two Colombian Army (18th Brigade) checkpoints without being stopped or questioned.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, December 28, 2011.

* December 27, 2011. A Colombian Army noncommissioned officer and five soldiers have been arrested and charged with homicide in the death of a civilian, Damian Romana, on September 21, 2007 in Aguazul (Casanare Province). In their report, they stated that the victim, dressed in civilian clothes, had attacked them with a 38 caliber revolver. An investigation showed that there had been no attack and that Roman was known locally as a farmer who also did some fishing.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, December 27, 2011.

* December 27, 2011. Colombia's highest administrative court, the Council of State, has ordered the case against six National Police officers who killed two teenagers to be re-opened.

On August 14, 1992, the six officers stopped the teenage boys, beat them, tied their hands, and told them they would be taken to police headquarters. One of the boys was able to escape, but the police shot the other three. Two died and one survived, though badly injured. A military court found the police not guilty and a civil suit was dismissed. The Council of State ordered the Colombian government to pay the survivors 550 million pesos (about \$300,000) and ordered the Attorney General's office to open a criminal investigation.



Source: *Semana*, Bogota, December 27, 2011.

* December 23, 2011. Fifteen Colombian Army soldiers have been sentenced to prison for killing five young civilians on December 20, 2006 in El Totumo, near Ibague (Tolima Province). The major who commanded the patrol was sentenced to 26 years and the lieutenant, two corporals and the other soldiers were sentenced to 25 years. According to the evidence, the patrol presented five bodies as members of an illegal armed group killed in combat. Prosecutors showed that the young men were part of a soccer team travelling to an outing. The Attorney General's Human Rights unit reported in November that it is carrying out 8,295 investigations of violations of fundamental human rights, including 1,598 violations by representatives of the Colombian government.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, December 23, 2011.

* December 22, 2011. Jose Miguel Narvaez, the former deputy director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) and seven former DAS officials are being investigated for charges of aggravated psychological torture for their actions in stalking and threatening a journalist, Claudia Julieta Duque Orrego. Narvaez is also under investigation for the illegal wiretapping carried out by the DAS and his connection to the assassinations of Congressman Manuel Cepeda Vargas and journalist Jaime Garzon.

Source: *El Espectador* and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, December 22, 2011.

* December 22, 2011. A Colombian infantry colonel, Henry Mauricio Rodriguez Botero, assigned to course work in Montevideo, Uruguay, in preparation for promotion to general, has been arrested and charged with torture and aggravated homicide in the torture and death of a young man in San Cristobal (Bolívar Province) on June 1, 1992. In spite of the fact that the victim's mother was able to identify several of the soldiers who took part in the torture, a Colombian military court dismissed the case. The case has been the subject of a complaint before the Inter-American Court for Human Rights and twelve other soldiers have been arrested and charged.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, December 22, 2011.

* December 10, 2011. Colombia's Inspector General has ordered the discharge of three Colombian Army soldiers after finding that the three murdered a farmer in Labranzagrande

(Boyaca Province) on May 25, 2006. They have confessed that after killing him they told his mother that he had been killed in combat.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, December 10, 2011.

* December 8, 2011. A Colombian Army colonel and a colonel in the Colombian National Police, along with five other soldiers are charged with criminal conspiracy, drug trafficking and theft after authorities discovered that they were on the payroll of the criminal gangs they were supposed to fight. Prosecutors allege that they were protecting drug operations and informing drug traffickers of army and police operations and that they received money from the gangs.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, December 8, 2011.

* December 7, 2011. A recently demobilized paramilitary commander, Jorge Umberto Victoria, alias “Raul” or “Captain Victoria”, making his confession under the Justice and Peace Law, describes the connection between the Colombian military and the massacre at Mapiripan (Meta Province). Victoria served in the Colombian Army from 1974 until 1987, reaching the rank of captain. He was important in building the relationship between the Army and the paramilitaries.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Semana's www.verdadabierta.com*, Bogota, December 7, 2011.

* December 2, 2011. A witness in the prosecution of Colombian Army 2d Lt. Raul Munoz Linares for the sexual assault and murder of young children in Tame (Arauca Province) in October 2010 complains that lawyers for Munoz have tried to bribe him to disappear or change his story. A number of soldiers in his unit have testified as to the dates and times he was absent from duty, and the fact that he returned sweaty and dirty.

Source: *Semana* and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, December 2, 2011.

* December 1, 2011.

* October 21, 2011. Citizens have filed complaints against Colombian National Police for roughing them up in the effort to find a young girl kidnapped by the guerrillas. Farmers Angel Miguel Garcia and Maria Nelly Benavides complained that police landed a helicopter in the town of Muriba (Arauca Province) and burst into the home where Garcia and Benavides lived with two young children, aged six and ten. They tied the children up. Garcia's injuries required hospitalization. The Police apparently believed that the kidnapped girl was being held in the home. She was later found at another location.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 21, 2011.

* October 19, 2011. Retired Colombian National Police Captain Felipe Mantilla Barbosa is being investigated for the crimes of aggravated homicide and attempted aggravated homicide in the assassination of presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galan Sarmiento on August 18,



1980 in Soacha (Cundinamarca Province). At that time Mantilla Barbosa was the National Police Commander in the Soacha District. The Minister of Justice at that time, Alberto Santofimio Botero has been sentenced to 24 years in prison for the killing.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 19, 2011.

* October 18, 2011. *Semana's verdadabierta.com* provides a history of paramilitary conquest in Atlantico Province in 2003-2006. They sent a former Colombian Army Major, Jose Pablo Diaz. When he was murdered, they sent a former Captain, Edgar Ignacio Fierro. According to the Inspector General's Office, murders immediately increased in the region. The paramilitaries used a retired Colombian National Police officer, Miguel Villareal Archila, alias "Don Antonio", to control the drug traffic between Barranquilla and Cartagena. Between 2003 and 2006, they were able to transit more than 100 tons of cocaine, with the help of the Atlantico Province police, who charged for the service.

When "Don Antonio" was captured in 2006, his computer revealed that the paramilitaries and drug traffickers used DAS (Colombian FBI) and police sources to identify journalists and labor leaders to be killed.

* October 16, 2011. *Caracol Radio* quotes *Semana.com* as revealing that numerous members of the DAS (Colombian FBI) have been involved in criminal activity. Some DAS officials helped planning attacks on German Vargas Lleras and "emerald czar" Victor Carranza. In other cases, DAS agents trained paramilitaries in handling explosives. They also reported to paramilitaries on DAS operations.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, October 16, 2011.

* October 16, 2011. The former Colombian National Police commander in Narino Province, Colonel William Montezuma, has been indicted for the disappearance and murder of a subordinate, 2d Lieutenant Luis Antonio Mora Chaustre. A witness has testified that Montezuma ordered Mora killed because he knew all about his illegal operations.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 16, 2011.

* October 14, 2011. Colombian Army Lieutenant Julio Valencia Salazar and soldier Jose Alirio Barinas Merchan have been convicted of homicide and sentenced to 24 years in prison for the killing of two civilians, one of them a child, on June 22 and July 18, 2004. They presented the victims' bodies as "guerrillas killed in combat."

Source: *Caracol Radio* and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 14, 2011 and *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 13, 2011.

* October 14, 2011. Two Colombian Army officers and a member of the Marine Corps have been arrested and charged with kidnapping. Prosecutors allege that on August 23, 2010, they

burst into a home and dragged a farmer, Rito Marcial Payan Salazar, into a boat and took him to a swamp where they tied him up and threatened him because they thought he knew the whereabouts of a submarine and some drugs.

Source: Attorney General's web site, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, October 14, 2011.



* October 12, 2011. A Colombian police patrolman, Wilmer Antonio Alarcon, is being investigated for shooting a young man who was painting graffiti, Diego Felipe Becerra. The Attorney General's Office has announced that Patrolman Alarcon will be tried by the military justice system, because the shooting was "part of his service". According to the Attorney General, this is required by Colombia's constitution. His defense attorney argues that Becerra was killed "in a crossfire".

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 12, 2011 and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 13, 2011.

* October 12, 2011. Ten Colombian Army soldiers, including a captain, three noncommissioned officers, and six soldiers, have been accused of kidnapping and murdering two civilians on March 22, 2006 and presenting their bodies as "guerrillas killed in combat". According to the investigation, alleged paramilitaries kidnapped Arcadio Torres Pena and Rosendo Holguin Bohorquez from their home in the town of Alto Cafre in Meta Province and their bodies were presented the next day. The defendants are being held in a military installation.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Espectador*, Bogota, *El Mundo*, Medellin, October 11, 2011 and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 12, 2011.

* October 12, 2011. All fourteen of Bogota's specialized judges have failed to pass an exam they must pass in order to retain their positions. The result will be significant delay in complicated cases such as illegal spying and wiretapping by the DAS (Colombian FBI) and the numerous charges of "false positives". Replacement judges have to read files that may contain thousands of pages, including the case against retired General Rito Alejo del Rio, who is accused of working with paramilitaries in terrorism and drug trafficking. Prosecutors fear that some of the accused may be freed by the expiration of the statute of limitations.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 12, 2011.

* October 12, 2011. A new autopsy reveals that Colombian Supreme Court Justice Carlos Horacio Uran, who was claimed to have died in the combat when the Army retook the Palace of Justice in 1989, actually suffered two bullet wounds in his head and that one of them was at close range, suggesting that he was executed. The remains also showed some signs of torture. In 2007, his wallet was found in a secret storage place in an Army installation. Next to the wallet was a list of supposed "guerrillas killed in the combat". Uran's name and that

of another justice appeared on the list. A report issued in 2009 established that Uran left the building alive, in the custody of soldiers.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 12, 2011.

* October 11, 2011. Two Colombian Army soldiers who were off duty were caught in the act of murdering a bus driver in Valle del Guamuez (Putumayo Province).

Source: *El Espectador* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, October 11, 2011.

* October 10, 2011. Retired Colombian Army General Miguel Maza Marquez will go to trial on charges of aggravated homicide for terrorist purposes and attempted homicide for terrorist purposes in the assassination of presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galan Sarmiento on August 18, 1989 in Soacha (Cundinamarca Province). A Bogota judge denied a defense motion to dismiss the charges, ruling that the assassination was a crime against humanity, so that the statute of limitations does not apply. The current commander of the Colombian National Police, General Oscar Naranjo, is expected to be a witness at the trial.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 10, 2011, and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, October 11, 2011.

* October 10, 2011. Newsweekly *Semana* reveals that retired Colombian Army Colonel Hernan Orozco, who was sentenced to 40 years in prison for failing his duty to protect civilians in the massacre at Mapiripan (Meta Province) in July, 1997, is living in Florida and working as a security guard. It appears that Colombia has yet to institute proceedings for his return.

Source: *Semana*, Bogota, October 10, 2011.

* October 10, 2011. Two intoxicated off duty Colombian police officers exploded a grenade in the Suba Bilbao neighborhood in Bogota. Neighbors complained that the police frequently make trouble and behave badly.

Source: *El Espectador* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, October 10, 2010.

* October 8, 2011. A Colombian National Police officer, a noncommissioned officer, and three former officers were arrested and charged with aggravated forced disappearance in the disappearance of a rancher, Isaac Galeano Arango on December 7, 2000, in Calarca (Quindio Province). Police were interviewing Galeano Arango in regard to a complaint of extortion, and he was never seen again. His whereabouts are still unknown.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, October 8, 2011.

* October 8, 2011. According to recent confessions, Colombia's Armed Forces committed "every kind of crime" in the province of Cordoba. Captain Antonio Roza Valbuena, an expert in combat and counterinsurgency operations confessed to prosecutors the violent crimes he



and other officers committed in Cordoba in 2006 and 2007 because “the more kills a unit reported, the better it would be graded and the commanders would get overseas trips and the subordinates would be rewarded”.



Rozo confessed that in March of 2006, when President Uribe was vacationing at a farm near Sabanal, they killed five people on the order of Major Oscar Alberto Acuna, so that the unit would “stand out”. Later they killed more, but there were complaints of human rights violations and the U.S. Embassy cut off funding. According to Rozo, if they did not have kills, they would be relieved of their command, and that they had a lot of “false positives” because without numbers of kills, they would never be promoted. Rozo said that an officer named Ramirez received a medal for reporting 54 kills, most of which were “false positives”. He gave prosecutors a list of members of the Armed Forces, including Col. Javier Fernandez Leal, who took part in the crimes.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 8 and October 13, 2011.

* October 6, 2011. While the Colombian Congress debates judicial reform including “military privilege”, a number of military officers who are under investigation argue in favor of the privilege. Retired Col. Edilberto Sanchez Rubiano, who is charged with “disappearing” civilians when the Army retook the Palace of Justice in 1985, argues that soldiers ought to be judged by military judges who “are familiar with the rules that apply in this area”. Retired General Rito Alejo del Rio, former commander of the 17th Brigade, charged with aggravated homicide in the murder of a farmer, argues that military success can’t be guaranteed without the “military privilege”.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 6, 2011 and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, October 4, 2011.

* October 5, 2011. Both the Attorney General and the Inspector General of Colombia have urged a court to find retired General Rito Alejo del Rio guilty in the murder of a farmer, Marino Lopez Mena in Riosucio (Choco Province) on February 27, 1997. Lopez was killed and cut in pieces by paramilitaries acting along with troops from the 17th Brigade, commanded by General Alejo del Rio. Prosecutors argue that what happened to Lopez was intended to frighten local farmers and get them to leave their land. The General is also being investigated for criminal conspiracy and aiding paramilitaries.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, *Semana*, *Semana’s verdadabierta.com*, *Caracol Radio*, *El Tiempo*, Bogota, *El Mundo*, Medellin, and *Vanguardia*, Bucaramanga, October 5, 2011.

* October 5, 2011. The neighbor who discovered the grave of the three children allegedly murdered by Lt. Raul Munoz in Tame (Arauca Province) complains that the community is “in panic” because of threats against witnesses. The children’s father complained that he was threatened by soldiers when he first went to complain to them that his children were missing.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 5 and 6, 2011, and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 6, 2011.

* October 4, 2011. A Colombian soldier, Jose Alexander Gomez Lozano, was killed in mysterious circumstances after being threatened by a group of soldiers from his batallion. The Army first reported that he was killed in action against the guerrillas, but he may have been killed by friendly fire.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Valle, October 4, 2011.



* October 4, 2011. Two Colombian Army soldiers attached to the 30th Brigade, headquartered in Norte de Santander Province, were captured while selling weapons to the guerrillas. Their capture raises to eight the number of soldiers attached to this unit who have been charged with selling weapons and equipment to the guerrillas.

Source: *El Espectador* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, October 4, 2011.

* October 4, 2011. Newsweekly *Semana* has won the Simon Bolivar award for its investigation and reporting about the abuses at the military prison at Tolemaida. *Semana* revealed that military prisoners who had been convicted of violent crimes were allowed to conduct lucrative businesses, to come and go as they pleased, and to have parties with guests, liquor, and prostitutes.

Source: *Semana*, October 4, 2011.

* October 3, 2011. A former Colombian Minister of Defense, Jorge Alberto Uribe, and two Generals, Reynaldo Castellanos and Carlos Alberto Ospina, have been ordered to make statements as to why they permitted Army troops to take part in the February 21, 2005 massacre at San Jose de Apartado. The statements will be part of the case against General Hector Jaime Fandino, former commander of the 17th Brigade and Colonel Nestor Ivan Duque Lopez. Captain Guillermo Armando Gordillo has already pleaded guilty to homicide and aggravated criminal conspiracy and received a reduced sentence of 20 years in prison in return for his testimony.

Source: *El Espectador* and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, *El Mundo*, Medellin, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, October 3, 2011.

* October 3, 2011. Colombian Army Colonel Julian Villate Leal, Major Marco Fidel Rivera and Major Hugo Abondano Mikan, all retired, have been arrested and charged with aggravated criminal conspiracy. Prosecutors allege that in 2004 they took part in the so-called Operation Dragon which consisted “in carrying out clandestine actions against the lives and physical integrity” of trade unionists, a Senator, and a human rights official.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, *El Espectador*, and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, *El Herald*, Barranquilla, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, October 3, 2011.

* October 3, 2011. Six members of a criminal gang have been convicted of aggravated criminal conspiracy, illegal fabrication and use of weapons and aggravated homicide and one of the defendants is an officer in the Colombian National Police, John Jairo Rosas Carrascal.

He has been sentenced to 28 years in prison. The evidence showed that Rosas Carrascal was in charge of notifying gang members of police operations.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 3, 2011.

* October 3, 2011. The Attorney General's Justice and Peace Unit reports that it is investigating 4,131 ex-paramilitaries and 503 former guerrillas for human rights violations, and that, based on the confessions of ex-paramilitaries, it is investigating 505 police and members of the military.

* September 26, 2011. A Colombian prosecutor is traveling to the Colombian consulate in Montevideo to take a sworn statement from Army Colonel Henry Mauricio Rodriguez Botero. Col. Rodriguez Botero is being investigated for his part in the abduction, torture and murder of a civilian, Omar Zuniga, 19 years ago in San Jacinto (Bolívar Province). Zuniga's 70-year-old mother witnessed the torture and saw four soldiers dress her son in camouflage and take him away. She was told that if she said anything, she would be killed. In spite of that, she went to Brigade headquarters and identified the soldiers she had seen torture her son, but nothing was done. The Attorney General's Office is now investigating and Col. Rodriguez Botero must give a statement because he was the commander of the patrol that abducted, tortured and killed Zuniga.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 26, 2011.

* September 24, 2011. After a year and a half of investigation, the Attorney General's Office has captured members of a drug trafficking gang that operated in Armenia, Cali, and Palmira (Valle Province), Popayan, Balboa, El Bordo and Marcella (Cauca Province, Santa Marta (Magdalena Province) and Pasto (Nariño Province). Four Police officers were among the 23 gang members arrested.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 24, 2011.

* September 23, 2011. Colombia's Supreme Court has denied a defense motion for the recusal of two justices in the ongoing criminal prosecution of DAS (Colombian FBI) official Maria del Pilar Hurtado and ex-President Uribe's chief of staff Bernardo Moreno for illegal spying and wiretapping by DAS agents. The defense alleged that the two justices should recuse themselves because the justices who had assigned them to the case were victims of DAS spying and wiretapping. The Court set a hearing for September 27. The two defendants are charged with criminal conspiracy, illegal wiretapping, and abuse of public office. Hurtado has sought asylum in Panama. She is also charged with appropriation of public funds and falsifying public documents.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 23, 2011.

* September 22, 2011. Colombian Senator Juan Manuel Galan has demanded investigation of a report that DAS (Colombian FBI) agents not only spied on members of Congress,



but infiltrated their staffs. He has threatened to file a complaint with the International Parliamentary Union.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 22, 2011.

* September 21, 2011. A former Colombian Army soldier, John Jairo Munoz, has been arrested and charged with homicide in the death of Ober Oyuela Devia, a 15-year-old farm boy on December 8, 2006. According to prosecutors, Oyuela Devia was travelling on a raft on the Caqueta River, carrying a load of milk. Soldiers stopped him on his way to Mononguete (Caqueta Province). They dressed him in camouflage, killed him, and then reported him as a “guerrilla killed in combat”.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, September 20, 2011 and *El Mundo*, Medellin, September 21, 2011.

* September 21, 2011. The Inter-American Court for Human Rights has informed the Colombian government that it will hear the case brought by the families of the civilians killed in the bombing and strafing of a village, Santo Domingo (Arauca Province) on December 13, 1998. The families allege that the government was responsible for the bombing by the Colombian Air Force in which 17 people were killed, including six children, and 27 people were seriously injured. They also claim that cluster bombs, prohibited by international law, were used. A pilot and copilot have been sentenced to 30 years in prison for their actions.

Source: *El Espectador* and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 21, 2011.

* September 17, 2011. Three forensic experts from the Colombian Attorney General’s forensic medicine unit have testified that the DNA of Colombian Army Lt. Raul Munoz was found on the body and the clothing of the little girl that he is alleged to have raped and killed. He is also on trial for killing the girl’s two younger brothers and covering their bodies with dirt and brush.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Semana*, Bogota, September 17, 2011.

* September 17, 2011. Nine Colombian Army soldiers, three officers, one noncommissioned officer, and five soldiers, have been found guilty of aggravated homicide. Prosecutors offered evidence that on January 14, 2007, they fired on four occupants of a taxi in Cali. The defendants claimed that the four victims were kidnappers, but the investigation showed that they were civilians, ordinary citizens, with no connection to or participation in any criminal gang. The defendants’ commanding officer, Major Mauricio Ordonez Galindo is a fugitive, not in custody.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 17, 2011.

* September 17, 2011. Colombian newsweekly *Semana* reports that the DAS (Colombian FBI), which will soon be disbanded after an illegal spying and wiretapping scandal, has lost control of its files and they have been and are being sold to criminal gangs. Identities of



agents and informants, their aliases and “front” businesses and code names, targets they were assigned to spy on, complete reports on each of their missions, all have been sold to criminal gangs, notably to cocaine trafficker Daniel “El Loco” Barrera. Some information has even been turned over to a foreign government “whose relations with Colombia have been tense in recent years”.



According to *Semana*, these sales have been going on but the price is going down. Three years ago it cost between 30 and 40 million pesos (about \$15,000 to \$20,000) to falsify immigration documents.

Source: *Semana*, Bogota, September 17, 2011 and *The Christian Science Monitor*, Boston, September 20, 2011.

* September 17, 2011. Colombia newsweekly *Semana* also reveals that the DAS (Colombian FBI) spied illegally on dozens of members of Congress, and on several political parties. They were chosen because they questioned the policies of then-President Alvaro Uribe. Records obtained by the Attorney General’s Office indicate that other cabinet agencies, such as the Interior Ministry, aided the DAS in the spying activities. Agents would infiltrate and report on political party problems and activities throughout the country.

Source: *Semana*, Bogota, September 17, 2011.

* September 16, 2011. The former assistant director of the DAS (Colombian FBI), Jose Miguel Narvaez, has been arrested and charged with ordering the murder of Senator Manuel Cepeda Vargas in August 1994. Several former paramilitary commanders, Jorge Ivan Zapata Laverde, alias el “Iguano” and Diego Fernando Murillo Bejarano, alias “Don Berna” testified that Narvaez was close to the top paramilitary commander, Carlos Castano, and that he urged Castano to give the order to kill several politicians including Manuel Cepeda and the journalist Jaime Garzon. Narvaez is already in custody, charged with illegal spying and wiretapping performed when he was employed by the DAS.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 16, 2011 and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, September 17, 2011.

* September 15, 2011. Two Colombian Army soldiers, Yanquin Nolber Mora Garcia and Wilson Orlando Gualteros Molina, have been sentenced to 14 years in prison for killing a civilian on February 1, 2004. Prosecutors had evidence that they entered a house in the town of Platanillo de Florian (Santander Province) and told the residents that they had found a pistol nearby. They demanded identity documents. One of the residents, Jose Daniel Lopez, hesitated and turned to look for the papers, whereupon he was shot to death. Two other soldiers were tried in absentia and are fugitives.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, *El Tiempo*, and *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 15, 2011.

* September 15, 2011. *Semana* reports that a Colombian giveaway newspaper, *Un Pasquin*, obtained copies of messages between Colombian officials, politicians and journalists and top paramilitary commander Carlos Castano. One of the officials was former assistant director of the DAS (Colombian FBI), Jose Miguel Narvaez. The communications also show that the DAS provided confidential information of the Supreme Court to Spanish journalist Salud Hernandez. *Un Pasquin* reportedly obtained the communications from a flash drive furnished to them by Ever Veloza, alias H.H., an extradited paramilitary commander. The communications showed that the Colombian National Police leaked information to Castano, including secret information about planned operations, along with names, photos, assignments, and specialties of various police agents, as well as secret codes and code names, and information about agents who infiltrated the paramilitaries. There was also communication between Castano and Army officers



Source: *Semana*, Bogota, September 15, 2011.

* September 14, 2011. Jorge Noguera, former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI), has been sentenced to 25 years in prison for leading the agency to stalk and wiretap political opponents, journalists and Supreme Court Justices. He was also convicted of destroying and hiding public documents. Besides the prisons sentence, he was fined about \$1.9 million and ordered to pay \$89,000 to the relatives of a college professor, Alfredo Correa de Andreis, who was murdered by paramilitaries in 2004. Noguera has also been accused of aiding paramilitaries and giving them the names of union members and activists who were later killed.

Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., *The New York Times*, New York, *BBC News*, London, *Semana*, *El Espectador* and Attorney General's web site, Bogota, September 14, 2011.

* September 14, 2011. A trial date has been set for retired Colombian Army General Miguel Maza Marquez on charges of aggravated homicide as a terrorist and attempted aggravated homicide. He is charged with helping plan the assassination of Calos Galan Sarmiento on August 18, 1989 in Soacha (Cundinamarca Province). At the time of the assassination, Gen. Maza Marquez was Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) and was responsible for protection of Galan, whose life had been threatened repeatedly. Last August 31, the Supreme Court sentenced former Minister of Justice Alberto Santofimio to 24 years in prison in the same case.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 14, 2011.

* September 13, 2011. The former Narino Province commander of the Colombian National Police, Col. William Alberto Montezuma, has been captured in Bogota. He is under investigation for murder and for being allied with paramilitaries. He is alleged to have ordered the killing of Ruth Granados Contreras, Antonio Granados Contreras, and their mother, Virginia Contreras de Granados because he believed that they were informing authorities about paramilitary activities. A demobilized paramilitary commander, Jorge Laverde, alias "El Iguano", has testified that paramilitaries paid Col. Montezuma to allow them to "act". Another demobilized paramilitary, Freddy Perez, alias "Simon", testified that

Col. Montezuma and other police officials asked for money in return for releasing them after they had been captured.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, *El Colombiano* and *El Mundo*, Medellin, *Vanguardia*, Bucaramanga, September 13, 2011 and *Semana*, Bogota, September 14, 2011.



* September 12, 2011. A retired Colombian Navy Officer, Captain Camilo Martinez Moreno, has been arrested in connection with the massacre of 29 people at Chengue (Sucre Province) on March 17, 2001. Prosecutors allege that, while paramilitaries were carrying out the massacre, Captain Martinez refused to allow troops under his command to come to the aid of the police and the Attorney General's staff in capturing the killers.

Source: Attorney General's web site, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, September 12, 2011.

* September 12, 2011. Colombia's Inspector General has asked the Attorney General to investigate the participation of the DAS (Colombian FBI) in three assassinations of presidential candidates. The Attorney General has already charged former DAS Director Miguel Maza Marquez with the murder of Luis Carlos Galan, but the Inspector General believes that Maza and other DAS officials were also involved in the killings of Carlos Pizarro and Bernardo Jaramillo Ossa. He believes that the "modus operandi" was similar in all three assassinations and that the intelligence agency was working with drug traffickers to plan and carry out each of them. The Inspector General also insists that Police officials were involved.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 12, 2011.

* September 10, 2011. Colombian Police detained an Army lieutenant, Elkin Fabian Garcia Colmenares when he threatened them with his service weapon after they came to search a business that he and his friends were just leaving. The Police report that the lieutenant was extremely intoxicated.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, and *El Pais*, Cali, September 10, 2011.

* September 10, 2011. Two more Colombian Navy personnel have been arrested and charged with killing a retired Police officer who owed them money. One of the defendants, David Fernando Moreno, already in custody, is cooperating with authorities and identified Sgt Alexander Ortiz Masmela and Corporal David Enrique Jack Carrillo as the ones who carried out the murder on June 19, 2010. The two have pleaded not guilty.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, September 10, 2011.

* September 10, 2011. A Colombian administrative court has ordered the government to pay 3.5 billion pesos (about \$1,750,000) to the families of victims of the massacre at Chengue (Sucre Province) ten years ago. The court concluded that the National Police and the Colombian Navy knew that paramilitaries were approaching the village and did nothing

to stop them. The paramilitaries killed 27 farmers by beating them. All of the other villagers were displaced. The court concluded that both the Police and the Navy had the resources and the authority to prevent the massacre and chose not to.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 10, 2011.

* September 10, 2011. The Council of State, Colombia's highest administrative court, has ordered the Attorney General's Office to investigate and prosecute a case of "social cleansing" in Cali in 1994. The Council also ordered the government to pay 980 million pesos (about \$490,000) to the parents and children of three of the seven people who were murdered. The investigation revealed that on April 24, 1994, ten masked men who called themselves "the court" entered the victims' home and forced them into a truck. They were taken to a place near the river, made to lie down, and shot in the head. A survivor identified one of the killers, a police officer known as Libardo Carlosama. He has been sentenced to 50 years in prison.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 10, 2011.

* September 9, 2011. Four members of the Colombian Armed Forces were among the 31 gang members captured in the municipalities of San Antero, Lorica, Cerete and Monteria in Cordoba Province. They included noncommissioned officers of the National Police and two Marines.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, September 9, 2011.

* September 9, 2011. Through the confession of Edward Cobos Tellez, alias "Diego Vecino", a demilitarized paramilitary commander, *Semana's verdadabierto.com* traces the advance of paramilitaries, led by the Castano brothers, across northern Colombia in the '90's. They sent a former Colombian Army soldier, Edwin Tirado, alias "El Chuzo", who had been recruited by paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso. He had served as a bodyguard for paramilitary commanders in Tierralta (Cordoba Province). His mission was to get rid of all guerrillas and of anyone who might be friendly to the guerrillas.

Another paramilitary leader, known as "Amaury" had been in Army, but had a criminal conviction. He was sent to an area where he would be less visible, but he killed people in Magangue (Bolívar Province), Zambrano (Magdalena Province), El Salado (Bolívar Province) Canutal (Sucre Province) Canutalito (Sucre Province) San Pedro (Sucre Province) and Buenavista (Boyaca Province). "Amaury" became a problem for the paramilitaries because he ordered the killing of six DAS (Colombian FBI) agents. He had a deal with them for stealing gasoline. That crime and the El Salado massacre led to the break-up of "Amaury's" group and "Amaury" was sent to another province.

At the end of his testimony, "Diego Vecino" begs for the return of a little green pocket-size book where he kept all his records. He says it contains all of the salaries he paid to members

of the Attorney General's staff and of the DAS (Colombian FBI), along with the National Police and the Marines.



Source: *verdadabierta (Semana)*, September 9, 2011.

* September 8, 2011. Carlos Alberto Arzayus, former assistant director of intelligence operations for the DAS (Colombian FBI), has testified that the illegal stalking and wiretapping conducted by the agency was “according to the manual”. In a hearing on the charges he cited language in the manual requiring agents to observe and follow individuals so as to obtain confidential information in order to neutralize persons and organizations that might “destabilize public order or national security”. He admitted that he now realizes that those actions were “illegal, unconstitutional, and barbaric”.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 8, 2011.

* September 7, 2011. The trial of former Colombian Army Lt. Raul Munoz continues this week in Bogota. He is accused of sexually assaulting two young girls and killing one of the assault victims along with her two young brothers aged 6 and 9. Prosecutors allege that he killed the three children with eight blows of a machete. They have asked for the maximum penalty of sixty years in prison.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Semana*, Bogota, September 7, 2011.

* September 7, 2011. Colombian prosecutors accuse Carlos Alberto Arzayus, former assistant director of intelligence operations for the DAS (Colombian FBI) of aggravated Criminal conspiracy, illegal wiretapping, illegal use of reception equipment and abuse of authority. They allege that between 2004 and 2005, the group headed by Arzayus illegally stalked and wiretapped NGO's and a public interest law firm, the Jose Alvear Restrepo Lawyers Collective, without any court order.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 7, 2011.

* September 6, 2011. A Colombian National Police Officer, William Fernando Segura Fuquene, has been discharged by the nation's Inspector General from his position as Commander of the Police Station at Bocagrande in Cartagena. The evidence showed that on February 16, 2004, he and his staff illegally detained and held a citizen whom they accused of stealing from a jewelry store. While he was in custody, they beat and tortured him. The Inspector General ordered that Segura not hold any public office for ten years.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 6, 2011.

* September 6, 2011. Colombia's Inspector General has charged 14 members of the Colombian Army with the extrajudicial killing of three civilians on June 20, 2007 in the municipality of Puerto Libertador (Cordoba Province). The soldiers claimed that the guerrillas had attacked them and that they returned fire, killing the three civilians, whom they

reported as “guerrillas killed in combat”. The Inspector General’s investigation established that there had been no combat and that the three victims had been murdered.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 6, 2011.

* September 5, 2011. Two members of a special Colombian Army squadron have been arrested and are being held without bail on charges of killing three civilians and claiming that the victims were members of a criminal gang. Prosecutors allege that on November 20, 2005 in the town of Las Granjas (Caqueta Province), squadron members claimed that they had killed three members of a gang of extortionists in an armed confrontation. An investigation revealed that there had been no combat and that the three civilians had been murdered.

Source: *El Espectador* and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 5, 2011.

* September 2, 2011. An editorial in the *Los Angeles Times* commends on a *Washington Post* article suggesting that United States financial assistance to Colombia may have been used by the DAS (Colombian FBI) to spy on judges, journalists, politicians and union leaders. It quotes the Colombian President and U.S. ambassador as denying any knowledge about the criminal activity. The editorial urges prompt U.S. action to investigate and determine the truth.

Source: *Los Angeles Times*, Los Angeles, September 2, 2011.

* September 2, 2011. Alba Luz Florez Gelvez, a former DAS (Colombian FBI) detective dubbed “Mata Hari” by reporters, will be formally summoned to give testimony about her part in the illegal spying and wiretapping scandal. Prosecutors allege that she was responsible for infiltrating Colombia’s Supreme Court in order to get information that would discredit certain justices. According to the investigation, Florez recruited an employee who served coffee to “bug” the chambers where the justices discussed cases and their decisions. Attorneys for Florez and another detective, Martha Ines Leal, are negotiating plea agreements in exchange for their testimony.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 2, 2011.

* September 2, 2011. Pedro Antonio Agamez Diaz has been convicted of “recruiting” two young men from Soacha (Cundinamarca Province) and taking them to Ocana (Norte de Santander Province) where they were murdered by Colombian Army soldiers and reported as “guerrillas killed in combat.” Agamez has been sentenced to 40 years in prison. Prosecutors showed proof that he was part of a group of “recruiters” who brought poor young men who were looking for jobs to locations where Army soldiers would kill them and report them as “guerrillas killed in combat”. The two victims in this case were among eleven from Soacha alone whose bodies later appeared in Ocana.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, *Caracol* Radio, Bogota, *Vanguardia*, Bucaramanga, September 1, 2011, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, September 2, 2011.



* September 1, 2011. A Colombian appellate court upheld the sentences of two former Defense Ministry officials, Richard Yezid Velandia Sanabria and Luis Eduardo Baron Hernandez. A lower court had found them guilty of stealing 44 million pesos (about \$22,000) while they were responsible for purchasing water. Velandia was sentenced to 11 years and Baron was sentenced to ten and one-half years in prison.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 1, 2011.

* September 1, 2011. Prosecutors in the Colombian Attorney General's Office have called retired General Mario Montoya, formerly the commander of the Colombian Army and recently retired as Colombia's Ambassador to the Dominican Republic and retired General Lelio Fadul Suarez Tocarruncho, to testify in the investigation of the phony staged "demobilization" of guerrilla forces. Army Colonel Jaime Joaquin Ariza Giron will also be called to testify in the same matter. Gen. Montoya is also being investigated for his alleged support of paramilitaries.

Source: *El Tiempo*, and *Semana*, Bogota, September 1, 2011.

* August 30, 2011. Clara Lopez Obregon, Acting Mayor of Bogota, has announced plans to set up a committee to investigate alleged abuses by police. After a young graffiti painter was shot in the back at close range by a member of the Metropolitan Police, there were other complaints. The Mayor stated that all complaints would be investigated.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, August 30, 2011.

* August 29, 2011. Colombian Army Lieutenant Yeison Fernando Ramirez Munoz, attached to the Joint Task Force in Sucre Province, has been apprehended by detectives in Armenia (Quindio Province). He has been arrested and charged with homicide in the death of Juan Rafael Navarro Gamarra, a civilian killed by troops from the Joint Task Force on April 1, 2006. His body was presented as a "guerrilla killed in combat", along with a 38 calibre Llama revolver, three cartridges, and other equipment. The judge lifted the order of a military court preventing the arrest of Munoz and ordered him held in a military prison.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Espectador*, Bogota, August 29, 2011.

* August 28, 2011. A group of mothers from Soacha (Cundinamarca Province) whose sons were lured to Ocana (Norte de Santander Province) and murdered by soldiers who claimed that they were "guerrillas killed in combat" will ask Colombia's Attorney General Viviane Morales to pursue the necessary investigations and to appoint a coordinator to guarantee that prosecutions will be instituted without further delay. They expressed concern that most of the cases are still in early investigation stages and few charges have been brought.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, August 28, 2011.

* August 26, 2011. When the Colombian Attorney General's detectives captured 14 members of a drug trafficking gang in Bello (Antioquia Province), three of the captives were

Colombian police officers. Besides drug trafficking, the gang is accused of extortion, robbery, theft, murder, and forced disappearances.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, August 26, 2011.

* August 26, 2011. Five former DAS (Colombian FBI) officials, Eduardo Aya Castro, assistant director of operations; Rodolfo Medina, intelligence officer; Mario Ortiz Mena; and Ignacio Moreno Tamayo, have been indicted for their part in the DAS illegal stalking and wiretapping scandal. They are accused of overseeing the illegal activities and have been charged with criminal conspiracy, illegal wiretapping, illicit use of government property and abuse of authority.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, August 26, 2011.

* August 26, 2011. Colombian prosecutors allege that on December 7, 2007, Fernando Pamplona and his son, Francisco, who was unable to hear or speak, had a chest malformation, and a cognitive disability, were walking to work in Bogota where they worked in construction. When Pamplona found his son missing, he searched for him and then reported him as missing. A week later, he was informed that his son's body had appeared on December 16 with various bullet wounds and an official report stated that he had been killed in Army combat with a criminal gang. Next to his body was the sign he always carried: I CANNOT HEAR OR SPEAK. Although he was left-handed, a pistol had been placed in his right hand. The Army squad leader Giovanny Velasco Suarez, has been charged with aggravated homicide and falsification of a public document and the six soldiers in the squad are being investigated.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, August 26, 2011.

* August 26, 2011. Retired Colombian Army Col. Luis Fernando Borja Aristizabal, formerly the commander of the Army's Joint Task Force in Sucre Province, has been sentenced to 23 years in prison. He confessed that in 2008 he had killed Angel Gabriel Berrio and presented his body as a "guerrilla killed in combat".

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, August 26, 2011.

* August 24, 2011. The dates of September 1 and 2 have been set for the appearance of retired Colombian Army General Mario Montoya's appearance before an investigating prosecutor. Montoya is being investigated for setting up a phony demobilization of 62 alleged guerrillas in Tolima Province on March 6, 2006. The "guerrillas" wore brand new uniforms, some with authentic Army insignia, and turned over home-made weapons and some that were not operable.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, *El Espectador* and *Semana*, Bogota, August 24, 2011.

* August 24, 2011. Six Colombian Army soldiers, including a major and a noncommissioned officer, have been sentenced to 30 years in prison for murdering a civilian, Leonardo Jose



Montes Pastrana, a farmer from Puerto Libertador (Cordoba Province). The court found that on October 30, 2007, they reported killing a guerrilla in combat, but that they had altered the site of the killing and disagreed among themselves as to the location of the combat. The victim's family testified that they saw him leave his home in the company of two soldiers.



Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin and Attorney General's web site, August 24, 2011.

* August 24, 2011. When drug traffickers who were building submarines were arrested, four former Colombian Navy personnel and one active noncommissioned Navy officer were among them. The active duty officer is believed to have furnished information on Navy operations. They will be charged with preparation and distribution of controlled substances and planning and logistical support of the submarine captured in Ecuador on July 2, 2010 and another one captured in Cauca Province last February 13.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, August 24, 2011.

* August 23, 2011. A retired Colombian Army battalion commander, Col. Juan Carlos Castaneda Villamizar, has been captured in Bogota after evading arrest. He is charged with the disappearance of at least 50 people in the municipalities of Recetor and Chameza (Casanare Province) in the years of 2002 and 2003. He is expected to be charged with homicide, forced disappearance and criminal conspiracy. According to the investigation, when Col. Castaneda was stationed with the 16th Brigade he aided and supported paramilitaries who captured, tortured and murdered some 50 people. He is being held without bail in a military facility.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, August 23, 2011.

* August 23, 2011. Three Colombian Army soldiers, attached to the Magdalena Battalion in Pitalito (Huila Province) have been captured after they assaulted a farmer and robbed him of 27,000 pesos in cash (about \$13.50) and a cell phone. Two of the soldiers have confessed to the crime, but the third denied taking part.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, August 23, 2011.

* August 23, 2011. Prosecutors will ask for the maximum penalty of 60 years in prison for 2d Lt. Raul Munoz, accused of raping a 14-year-old girl and then killing her and her two younger brothers. His DNA was found in the graves he allegedly dug to hide their bodies, and he was absent without leave for three hours from his unit. In addition, the unit was short one machete, the weapon he is accused of using to kill the children. The medical examiner reported that each body contained seven or eight slashes.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, August 23, 2011, *Semana*, Bogota, August 17, 2011, and Attorney General's web site and *Vanguardia*, August 16, 2011.

* August 22, 2011. According to paramilitaries making their confessions under the Justice and Peace law, the term "trade unionist" was the same as "guerrilla" and they tortured and

killed several trade unionists because “someone had heard” that they “helped the guerrillas.” On another occasion, the paramilitaries were told by military officers that a certain person was a trade unionist and that person was killed.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, August 22, 2011.

* August 20, 2011. A woman, Ballena Mejia, has been arrested and charged with identifying potential “false positive” victims to Colombian Army soldiers attached to the Counter-guerrilla Battalion in Norte de Santander Province in exchange for money. According to the investigation, on August 13, 2007, after she suggested Wilfredo Quintero Chona, Quintero was dragged out of a bar by masked soldiers, shot to death, and his body was then presented as a “guerrilla killed in combat”. Detectives established that there had been no combat and that the victim was not a member of any armed group.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, August 20, 2011 and Attorney General’s web site, August 19, 2011.

* August 20, 2011. Four Colombian police officers have been accused of murder in the deaths of Victor Andres Ibarra and a 17-year-old. The four had taken the two victims to a bridge over the Cauca River and tied their hands and feet and threw one of them into the water. Ibarra’s body was found in the river with several bullet wounds. The 17-year-old escaped. The four defendants are charged with aggravated homicide and attempted homicide.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, August 20, 2011 and Attorney General’s web site, August 19, 2011.

* August 20, 2011. *The Washington Post* reports that American aid and possibly U.S. officials were involved in the DAS (Colombian FBI) illegal stalking and wiretapping scandal. According to the report, American funds, equipment and training supplied to members of the Colombian intelligence service were used to carry out the illegal spying operations and “smear campaigns against Supreme Court justices”. The *Post* reports that six former high-ranking intelligence officials have confessed to criminal activity and more than a dozen other agency operatives are on trial. U.S. officials deny any knowledge of or involvement in the illegal acts.

Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington D.C., August 20, 2011.

* August 18, 2011. Two Colombian National Police officials in Narino Province are under investigation by the Attorney General’s Office. Col. William Montezuma, former head of Police in Narino Province, is alleged to have arrested Gabriel Tamayo Giraldo in 2005 and demanded 600 million pesos (about \$300,000) to let him go. A second official, Gen. Marco Antonio Pedreros, the former head of Region 6 of the National Police, is accused of selling munitions to the guerrillas. A former guerrilla has testified that Gen Pedreros sold the guerrillas 7.62 caliber Galil rifles and that he himself had received them.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, August 18, 2011.

* August 14, 2011. *El Tiempo* reported that paramilitary groups kept women as sex slaves and used sexual abuse as a tactic. The Attorney General's Office has documented 721 cases, but notes that the majority of victims have been afraid to report sexual abuse. Among offenders sought by detectives are a former Army Captain, Diego F. Fino, who has been sentenced to 50 years in prison for several massacres but is now a fugitive, and another former military officer who is not in custody and is presumed to be part of a criminal gang.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, August 14, 2011.

* August 13, 2011. A former paramilitary, Jose Gregorio Diaz, alias "el Cirujano" ("the Surgeon") insists that he has proof that the Colombian Armed Forces worked with paramilitaries to kill the journalist and humorist Jaime Garzon. Diaz claims that Garzon was considered a threat to a criminal organization that existed within the armed forces and that he has two hard discs, a laptop and 36 disquettes and will turn them over to the Attorney General's Office.

Source: *RCN Radio*, Bogota, August 13, 2011.

* August 13, 2011. A lawyer representing the family of murdered journalist and humorist Jaime Garzon claims that his killing was ordered by high-ranking Colombian military commanders who disagreed with him. The lawyer, Rafael Barrios, claims to have a tape recording in which retired General Rito Alejo del Rio tells another general about his dislike of Garzon's broadcasts. Barrios also suggest the involvement of retired General Jorge Enrique Mora Rangel, the former commander of the Colombian Army.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, August 13, 2011.

* August 12, 2011. A prison guard with 15 years of service, Ivan Angulo Padilla, has been charged with extorting money from inmates at the Barranquilla prison where he worked. Officials saw him receiving seven million pesos (about \$3,500) from a merchant who was paying extortion to an inmate gang. Prosecutors allege that the guard was charging the gang a percentage of their take.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 12, 2011.

* August 12, 2011. Rosa Bravo Campaz, the former director of the Colombian penitentiary at Buenaventura (Valle del Cauca Province), has been arrested and charged with bribery. Prosecutors allege that in 2008 she demanded money from an inmate and his family on several occasions, offering him a cell with a patio and other comforts. She has denied guilt and is being held without bail.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 12, 2011.

* August 12, 2011. A retired Colombian Army sergeant, Jose Wilmer Mancilla Mancilla, has confessed to charges of aggravated homicide and misuse of public funds. He was sentenced to 23 years and six months in prison. Prosecutors charged that on January 8, 2008, troops from the

Joint Task Force in Sucre killed Rodrigo Antonio Aviles Salgado in the rural area of Corozal. Although they claimed that Aviles was killed in combat, the investigation showed that there had been no combat. Six other defendant have already been sentenced in this case.



Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, August 12, 2011.

* August 12, 2011. A Colombian Army soldier, Eduardo Hernandez Gomez, has been indicted on charges of aggravated forced disappearance and aggravated homicide in the deaths of two unemployed youths, Yamir Verbel Paternina and Jorge Eliecer Barbosa Reales in Dabeiba (Antioquia Province) on May 10, 2006. The defendant is alleged to have contacted the two victims in Cartagena, offering them jobs in northeast Antioquia Province. After killing them, he presented their bodies as “guerrillas killed in combat”. The defendant was attached to the Gen. Bejarano Munoz Battalion, part of the Army’s 4th Brigade.

Source: Attorney General’s web site and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, August 12, 2011.

* August 12, 2011. A notorious drug trafficker, Angel de Jesus Pacheco Chancy, alias “Sebastian” was murdered on July 25 by two members of his gang and the two have surrendered the records of the gang’s payoffs to members of the Colombian armed forces. Two of the soldiers have already been arrested. The records show that between October 2010 and January 2011, 896 pesos (about \$448,000) were paid to members of the military who “provided services” to “Sebastian”. For January 2011, the “payroll” showed payments of ten million pesos (about \$5,000) to the judicial police; 15 million pesos (about \$7,500) to the Army command staff in Atlantico Province; 30 million pesos (about \$15,000) to Police Headquarters in Cauca Province; and 35 million pesos (\$17,500) to the judicial police in Cauca. The “payroll” also lists specific payments to individual military personnel.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, August 12, 2011.

* August 11, 2011. Retired Colombian Army Col. Jorge Eliecer Plazas Acevedo and eight other individuals have been found guilty and sentenced to 27 years in prison in the kidnapping of a salesman, Wilson Martinez Quiroga on November 25, 1998. Prosecutors demonstrated that Martinez was on his way home when he was seized and turned over to a criminal gang headed by Col. Plazas Acevedo. The kidnappers demanded money from the victim’s family but his fate and whereabouts are not known.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, August 11, 2011.

* August 11, 2011. Two former DAS (Colombian FBI) officials, Fabio Duarte Traslavina and German Enrique Villalba Chaves, have been sentenced to six years in prison. Both admit that they operated illegal wiretapping equipment and monitored telephone calls to gain confidential information about human rights defenders, journalists and opposition politicians. They are the fourth and fifth DAS officials who have admitted illegal stalking and wiretapping.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, August 11, 2011 and *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, August 10, 2011.

* August 10, 2011. Retired Colombian General Mario Montoya has been ordered to report to an investigating court looking into allegations that he faked a demobilization of a bloc of the FARC guerrillas. Prosecutors have some evidence that he and other military officers offered benefits to 77 civilians who posed as guerrillas and turned over 55 weapons and an airplane. It was later proved that the airplane had been seized from captured drug traffickers and some of the weapons were useless. The “surrendering guerrillas” wore brand new uniforms and some of their boots were marked as belonging to the Army’s 6th Brigade.



Source: *El Espectador*, *RCN Radio*, *El Tiempo*, *Semana*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, *Vanguardia*, Bucaramanga, and *El Pais*, Cali, August 10, 2011 and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 11, 2011.

* August 10, 2011. *Caracol Radio* has had access to a document recently declassified by the U.S. Department of State. In the document, U.S. officials report that Colombian Army officers were enraged about Jaime Garzon’s efforts to make peace with a guerrilla group. The document relates that Garzon asked for a meeting with the Commander of the Colombian Army, Gen. Jorge Enrique Mora Rangel after he found out that Mora was “furious” about Garzon’s effort to re-start talks between the guerrillas and the government. Mora did not show up for the meeting but General Rito Alejo del Rio met with Garzon. The general told Garzon that he was being used by the guerrillas. After the meeting, Garzon said he was very worried “by the intensity of Gen. del Rio’s anger.” Gen. Alejo del Rio is now in custody for his part in several other murders.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, August 10, 2011.

* August 10, 2011. Colombian Army 2d Lieutenant Marco Fabian Garcia Cespedes, and John Henry Alzate, a soldier, have been arrested and charged with murder, abuse of process and falsification in the killing of a farmer in Tamara (Casanare Province) on December 17, 2006. Prosecutors allege that the farmer, Jose Cayetano Mendivelso Rabelo, left his house in Ariporo to do the weekly marketing, but was stopped and killed. He was later reported as “a guerrilla killed in combat.” His family found his body at the Army’s 16th Brigade headquarters. He was alleged to have been carrying fragmentation grenades and some ammunition.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, August 10, 2010.

* August 8, 2011. Colombia’s Inspector General has opened a preliminary investigation of Brig. Gen. Gustavo Adolfo Ricaurte Tapia, the head of Colombia’s penitentiary system, because of alleged irregularities and favoritism in the prison system.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 8, 2011.

* August 7, 2011. A Colombian court investigating the connection between politicians and paramilitaries has uncovered a recorded conversation in which Hugo Atencia, a lawyer defending one of the accused politicians, tells how a paramilitary, Jorge Luis Alfonso Lopez, alias “El Gatico” (The Kitten), coordinated paramilitary operations with the then-National

Police commander in Sucre Province, Norman Arango. “When they started cleaning up in Sucre and when they were going to kill somebody, ‘The Kitten’ was the one who worked it out with the Police commander so that they would do the killing and the Police would react 20 or 30 minutes later.” He added: “‘The Kitten’ worked it out so that when two trucks full of paramilitaries headed out for the massacre at Chinulito, they passed the Police checkpoint as if they were going into their own house.”



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, August 7, 2011.

* August 6, 2011. Twenty criminal gang members were charged with aggravated criminal conspiracy. Among them were two Colombian Army soldiers and six members of the Colombian National Police. They were captured in the municipalities of Cauca, Taraza and Caceres (Antioquia Province). Prosecutors charge that members of the Armed Forces as well as civilian gang members took part in murders, forced disappearances, and drug trafficking. They also used text messages to warn other gang members of law enforcement plans. One of the messages involved plans for throwing four bodies into the river. The charging hearing was interrupted when one of the police charged threatened to kill one of the other defendants and tried to attack him. Prosecutors expect to file charges of homicide, kidnapping, and forced disappearance.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, August 6, 2011, and *El Colombiano*. Medellin, and *Semana*, Bogota, August 5, 2011, and *El Espectador*, Bogota, August 4, 2011.

* August 6, 2011. Gustavo Sierra Canales, the former Deputy Director for Analysis of the DAS (Colombian FBI), insists that the orders for the illegal stalking and wiretapping of opposition politicians, journalists and the Colombian Supreme Court came directly from the then-head of the agency, Maria del Pilar Hurtado. Sierra has turned files, documents, and other evidence over to prosecutors. He has been sentenced to eight years and four months in prison for his part in the scandal.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, August 6, 2011 and *Semana*, Bogota, August 5, 2011.

* August 5, 2011. The Colombian Attorney General’s office has filed charges against Mari del Pilar Hurtado, the former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) and Bernardo Moreno, former President Uribe’s chief of staff, alleging that they used illegal stalking and wiretapping in a “real crusade” against Supreme Court justices, human rights defenders, and political opponents. According to the charging document, they “. . . organized, directed and promoted a plan to commit crimes against these individuals, with the goal of obtaining information illegally through the intelligence agency, and discrediting them by delivering the confidential information to third parties and to communications media.” The Attorney General charges that they even used the President’s cousin, Mario Uribe Escobar, but he is not charged with any crime. Hurtado and Moreno are charged with aggravated criminal conspiracy, illegal

wiretapping, and abuse of public office. Hurtado will also be charged with bribery and falsifying a public document.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, August 5, 2011.

* August 5, 2011. Two Colombian police officers in Valledupar (Cesar Province) are being tried in the death of a motorcyclist they were pursuing in the early hours of November 1, 2009. Three people were riding the motorcycle. A superior testified that when one of the riders fell off, he ordered the two to stop the pursuit, but they disobeyed the order. Even when a second rider fell off, they continued the pursuit. Another witness testified that he saw the two officers hit the victim, causing him to crash into a manhole. He fell and hit his head and died instantly.

Source: *Vanguardia*, Bucaramanga, August 5, 2011.

* August 4, 2011. Freddy Rendon Herrera, alias “El Aleman” (The German), a demobilized paramilitary commander, making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, charges that the weapons and equipment that his paramilitary group turned in when they demobilized were later sold by the Colombian Army’s 17th Brigade, headquartered in Carepa (Antioquia Province). He claims that he delivered weapons in good condition with serial numbers intact, and that the weapons the Army claimed came from his group were rusted, had parts missing, and had their serial numbers obliterated.

Source: *verdadabierta.com (Semana)*, Bogota, August 4, 2011.

* August 2, 2011. Colombian news magazine *Semana* reports that in the Lower Cauca region of Antioquia Province, all of the criminal gangs that are active in the area have members of the Colombian National Police of various ranks on their payrolls. According to the article, rival gangs compete for the services of skilled but vulnerable police officers. The article also points to evidence that the same is true of other gangs in other parts of the country. The author suggests that part of the reason may be that the gangs are largely made up of demobilized paramilitaries and points to the number of murders, forced displacements, forced disappearances, drug and weapons trafficking, and money laundering.

Source: *Semana*, Bogota, August 2, 2011.

* August 2, 2011. Former Colombian Army Lt. Col. Byron Carvajal, who is serving a 29-year prison sentence for leading a massacre of Colombian police officers in Jamundi on May 22, 2006, has petitioned the Colombian Supreme Court to reduce his sentence, and also to reduce the fine he was ordered to pay. Fifteen of his subordinates took part in the massacre and are also in prison and have also requested the reduction. A Superior Court in Cali has already denied the requested relief.

Source: *RCN Radio*, Bogota, August 2, 2011.

* August 1, 2011. Admiral Edgar Cely, commander of Colombia’s armed forces, said it is shameful that there are so many Colombian military and police on the payrolls of the criminal page 31

gangs. Two gang members who surrendered recently have shown authorities evidence showing that a gang leader whom they killed recently was paying 250 million pesos (about \$125,000) every month to Colombian army soldiers and police.

Source: *Vanguardia*, Bucaramanga, August 1, 2011 and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, July 30, 2011.



* July 31, 2011. A 19-year-old woman who had testified that she saw three guerrillas murder a judge who was hearing the case of the Colombian Army lieutenant accused of sexually assaulting two young girls and killing one of the girls and her two brothers, has recanted her testimony. She now says that she knows nothing about the judge's murder, but that an Army major and a lieutenant promised money for her testimony and also that her brother would be released from prison. Human rights attorneys have asked that she receive protection because she may be in danger, given the importance of the testimony.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, July 31, 2011.

* July 31, 2011. Victims of the illegal spying and wiretapping by the DAS (Colombian FBI) claim that they have a document proving that then-President Alvaro Uribe knew all about what was going on. They refer to a 37-page Executive Management Report that former DAS Director of Intelligence, Fernando Alonso Tabares, filed when he resigned in February 2009, after the scandal was revealed. On page 22 of the Report, Tabares referred to two cases aimed at finding "confidential information for the top government about a political target".

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, July 31, 2011.

* July 30, 2011. Bernardo Moreno, who was chief of staff for former President Alvaro Uribe, has been arrested in connection with the illegal spying and wiretapping by the DAS (Colombian FBI). He is charged with aggravated criminal conspiracy, abuse of authority, and illegal wiretapping. A judge agreed with the prosecutor's argument that if he remained free, he might "obstruct justice". There was some evidence that he had already urged witnesses to "keep his name out of it". Moreno has already been disciplined by the Inspector General for his part in the wiretapping scandal.

Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., *El Colombiano* and *El Mundo*, Medellin, *Semana* and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, July 30, 2011.

* July 30, 2011. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights announced that it will initiate an action in the Inter-American Court for Human Rights against the government of Colombia for the actions of the Colombian Air Force in the bombing of civilians in the town of Santo Domingo (Arauca Province). Specifically, the Commission charges that the Air Force dropped a cluster bomb on civilians in the town, killing 17 civilians including 6 children, and injuring 27. It charges that after the explosion, "the armed forces continued the bombing of civilians who were trying to help the injured and who were fleeing to safety. The

Commission concludes that these actions remain in impunity, because the government made no serious investigation to identify the planners or the forces involved and impose appropriate punishment.



Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, July 30, 2011.

* July 29, 2011. Retired Colombian National Police Colonel Luis Gonzaga Enciso Baron has been indicted for torturing a civilian. Prosecutors allege that a group of soldiers tortured Wilson Gutierrez Soler on August 24, 1994, after they stopped him in northern Bogota and demanded that he confess to crimes he knew nothing about. He was so terrified that he confessed and was jailed for six months. The victim received permanent injuries. The military criminal justice system never filed any charges.

Ten years later, September 17, 2008, the Supreme Court found the military investigation to be insufficient and ordered it re-opened. Earlier, the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights held the government of Colombia liable for the violation of the Inter-American Human Rights Convention. The defendant, retired Col. Gonzaga, is not in custody and is considered a fugitive

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, July 29, 2011.

* July 28, 2011. The Inter-American Commission for Human Rights will file a formal complaint before the Inter-American Court for Human Rights, charging the government of Colombia with failing to punish those responsible for killing 17 civilians in an aerial bombing on December 13, 1998.

Source: *Semana*, *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, July 28, 2011.

* July 28, 2011. Two Colombian Army sergeants and two soldiers have been charged with homicide and falsifying public documents when on November 14, 2006, they killed two civilians, Orlando Rafael Epiayuu and Jorge Miguel Reinoso Rodriguez, members of the Wayuu tribe. They presented them as having been killed in combat, but an investigation showed that there had been no combat.

Source: Attorney General's web site, July 28, 2011.

* July 28, 2011. An appellate court has upheld the trial court's decision to admit DNA evidence, clothing worn by the murder victims, and other evidence gathered from the common grave where Colombian Army 2d Lt. Raul Munoz Linares is alleged to have buried three children in Arauca Province. He is charged with sexual assault of a young girl and killing her and her two younger brothers. The case is being tried in Bogota after the judge hearing the case in Arauca Province was murdered.

Source: *Semana*, Bogota, July 28, 2011.

* July 28, 2011. An administrative court in Bogota has ordered Colombia's Defense Ministry and National Police to pay damages to the family of 2d Lt. Luz Marina Forero Nunez. On February 21, 2008, her ex-husband, police officer Jorge Calero, entered the station where she was on duty and killed her. He then left the station and later killed himself. The administrative court held that the killer should not have been allowed to leave the station after the murder.



Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, July 28, 2011.

* July 27, 2011. Retired Colombian Army Commander, General Mario Montoya recently resigned his position as Colombian Ambassador to the Dominican Republic after the Attorney General commenced several investigations into his conduct while commanding Army forces. He is accused of staging phony demobilizations and of supporting the paramilitaries. Wikileaks recently revealed a March 6, 2006 cable from then-U.S. Ambassador William Wood to the State Department in Washington, in which Wood warned of complaints about Montoya's violations of human rights. In February, 2010, in a hearing in the prosecution of soldiers for the massacre at San Jose de Apartado, a colonel and two captains testified that Montoya urged alliances between the armed forces and paramilitary groups. Former paramilitary commander "Don Mario" testified that Montoya received 1,500 million pesos (about \$750,000) from a paramilitary group to aid in its fight with another paramilitary group.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, July 27, 2011.

* July 26, 2011. The Secretary General of the Inter-American Court for Human Rights announced that the court has received a complaint against the government of Colombia for its failure to punish those responsible for "Operation Genesis", carried out by the 17th Brigade of the Colombian Army along with paramilitaries in February, 1997. Besides a number of murders, thousands of Colombians were displaced in Choco Province.

Source: *Vanguardia*, Bucaramanga, July 26, 2011.

* July 25, 2011. In an opinion column, Jorge Gomez Pinilla of Colombian news magazine *Semana*, traces the connections of Jose Miguel Narvaez of the DAS (Colombian FBI) to paramilitary groups. Since 1994, Narvaez served as aide to several Colombian military commanders, including General Rito Alejo del Rio (now charged with murder). He instructed in "political warfare" in the Armed Forces Intelligence Academy, specializing in psychological operations, and strategies to separate the political arm of the guerrillas from their connections to the civilian population. He was deputy director of the DAS while Jorge Noguera (convicted of illegal wiretapping) was the director until 2006. At least five demobilized paramilitary commanders testify that Narvaez gave their troops a lecture entitled "Why it is legal to kill communists in Colombia". The same commanders testified that a paramilitary leader ordered the murder of a radio personality, Jaime Garzon, at the urging of Narvaez. The writer asks whether Narvaez acted on his own, or whether he was encouraged

by higher military commanders. He points to recent testimony to the effect that the military high command encouraged the elimination of members of the Patriotic Union Party.

Source: *Semana*, Bogota, July 25, 2011.

* July 25, 2011. An ex-paramilitary, Agapo Gamboa Daza, has been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide. Prosecutors allege that he, working with soldiers from the Colombian Army's 28th Infantry Battalion in Viota (Cundinamarca Province), killed two young salesmen, Jose Alfredo Castaneda and Alonso Rincon Leon, and turned their bodies over to the soldiers. The soldiers dressed them in camouflage, placed a shotgun and a submachinegun beside their bodies and presented them as "guerrillas killed in combat" on June 26, 2003. An Army captain, Edgar Mauricio Sanchez Arbelaez (retired) has already been convicted in the case.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, July 25, 2011.

* July 23, 2011. An appellate court in Medellin has upheld the sentences of Colombian Police Officers Andres Alberto Guerra and Yufrahy Soto Martinez to 14 years in prison for kidnapping and extortion, and the sentence of another officer, Eider Alexander Rivas Jaramillo, to eight years for extortion. On October 5, 2009, two of them approached the owner of a restaurant claiming to be paramilitaries. They demanded 130 million pesos (about \$65,000) and threatened to kill him and his family. When he said he didn't have the money, they forced him to go to a used car company where they made him sell his car for 10 million pesos (about \$5,000) and took the money. A few days later they telephoned a demand of another 60,000 pesos (about \$30,000). This time they were arrested, charged, and tried.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, and *Vanguardia*, Bucaramanga, July 23, 2011.

* July 22, 2011. A judge ordered the head of the Colombia prison system to prison after he transferred two drug lords, Marlon Javier Vergara, alias "La Arana" ("The Spider") and Alirio de Jesus Rendon, alias "El Cebollero" ("The Onion Man") without notifying the court.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, July 22, 2011.

* July 19, 2011. A Colombian Army sergeant, Victor Fabian Sanchez Arango, and four soldiers have been charged with homicide in the death of Rodrigo Alonso Borja on February 20, 2005 in Aracataca (Magdalena Province). The defendants presented the victim's body as a "guerrilla killed in combat", but an investigation revealed that he was a farmer in the community and that there had not been any combat.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, July 19, 2011.

* July 18, 2011. Colombian Army Corporal Aramis Machado Ortiz left the Army to join Commander Salvatore Mancuso's paramilitaries. He used his military experience to train paramilitaries and then worked closely with Jorge Ivan Laverde, alias "El Iguano", a paramilitary who has confessed to killing dozens of people and burning their bodies in



clandestine crematoria. He was captured and sentenced to six years in prison for criminal conspiracy. From the prison in Cucuta, he ordered the killing of his girlfriend's ex-husband and actively carried on paramilitary operations and was paid by the paramilitaries for his work.



Source: *verdadabierta.com (Semana)*, Bogota, July 18, 2011.

* July 16, 2011. Colombian Army Colonel Luis Fernando Borja, commander of the Army's Joint Task Force in Sucre Province, has entered into a plea bargain in which he confessed that his unit regularly killed innocent civilians and presented their bodies as "guerrillas killed in combat". His unit was known for its "results". Under the plea agreement, he will be sentenced to 42 years in prison, and the sentence will be cut in half because he has agreed to furnish testimony and documents revealing exactly what was done, when and where. He admitted that the killers sometimes received money rewards, that he was told in advance about the planned killings, and that he cautioned the killers to be sure that when they placed guns beside their victims' bodies, that the guns were in good condition.

Source: *Semana*, Bogota, July 16, 2011.

* July 15, 2011. Eight members of the Colombian Army, a Lt. Colonel, a Lieutenant, a sergeant, and five soldiers have been sentenced to prison for the murder of two civilians, Andres Pesca Olaya and Eduardo Garzon Paez in the town of Brasilia, municipality of Cimitarra, (Santander Province) in March 2008. The soldiers presented their bodies as "guerrillas killed in combat". Their sentences range from 28 to 55 years in prison. In the sentencing decision, the judge wrote that the soldiers "performed atrocious acts that had no relation to their duties."

Source: *El Tiempo, El Espectador, and Semana*, Bogota, July 15, 2011.

* July 15, 2011. The director of Colombia's Revenue and Customs Service (DIAN is the Spanish acronym.) states that the husband of Blanca Jazmin Becerra, accused of massive fraud in the agency, is a Colombian Army officer who has threatened agency officials.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, July 15, 2011.

* July 15, 2011. A criminal court in Bucaramanga is ready to pass sentence on eight Colombian Army soldiers found guilty of murdering two civilians, Eduardo Garzon Paez and Daniel Andres Pesca Olaya. The two disappeared from Bogota on March 4, 2008 and their bodies were presented as "guerrillas killed in combat" in the town of El Brasil in the municipality of Cimitarro (Santander Province). The eight soldiers later created a phony combat scene and dressed their victims in uniforms, placing weapons beside their bodies.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota and *Vanguardia*, Bucaramanga, July 15, 2011.

* July 15, 2011. Two Colombian Army lieutenants and six soldiers have been arrested in connection with the deaths of two civilians in Antioquia Province. Prosecutors allege that an

Army patrol stopped Blanca Libia Gomez Cuervo on May 20, 2004 as she was driving some cattle that belonged to her. She was killed and reported as a “guerrilla killed in combat” in the municipality of San Luis. Her body was taken to Cocama where she was buried as unidentified. The next day the Army patrol also allegedly killed a laborer, Jairo de Jesus Garcia Garcia, as he was travelling with his wife and two children in the district of Santana. They also reported him as a “guerrilla killed in combat.” The defendants are being held in a military installation.



Source: Attorney General’s web site and *El Mundo*, Medellin, July 15, 2001.

* July 13, 2011. The commander of the Colombian Air Force, Gen. Julio Alberto Gonzalez has ordered Col Sergio Andres Garzon, currently serving as military attaché at the Colombian Embassy in Paris, to return to Colombia to face charges for their part in the massacre at Santo Domingo (Arauca Province) on December 13, 1998. Col. Garzon, and Major German David Lamalia are accused of bombing and machine-gunning civilians, causing 17 dead and 21 wounded. Capt. Cesar Romero and Lt. Johan Jimenez have already been sentenced to 30 years in prison for killing civilians from a helicopter in the same incident.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, July 13, 2011.

* July 8, 2011. Detectives attached to the Attorney General’s Office arrested two Police officers who regularly stole money from two automatic teller machines in Baranoa, a town near Barranquilla (Atlantico Province). According to the investigation, they stole more than 400 million pesos (about \$200,000) on October 16, 2010 from machines that were about ten meters from the station where they were assigned. They are charged with aggravated theft,

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, July 8, 2011.

* July 8, 2011. A Colombian National Police Officer, Cesar Augusto Montana, attached to a Bogota unit that protects public officials, has been arrested and charged with the murder of his wife on December 12, 2008. According to the investigation, he purchased an insurance policy on his wife’s life and killed her. Later he purchased three policies on his own life and then faked his own death in Venezuela. He has confessed to the charge of killing his wife and authorities are considering charges of insurance fraud.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, July 8, 2011.

* July 8, 2011. The President of Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos, apologized to the families of the people killed by paramilitaries in the 2000 massacre at El Salado where 60 people were killed. He admitted that “there were omissions” by the government. There were troops in the area who knew what was happening and did nothing. After the massacre, the residents of El Salado fled and did not begin to return until 2009.

Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, July 8, 2011.



* July 8, 2011. Fifteen Colombian Army soldiers, including a lieutenant, Haizer Etiel Melendez Malagon, have been indicted for killing five civilians and reporting them as “paramilitaries killed in combat” on May 25, 2005 in a rural area of Monterrey (Casanare Province). The investigation revealed that there had been no combat and that the victims were a farmer, his two grandchildren, and a couple that worked on the farm. Prosecutors allege that the five were captured, dressed in camouflage, taken away from the farm where they had been working and then killed. The soldiers placed a rifle, a pistol, and nine grenades next to their bodies. The lieutenant and ten of the soldiers are charged with five counts of murder, forced disappearance, falsifying a public document, abuse of process, torture, illegal use of weapons, and criminal conspiracy. The other four soldiers are charged with homicide.

Source: *Semana*, *El Tiempo*, and Attorney General’s web site, Bogota, and *El Mundo* and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, July 8, 2011.

* July 6, 2011. Colombian Army Lieutenant Luis Gabriel Rueda and seven soldiers have been sentenced to 60 years in prison for murdering four laborers and presenting their bodies as “guerrillas killed in combat” in the town of Tobon (Antioquia Province) on March 14, 2006. Prosecutors demonstrated that there had been no combat and that the four victims had been dragged from their homes and shot in the back.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, July 6, 2011.

* July 5, 2011. Colombian Army Major Orlando Arturo Cespedes Escalona, former second in command of the Army’s Joint Task Force in Sucre Province, has been indicted on charges of aggravated criminal conspiracy, aggravated forced disappearance and homicide, in the deaths of eleven youths in the municipality of Toluviéjo. The young men disappeared between July and August 2007 when they were offered jobs on a local ranch. Later their deaths were reported as “gang members killed in combat”. Major Cespedes is being held without bail.

Investigations of “false positive” cases began in 2008 when civilians who disappeared were presented as “guerrillas killed in combat” so that the soldiers could receive a reward. Later it would be discovered that there had been no combat and that the victims were ordinary citizens. There have been some 2,000 such complaints, involving 1,487 members of the military. Nearly one hundred defendants have been sentenced to prison. The most recent case is that of Army Lieutenant Luis Alfonso Tangarife Narvaez, who was sentenced to 32 years in prison for the murders of two brothers in the municipality of Concepcion (Antioquia Province).

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, July 5, 2011.

* July 1, 2011. Colombian Army Lieutenant Luis Alfonso Tangarife Narvaez has been sentenced to 32 years and three months in prison for murdering two brothers, Jaime de Jesus and Andres Fernando Marin Guarin, and presenting their bodies as “guerrillas killed in combat” on December 2, 2004 in Concepcion (Antioquia Province). Lieutenant Tangarife’s patrol lured the victims to a location where they were killed.

Another court in Frontino recently sentenced seven soldiers to 20 years in prison for murdering three civilians and presenting their bodies as “guerrillas killed in combat”. They included a lieutenant, two corporals and four soldiers from the Fourth Brigade, headquartered in Medellin.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, July 1, 2011.

* June 28, 2011. Sentencing scheduled for June 28, 2011, for eight Colombian Army soldiers, including one colonel, has been postponed because one of the defendants has changed attorneys and the new attorney needs more time to prepare. The eight have been convicted of aggravated homicide, forced disappearance, and falsifying a public document after a court found that they had murdered two young men who had been lured to their location by promises of work. After they were killed, their bodies were presented as “guerrillas killed in combat”. Sentencing has been rescheduled to July 15, 2011.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, June 28, 2011.

* June 27, 2011. A Colombian Army soldier who was AWOL and intoxicated, threw a fragmentation grenade into a commercial building. One person was killed and seven were injured. The soldier is in custody.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, June 27, 2011.

* June 25, 2011. Jorge Montana Moreno, an officer in the Barranquilla Metropolitan Police, was arrested after an investigation of several months and charged with aiding a criminal gang, where he was known as “Sin Cuello” (No Neck). Prosecutors allege that he was connected with several murders in Barranquilla, that he used his police vehicle while on duty to transport weapons to be used by the gang’s hit men. He is being held without bail.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, June 25, 2011.

* June 24, 2011. A Colombian Army officer, Lt. Carlos Sarmiento, has been sentenced to 20 years in prison for his part in the murder of three civilians on January 20, 2007 in a rural area in Puerto Libertador (Cordoba Province). The victims’ bodies were presented as “guerrillas killed in combat”, but an individual who escaped told detectives that a soldier dressed as a civilian lured them to the place where they were murdered. Besides Lt. Sarmiento, another officer, a noncommissioned officer and five soldiers have already been sentenced to prison for these murders.

Source: Attorney General’s web site and *El Espectador*, Bogota, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, June 24, 2011.

* June 24, 2011. A lawyer for the families of victims of the bombing and strafing of civilians in the village of Santo Domingo (Arauca Province) has asked Colombia’s Attorney General

to investigate the actions of Col. Luis Alfonso Ruiz, then-Commander of the Colombian Air Force, in the bombing that killed 17 people and injured 21 others.

Source: *RCN Radio*, Bogota, June 24, 2011.

* June 24, 2011. The Colombian government has ordered the return to Colombia of Air Force Col. Sergio Andres Garzon, military attaché at the Colombian Embassy in Paris, after the issuance of a warrant for his arrest. Col. Garzon and another officer, Major German David Lamilla Santos, were ordered arrested because of their alleged responsibility for the bombing and strafing of civilians in the village of Santo Domingo (Arauca Province) on December 13, 1998.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, June 24, 2011.

* June 23, 2011. An extradited paramilitary commander and drug trafficker, Hernando Gomez Bustamante, alias “Rasguno”, testifying in the United States, has implicated Colombian Army and Police officials in the activities of the cartel in Norte del Valle Province. He testified that the murder of Alvaro Gomez Hurtado was planned by politicians and carried out by National Police Col. Danilo Gonzalez, “who belonged to the cartel . . . and not only furnished information but also trafficked drugs and carried out ‘professional hits’”. Gonzalez was murdered in 2004.

Gomez testified that Col. Gonzalez protected him and another drug lord, and that another Police official, German Osorio was also very helpful and received a salary from the cartel. He also said that the cartel was aided by the DAS (Colombian FBI) and by Generals Rito Alejo del Rio and Pedro Juan Moreno. He also worked with former Colombian Army Capt. Gerardo Candamil and another former officer, Guillermo Tarazona.

Source: *El Espectador* and *Semana*, Bogota, June 23, 2011.

* June 23, 2011. Colombia’s Attorney General has ordered the arrest of the current Air and Naval Attache at the Colombian Embassy in Paris, France, Col Sergio Andres Garzon and also of Major German David Lamilla. They will be charged for their part in the bombing and machine-gunning of civilians in the town of Santo Domingo (Arauca Province) in 1998. Seventeen people were killed. Two other officers, Capt. Cesar Romero and Lt. Johan Jimenez, who piloted the helicopters that bombed and fired on the civilians, have each been sentenced to thirty years in prison.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, June 23, 2011, and *RCN Radio*, Bogota, June 22, 2011.

* June 22, 2011. Two prison guards at the Colombian penitentiary at Itagui (Antioquia Province) have been arrested and charged with aggravated conspiracy and bribery. The arrests and 15 others came after an investigation of gang activities. Eleven prison guards have been arrested and charged with crimes so far this year.

* Source: *El Espectador* and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, June 22, 2011.





* June 22, 2011. Colombia's Supreme Court has overturned a military court's decision to exonerate 17 police officers of responsibility for the disappearance of 11 people and the deaths of two children in 1982. The Inter-American Commission for Human Rights has accused the Colombian government of failing in its obligation to guarantee the citizens' rights life, and personal integrity and liberty. The Supreme Court noted "evident violations of human rights, in that government agents illegally seized and disappeared the citizens, linking them to the subsequent kidnapping and murder of the children." The court found that such actions are not part of police service and thus should not have been under the jurisdiction of military courts. The case arose in 1982 when it appears that a drug trafficker, Jose Jader Alvarez hired the police to murder the captors of his two children. The children had been kidnapped and murdered by the 11 people disappeared by the police.

Source: *Semana*, Bogota, June 22, 2011.

* June 22, 2011. Colombia's highest administrative court, the Council of State, has ordered the Colombian government to pay damages of more than 136 million pesos (about \$68,000) to the families of five people murdered by Colombian police in 1994. The court found that the deaths took place as part of an "operation of social cleansing", or selective murders of thieves, prostitutes and drug addicts. In this case, according to the record, ten masked men broke into a home in a poor neighborhood in Cali in April 1994. They loaded seven people into a truck and shot them. Two of the victims survived and one recognized one of the killers as a policeman. Investigators found that the group of police officers routinely murdered persons they saw consuming drugs, or breaking other laws.

Source: *Semana*, Bogota, and *El Pais*, Cali, June 22, 2011.

* June 21, 2011. Two former officials of the Colombian Ministry of Defense, Richard Yesid Velandia Sanabria and Luis Eduardo Baron Hernandez, have been sentenced to between 10 and 11 years in prison for stealing almost 45 million pesos (about \$22,500) from the Ministry.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Espectador*, Bogota, June 21, 2011.

* June 21, 2011. Jorge Noguera, the former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) firmly denies that he ever furnished lists of trade unionists to paramilitaries who planned to kill them. The former information director at the DAS, Rafael Garcia, has testified to that effect. Noguera is in custody while being investigated for his relationships with paramilitary groups.

Source: *Vanguardia*, Bucaramanga, June 21, 2011 and *verdadabierta (Semana)*, June 20, 2011.

* June 21, 2011. Jose Miguel Narvaez, former deputy director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) has been indicted on charges of the murder of a humorist, Jaime Garzon, on August 13, 1999 in Bogota. Prosecutors charge that Narvaez urged a paramilitary commander, Carlos Castano Gil, to order the killing.

Source: *Vanguardia*, Bucaramanga, *El Mundo*, Medellin, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, June 21, 2011.

* June 21, 2011. A former paramilitary, Dilio Romero Contreras, alias “El Cocodrilo” (Crocodile), making his confession under the Justice and Peace Law, described how he had served as a guide for Colombian Army troops and how the paramilitaries worked with the Colombian Army to plan the massacre at El Salado in February 2000. At El Salado, the paramilitaries killed 60 people with machetes, knives and revolvers, raped women, and displaced the population. The prosecutor hearing Romero’s confession asked him how such a large group of paramilitaries could cross two provinces and the bridge over the Magdalena River, all with illegal weapons and not be stopped by the authorities. Romero replied that it was night and that 400 men were traveling in trucks that were covered and that was not the only time they had done it. He said that after the San Onofre massacre, they were stopped at an Army checkpoint, but when they said they were paramilitaries, they were allowed to pass. After the El Salado massacre, the Colombian Marines arrived after it was over, according to his testimony. He concluded by saying that after the massacre he was transferred to a new location where his group joined with DAS (Colombian FBI) officers to steal gasoline.



Source: *verdadabierta.com (Semana)*, Bogota, June 21, 2011.

* June 20, 2011. La Ascatidar, a group made up of indigenous people, plans to file suit against the Colombian Army for the death of one of their members, Humberto Peroza, who was killed in a military operation on June 10. The Army’s 18th Brigade reported a firefight with guerrillas in a rural area, and that a man had been killed. They reported that he had been possession of a radio scanner, and a guerrilla style uniform. The Commander of the Army, Genral Alejandro Navas, has ordered the Army’s Inspector General to investigate the group’s claim that Peroza’s death was an extrajudicial killing. The lawyer for La Asatidar, Alexander Uncacia, charged that Peroza never carried weapons or radios, but was a student at a school for indigenous leaders that is sponsored by the UN’s ACNUR and the National University of Arauca.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, June 20, 2011.

* June 18, 2011. An appellate court in Bogota has affirmed a trial court decision denying a defense motion to dismiss the charges in the criminal case against 2d Lt. Raul Munoz Linares. Munoz is accused of sexually assaulting two juvenile girls and killing one of the girls, along with her two younger brothers, in a rural area near Tame (Arauca Province). The defendant has changed attorneys and the appellate judge warned the new attorneys against making further efforts to delay the trial.

Source: *RCN Radio*, Bogota, June 18, 2011.

* June 16, 2011. An appellate court in Bogota affirmed prison sentences of 30 years for a Colombian Air Force pilot and copilot. They were convicted of dropping six fragmentation bombs on a group of civilians in the town of Santo Domingo (Arauca Province) in 1998.

Source: *RCN Radio*, Bogota, June 16, 2011.

* June 13, 2011. *El Espectador* reports that the former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI), Jorge Noguera, has few remaining defense arguments in his trial. He is charged with allowing paramilitaries to infiltrate and use the agency to obtain confidential information in their efforts to kill trade unionists. One of those killed was Professor Alfredo Correa de Andreis, killed in 2004.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, June 13, 2011.

* June 13, 2011. *Semana.com* provides a brief history of the “false positives” scandal in the Colombian military. It reports that a United Nations official asked to meet in mid-2007 with the then-Minister of Defense, Juan Manuel Santos (now the President of Colombia) and the Army’s top commander, General Freddy Padilla de Leon. The official had with him a soldier from the 14th Brigade in Puerto Berrio. The soldier revealed that he had belonged to a secret unit ordered to obtain young men from poor neighborhoods, kill them, and dress up their bodies as “guerrillas killed in combat”. When he was on leave, they killed his own father and presented his body as a “guerrilla killed in combat. This led him to leave the Army and report what had happened.

Padilla and Santos could not believe it, but ordered an administrative investigation. The investigators believed that the father really was a guerrilla and did not investigate further. Actually, a year earlier, the UN had expressed concern about the number of “disappearances” connected with the Army. A few months after the meeting, the Bogota Secretary of Government, Clara Lopez, noticed a number of disappearances of young men from Bogota suburbs, Soacha, Bosa, and Ciudad Bolivar and that many of them had been found dead in Santander. She observed that only a few days had elapsed between their disappearance and the report of their death. There would not have been time for them to join the guerrillas, go through training, and go into combat. Lopez informed the press and the Ministry of Defense and the Army then investigated more thoroughly.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota, June 13, 2011.

* June 12, 2011. *El Tiempo* reports that the Colombian Inspector General’s investigation of “false positives” was triggered after records showed that some batallions of the Army’s III^d Division had been in combat every three days in less than a year but had only suffered one casualty. Furthermore, the office learned, many of the bodies presented as “guerrillas killed in combat” were later identified as neighbors and family members, farmers, street vendors, or unemployed.

The Attorney General’s Office is also involved in the investigation and has already arrested and charged one officer, two noncommissioned officers, and 13 soldiers in connection with the deaths of 27 victims in Narino Province.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, June 12, 2011.

* June 12, 2011. A Colombian appellate court in Ibague (Tolima Province) has upheld the 35-40-year sentences of five Colombian Army soldiers for the massacre of a civilian family in

the town of Potosi on April 10, 2004. The soldiers claimed they had mistaken the family for guerrillas, but an investigation showed that at least one of the victims was shot at point-blank range and also that the crime scene had been altered. Two of the victims were children, including a six-month-old baby. The soldiers all received 35-year sentences except the one who shot a victim who was wounded, to prevent him from being a witness. That soldier received a 40-year sentence.



Source: *El Tiempo*, June 12, 2011.

* June 11, 2011. A Colombian appellate court ordered the government of Colombia to pay more than a billion pesos (about \$600,000) to the families of two men who were murdered by soldiers in Zaragoza (Antioquia Province). Their bodies were dressed in military uniform and they were presented as gang members who were killed in combat. Besides paying damages, the Colombian Army is ordered to make a formal and public apology and to erect a monument honoring the victims.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, June 11, 2011.

* June 10, 2011. Eight Colombian National Police officers have been arrested in Villavicencio (Meta Province) and charged with stealing a cargo of drugs allegedly belonging to Pedro Oliveiro Guerrero, alias “Cuchillo” (The Knife), now deceased, a notorious drug trafficker. They will be charged with drug trafficking, falsifying a public document, misappropriation of public property, and aggravated fraud.

Source: *El Espectador* and *RCN Radio*, Bogota, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, June 10, 2011.

* June 10, 2011. A judge in Bogota has found that the murder of Professor Alfredo Correa de Andreis and his bodyguard was ordered by paramilitary commander Rodrigo Tovar, alias (Jorge 40) and that DAS (Colombian FBI) agents took part. Professor Correa was murdered on September 17, 2004 in Barranquilla. He had been active in organizing farmers and displaced people.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, June 10, 2011.

* June 9, 2011. A Colombian Police Officer, who had served as a patrolman on San Andres Island until 2003, has been arrested and charged with drug trafficking. He is accused of being part of a gang that moved cocaine by speedboat from San Andres and Cartagena to Central America.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, June 9, 2011.

* June 9, 2011. Colombia’s Inspector General has charged Two Colombian Army officers, five noncommissioned officers, and 23 soldiers with human right violations. They are accused of the massacre of ten members of the Colombian National Police and a civilian. The

battalion commander, Lt. Col. Bayron Gabriel Carvajal Osorio, has already been convicted criminally and is serving a prison sentence.

Source: *RCN Radio*, Bogota, June 9, 2011.

* June 9, 2011. The Colombian National Police have arrested 23 of their officers. Eight are charged with stealing 5,000 kilos of cocaine from deceased drug trafficker “El Cuchillo”. The other 15 officers are accused of belonging to an organized crime gang “Los Rastrojos”.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, June 9, 2011.

* June 8, 2011. A Colombian Army 2d lieutenant, a noncommissioned officer, and five soldiers were found guilty of murdering three civilians in Monteliban (Cordoba Province) in June 2008. They dressed their victims in camouflage uniforms, with three pistols and two fragmentation grenades, and reported them as “guerrillas killed in combat”. A witness told investigators that there had been no combat and that the three victims had been lured to the place where the soldiers shot them.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, *El Mundo*, Medellin and Attorney General’s web site, June 8, 2011.

* June 8, 2011. Two soldiers from the Colombian Army’s 10th Brigade will have to serve their 44-year prison sentences after Colombia’s Supreme Court denied their appeal. Corporal Jota Eder Tamara Torrez and Private Jaime Cruz Velandia were convicted of murdering a farmer, Jose Navarro Avila and injuring his son, a juvenile in Manaure (Cesar Province). According to the evidence, the soldiers fired on the two civilians without any warning.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, June 8, 2011.

* June 8, 2011. Of 35 people arrested in a raid on drug traffickers, seven were police, two were in the Navy, one was a municipal council member and one was a judge. They were charged with aggravated criminal conspiracy, and the police were also charged with bribery.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, June 8, 2011.

* June 8, 2011. Seventeen Colombian National Police officers have been arrested and charged with drug trafficking in San Andres. They are charged with allowing illegal drugs to be brought into the San Andres islands and then transporting them by boat to Central America.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, *El Mundo*, Medellin, *Semana.com*, *El Tiempo*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, June 8, 2011.

* June 8, 2011. Eight more Colombian National Police officers have been arrested and charged with stealing a cargo of more than 5,000 kilos of cocaine that belonged to the now-



deceased Pedro Oliverio Guerrero, alias “Cuchillo” (“The Knife”). They were arrested in Bogota and in Villavencio (Meta Province).

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, *El Mundo*, Medellin, *Semana.com*, *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, June 8, 2011.



* June 8, 2011. Four members of the Attorney General’s detective staff (CTI), two Colombian National Police, and three civilians were arrested after they burst into a building demanding to search it without any warrant or court order. Prosecutors are preparing charges.

Source: *Semana*, Bogota, and Attorney General’s web site, June 8, 2011.

* June 8, 2011. Prosecutors in Santa Marta (Magdalena Province) obtained the arrest of 24 members of a criminal gang. A Seven of those arrested are Colombian National Police officers, two are part of the Attorney General’s detective staff (CTI), two are members of the Colombian Navy, one is a member of a city council and one is a judicial officer. Another 17 members of the Colombian Armed Forces have been arrested in Bogota, Bucaramanga (Santander Province), Cali (Cauca Valley Province), and San Andres, charged with being connected to criminal gangs. At the same time, eight Police officers have been arrested and charged with stealing cocaine that had been seized when paramilitary and drug trafficker alias “Cuchillo” (“The Knife”) was killed in 2010.

Source: *Semana*, Bogota, June 8, 2011.

* June 7, 2011. A Colombian Army 2d Lieutenant, a noncommissioned officer, and five soldier have been sentenced to 31 years in prison for murdering three young men in Puerto Libertador (Cordoba Province). They presented the bodies of Hector Espinosa Moreno, Hernan Espinosa Rodriguez and Edison Alzate Pulgarin as “guerrillas killed in combat”, along with three revolvers, two fragmentation grenades, and Army uniforms. A fourth victim survived the shooting and told how the soldiers had lured the four to the place where they were to be killed, shot them, and dressed their bodies as guerrillas.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, *Caracol Radio*, and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, *El Mundo*, Medellin, and *El Herald*, Bucaramanga, June 7, 2011.

* June 7, 2011. Colombian National Police Lt. Col. Luz Eugenia Molta has been suspended for nine months after she drove a car while intoxicated and crashed.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, June 7, 2011.

* June 4, 2011. The news magazine *Semana* expresses concern that demobilized paramilitaries comprise a significant number of members of criminal gangs, and that the gangs are terrorizing the population and perpetrating massacres, just as the paramilitaries did, and with the help of the armed forces, just as when they were paramilitaries. On May 31, when 24 gang members were captured, it turned out that there were seven police officers,

two Colombian Navy noncommissioned officers, two detectives attached to the Attorney General's Office, a judicial officer and a member of the local municipal council.

At the end of last year, detectives arrested an Army colonel and a prosecutor who had been stealing and selling military equipment for two years. A National Police major was arrested for helping a criminal gang.



Source: *Semana*, Bogota, June 4, 2011.

* June 3, 2011. Eight Colombian Army soldiers, a colonel, a lieutenant, a noncommissioned officer, and five soldiers have been found guilty of killing two young men from Soacha (Cundinamarca Province), reporting them as “guerrillas killed in combat”, and accepting rewards under the Army's rewards program. The two victims were buried in a common grave. One had disappeared from Soacha on March 2 and the other on March 4, but their bodies were found on March 5 in Cimitarra, near the Venezuelan frontier. Prosecutors have asked for the maximum penalty of 60 years in prison. Sentencing has been scheduled for June 28.

Source: Attorney General's web site, June 3, 2011.

* April 4, 2011. Prosecutors in Colombia say they will investigate the treatment of prisoners at one of the country's military jails, after *Semana* news magazine reported that they came and went as they pleased and lived in luxurious cabins. Some were allowed to take holidays on the Colombian cost. Some ran businesses inside the military prison and in many cases continued drawing their salaries. Some of those allegedly given privileges had been convicted of extrajudicial killing of civilians.

Source: *BBC News*, April 4, 2011.

* February 7, 2011. Two criminal gang leaders, Elias Abomohor Salcedo and Alex Navarro Salcedo have been charged with aggravated homicide, kidnapping, perjury, and abuse of process. Prosecutors charge that, in order to resolve a drug payment problem, they hired Colombian Army soldiers to massacre six people and then present the bodies as “guerrillas killed in combat”. The victims were machine-gunned, but military commanders claimed that they had been killed in combat. Eight of the soldiers, including a captain, have already been sentenced to 26 years in prison for the killings.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, February 7, 2011.

* February 5, 2011. Diaz Garzon, a DAS (Colombian FBI) detective with 15 years of service has been charged with working for a drug trafficking gang as supervisor of the hit men. The head of the gang, alias “El Tigre”, has been convicted of murder after he ordered at least 15 killings in the last two years in Ibague (Tolima Province). Prosecutors allege that Garzon received a million pesos (over \$500) per month for letting the gang know what the police were planning. Garzon is also being investigated for collaborating with another gang that extorted payoffs from street vendors.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 5, 2011.

* February 5, 2011. *Semana.com* editorial writer Leon Valencia criticizes Colombian Army leadership for failing to admit and deal with the fact that soldiers are helping the drug trafficking gangs. He cites evidence that alias “Cuchillo” (“The Knife”), a paramilitary commander and drug trafficker who was recently killed by the Army, worked closely with several Army officers who were on his payroll. He also mentioned Major Julio Cesar Torrijos, a Police Commander in Caqueta, who was arrested while transporting 103 kilos of coca.



Source: *Semana.com*, Bogotá, February 5, 2011.

* February 5, 2011. Eight former members of the Colombian Army have been captured and charged with criminal conspiracy for aiding a drug trafficking gang in Valeditoriale Province, in return for cash payments.

In another development, a former Army officer who became the military commander of another drug trafficking gang has been captured in Sincelejo (Sucre Province). He had been in charge of coordinating the gang’s armaments, munitions and administration. He was wanted for aggravated criminal conspiracy.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 5, 2011.

* February 4, 2011. Colombian Army Colonel Jose Gabriel Castrillon has been relieved of his position at the office of the Organization of American States in Washington after news media revealed that he is being investigated for his alleged participation in the extrajudicial executions of four civilians in 2004 in Choco Province. Eight of his subordinates are also being investigated in the incident.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, February 4, 2011.

* February 2, 2011. Two former DAS (Colombian FBI) officials are going to trial for their part in illegal stalking and wiretapping. Alba Luz Florez Gelvez, a DAS detective dubbed “Mata Hari” and William Romero, deputy director of the Human Sources Department are negotiating with prosecutors and have already provided them with information on the wiretapping scheme.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, February 2, 2011.

* February 3, 2011. Another DAS official, Gustavo Sierra, deputy director of the DAS a, de Analysis Department has entered into a plea agreement with prosecutors in the illegal stalking and wiretapping case. Sierra allegedly ordered a copy of a compact disc made by illegally taping the judicial conferences of members of Colombia’s Supreme Court. He will provide testimony against his superior and will serve eight years in prison.

Source: *El Espectador*, February 4, and *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, February 3, 2011.

* February 1, 2011. Retired Colombian Army Colonel Bayron Carvajal, serving a 29-year prison sentence for his part in the massacre at Jamundi in 2006, is being investigated for his part in the deaths of three civilians whose bodies were presented as “guerrillas killed in combat”.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Pais*, Cali, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, February 1, 2011.



* February 1, 2011. A Colombian National Police Officer, Jose Anibal Jerez Valbuena, is being charged with misuse of public property, tampering with evidence, and drug trafficking after he exchanged flour for 770 grams of cocaine that had been seized in a drug raid.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, February 1, 2011.

* February 1, 2011. Colombian Army noncommissioned officer Luis Carlos Tumay Hernandez has been arrested and is being held without bail. He is charged with three counts of aggravated homicide and criminal conspiracy in the death of Javier Caballeero Escobar on January 12, 1999 in Cienaga (Magdalena Province) and Dennis Maria Tovar Pacheco and Eixiano Jose Vargas on February 11, 1999, also in Cienaga. Prosecutors believe that former Col. Byron Carvajal, who is in prison for the massacre of 12 police officers on May 22, 2006 at Jamundi, is connected with these incidents.

Source: Attorney General's web site, February 1, 2011.

* January 31, 2011. Four former agents of the Colombian judicial police, retired Lieutenant Juan Gabriel Carrillo Garcia, Alejandro Robledo Acevedo, Andres Reinaldo Izquierdo Iter, and Gustavo Adolfo Rojas, were found guilty of forced disappearance of four of their fellow officers on or about August 14 and 15, 2008. The whereabouts of the four victims is unknown.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 31, 2011.

* January 31, 2011. General Oscar Naranjo, Commander of Colombia's National Police, denounced a video apparently made by police in Puerto Tejada in 2009. The video shows four police officers torturing and killing a small dog. General Naranjo said that some of the participants are no longer connected to the Police force, but that those who are will be discharged.

Source: *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, January 31, 2011.

* January 31, 2011. When Cartagena police searched the District prison in Ternera, they found cell phones and BlackBerries that prisoners were using to extort money from merchants in different parts of the city. Police also believe that a gang inside the prison is ordering murders to be carried out in and around the city.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, January 31, 2011.



* January 31, 2011. Colombian newsweekly *Semana* reviews recent reports that members of the Colombian military sentenced to prison for violent crimes have been allowed to come and go as they wish, have introduced prostitutes and liquor for parties they held at the military prison at Tolemaida. There is to debate as to whether the Colombian Constitution requires all charges against members of the military are to be handled by military courts or whether, when the crime is not part of military duty, military offenders ought to be treated like any other common criminal. A member of Congress has demanded that the former assistant director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) be transferred from a military base to a maximum security prison. In another case, retired Col. Alfonso Plazas Vega, who has been sentenced to 30 years in prison for forced disappearance, a crime against humanity, is serving his time at a military academy, where he teaches classes to recruits and has been seen leaving the institution without any supervision.

Source: *Semana*, January 31, 2011.

* January 30, 2011. Two Cucuta (North Santander Province) Metropolitan Police officers have been captured and discharged after it became known that they were extorting payments from smugglers. They will be charged with extortion.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, January 30, 2011.

* January 30, 2011. *El Mundo* of Medellin reports on the threats against human rights leaders from illegal armed groups. One group was threatened when it prepared a report analyzing drug trafficking, criminal gangs, and displacement of campesinos. It claimed that there are hundreds of dead buried without identification in cemeteries in the country, people killed in combat between legal and illegal groups as well as by extrajudicial executions by the Armed Forces.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, January 30, 2011.

* January 29, 2011. Paramilitaries confessing their part in killings in Soledad (Atlantico Province) described a mistake where they killed the wrong person and described an attack by four hired killers and a Colombian National Police sergeant. The attackers killed a civilian who refused to open his door to them.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, January 29, 2011.

* January 29, 2011. A Colombian Army soldier, Jose Raul Perez has been arrested for sexual abuse and impregnation of a 9-year-old girl. After a hearing, a judge ordered him released because of confusion in the testimony of witnesses. The order will be appealed.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, January 28 and 29, 2011, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, January 28, 2011.

* January 28, 2011. Relatives of a motorcyclist killed in a traffic crash allege that a Police Captain was the driver of the car that rear-ended the victim and not another person as

claimed in the initial report. Witnesses say that the Police Captain was part of a group of bodyguards accompanying a public official. Some witnesses also claim that the officer was intoxicated at the time of the crash.

Source: *Vanguardia*, Bucaramanga, January 28, 2011.

* January 28, 2011. Felipe Munoz, the current Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) has been subpoenaed to testify in the ongoing investigation of illegal spying and wiretapping by the agency. Former DAS employees have testified that he ordered or knew of illegal actions taken to obstruct the investigation. Since the scandal was first exposed, 20 DAS agents have been sentenced to prison.

Source: *Semana.com*, *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 28, 2011, and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *El Mundo*, Medellín, and *El Pais*, Cali, January 29, 2011.

* January 27, 2011. DNA tests indicate that Colombian Army Corporal Fabian Andres Moncada is the serial rapist authorities have been searching for in the municipality of Buga (Valle del Cauca Province). He is accused of at least ten sexual assaults, including assaults of two minor girls.

Source: *RCN Radio*, *El Espectador* and *Semana.com*, Bogotá, January 27, 2011 and Attorney General's web site.

* January 26, 2011. Colombian National Police Major Julio Cesar Torrijos Devia was arrested after his car was stopped and he was found to be carrying 112 packets of cocaine base, totaling 103 kilograms.

Source: *Semana.com*, *El Tiempo*, and *El Espectador*, January 26 and 27, 2011, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, January 27 and 28, Attorney General's web site, and *RCN Radio*, Bogotá, January 27, 2011.

* January 27, 2011. A Colombian police patrolman, Jeffrey Jose Fontalvo Montano has been indicted for the murder of his girlfriend last December 10. He had claimed her death was an accident, but a ballistics investigation determined that the shooting was intentional.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, January 27, 2011.

* January 26, 2011. Three armed men wearing masks attacked a civilian's truck and took away the driver and killed him. Corporal Franklin Antonio Tabares Montes and three soldiers have been charged with the murder and with falsely reporting the victim as a "guerrilla killed combat".

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 26, 2011 and Attorney General's web site.



* January 25, 2011. A lawyer representing the survivors of civilians tortured and “disappeared” when the Colombian Army retook the Palace of Justice in 1985 after it had been attacked by guerrillas has asked the court to investigate retired Colombian Army Sergeant Gustavo Arevalo Moreno for his part in the killings. The lawyer also asked that the court investigate another officer, Bernardo Garzon Garzon for his part in the torture of the civilians who worked in the building cafeteria. Retired General Ivan Ramirez Quintero and two of his subordinates are already being investigated in the case.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, January 25, 2011.

* January 25, 2011. Tribal leaders complain that a tribal member was killed in a firefight between the Colombian Army and guerrillas and later claimed as a “guerrilla killed in combat”. They claim his body had camouflage pants pulled over his own pants and was wearing boots larger than his regular size. They say he had no connection with any armed group and was shot in the back.

Human Rights Watch has issued a report claiming that soldiers involved in “false positives” are not being punished. There have been sentences in only 63 cases, while 1,366 cases involving more than 2,300 victims are being investigated, according to the report.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 24 and 25, 2011.

* January 25, 2011. Colombian Army authorities are investigating to find out why former Lt. Carlos Andres Lora Cabrales, sentenced to 30 years in prison for murder, was allowed to travel from the military prison at Tolimaida (Tolima Province) to Valledupar (Cesar Province) without any guard or supervision. According the Colombian Army commandant, Gen. Alejandro Navas, the journey should have been authorized by a judge and supervised by the director of the prison. A video taken by the lawyer for one of his victims shows former Lt. Lora taking a commercial flight from Valledupar to Bogota all alone. Besides his murder conviction, former Lt. Lora has been charged with a “false positive” homicide.

* Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, January 25, 2011.

* January 25, 2011. A Colombian Army lieutenant, Siervo Alexander Morales Romero, a corporal, Juan Alberto Pacheco Angulo, and six soldiers have been indicted on charges of murder in the killing of three young men in the municipality Abriaqui (Antioquia Province) on April 26, 2006. The defendants claimed that the victims were extorting money from local ranchers, but the investigation showed that they were itinerant vendors working in Medellin.

Source: *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, January 25, 2011 and Attorney General’s web site.

* January 24, 2011. In February 2009 Colombia’s Inspector General warned that prisoners at the military prison at Tolimaida Army Base (Tolima Province) were out of control. The director at that time, Major Henry Vargas Polonia, was fined four million pesos (about \$2,000) and suspended for 45 days. But, according to *El Tiempo*, nothing has changed. The

paper alleges that Major Julio Cesar Parga, accused of extrajudicial killings of civilians and of aiding illegal armed groups, lived in a cabana on weekends in his first prison stay in 2009.



Between 2008 and 2009, the Army transferred officers sentenced to long prison terms from civilian to military prisons. A lawsuit against the Defense Ministry by retired Major Jose Cote, who was in charge of one of prisons between 2004 and 2005 alleges that he was fired because he refused to obey an Army General who ordered him to allow imprisoned officers release to “take care of business” or for family celebrations. Another officer alleges that Captain Ivan Andres Gonzalez Villafane, sentenced to 35 years for the murder of three farmers in 2005, was allowed to take the Army’s course for promotion to major, although he was not promoted.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 24, 2011.

* January 23, 2011. Two retired military officers, Juan Carlos Rodriguez and Cesar Maldonado Vidales, both sentenced to long prison terms for numerous murders and drug trafficking and serving their terms in the military prison at Tolomaida Army Base (Tolima Province) have been fighting each other since last year for “control” of the prison. According to an investigation, several weeks ago they fought it out in a fist fight in front of 276 other prisoners. Investigators found that the two left the prison at least four times a week. They traveled in private cars between Melgar (Tolima Province) and Girardot (Cundinamarca Province) and they could usually be seen with their families in the base swimming pools, celebrating birthdays, parties and lunches, without any supervision.

According to investigators, the prostitutes mixed with civilian employees at the base and their big parties were held in a base training facility with the prison warden, Mayor Cesar Ramos Botia in attendance.

Source: *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 23, 2011.

* January 21, 2011. A group of mothers of the Soacha victims of extrajudicial killing by the Colombian Army have asked for a personal meeting with the Colombian Attorney General, Dra. Viviane Morales. They plan to ask for a speed-up of investigations of the murders of their sons. The investigations have taken more than 2 ½ years without making much progress.

Source: *RCN Radio*, Bogotá, January 21, 2011.

* January 21, 2011. The Attorney General of Colombia has opened a formal investigation of the role of a DAS (Colombian FBI) official, Jose Miguel Narvaez, in the 1999 kidnapping of ex-Senator Piedad Cordoba. Cordoba alleges that Narvaez met with paramilitaries to plan the kidnapping.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 21, 2011, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, January 26, 2011.

* January 21, 2011. A noncommissioned officer of the Colombian National Police got drunk at a party and fired his rifle at a group of young people on the dance floor. Four were killed.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 21, 2011.



* January 21, 2011. A Colombian Army soldier was arrested and charged with attempting to sell a fragmentation grenade in Tuluá (Valle del Cauca Province). Prosecutors allege that he had been selling military equipment to drug gangs. He has confessed to the crime.

Source: *El País*, Cali, January 21, 2011.

* January 20, 2011. A former member of Colombia's Congress, Wilson Borja, complains of his worry that "a large number of criminals that belong to the armed Forces are on the street, with the blessing of the military, and a number of others receive preferential treatment in the special prison installations provided for soldiers." Borja told *El Tiempo* he has previously complained about the special treatment given Major Cesar Alonso Maldonado, who he says has been absent from his place of confinement. Major Maldonado was convicted in civilian court of attacking Borja in 2000, and of other crimes, but had been confined in Tolemaida, a military prison, where significant irregularities have been revealed. Borja complains that Major Maldonado has been on the street most of the time since his conviction.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 20, 2011.

* January 20, 2011. Abuses and unauthorized privileges by Major Maldonado at the Tolemaida military prison will be investigated. Maldonado walked away from Tolemaida but was recaptured the same day. He has been sentenced to 25 years in prison for murder and for his attack on Wilson Borja. He had escaped once before in 2004. He has allegedly left the prison on numerous occasions. An Army officer told *El Tiempo* that he was surprised to see Maldonado in the town of Melgar (Tolima Province) one weekend.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 20, 2011.

* January 20, 2011. *El Tiempo* reveals other cases where military convicts under sentence have been allowed to run free:

Lt. Carlos Alberto Acosta Tarragona. In October 1995 he was sentenced to 56 years in prison after he murdered a prosecutor and two others. After only a month in prison he was allowed to visit his parents, accompanied by military police who allowed him to go to a store by himself. He fled, was recaptured, but escaped in 1999 and joined the paramilitaries.

Major Diego Fino. He commanded a battalion in the Colombian Army's IVth Brigade. In 2000 he was arrested and charged with killing three people. In March 2000 he escaped. He was found guilty of the murders in June 2001.

Major David Hernandez Rojas. He and four other soldiers were accused of murdering two government officials. During the investigation, he swore that he would escape and join the

paramilitaries. While detained in military custody at IVth Brigade headquarters, he escaped in January 1999. He was convicted of three murders in June 2001, but remained with the paramilitaries.

Col. Jorge Plazas. He was found guilty of kidnapping and murder and sentenced to 40 years in prison. While he was detained at a military headquarters in Bogota, he escaped. He is now serving as coordinator for the Office of Human Rights in the Fernando Landazabal Reyes Battalion, located in the same military headquarters.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, January 20, 2011.

* January 20, 2011. In an editorial, *El Tiempo* complains about the serious failures of the Colombian Army to maintain order at its prison installations, particularly the one at Tolemaida. The editorial argues that the military installations were intended for those convicted of offenses related to military service and that offenders convicted of common crimes, murder, bribery, drug trafficking, ought to be housed in civilian prisons. It demands full information about what has been going on at the military prisons.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, January 20, 2011.

* January 20, 2011. *El Pais* reports that there are 1,008 members of the military in prison at present and that 418 of those are awaiting trial and 527 have been convicted. After complaints that military convicts are not properly supervised, the Minister of Defense has ordered an inquiry. For example, a Colombian Army Major, Juan Carlos Rodriguez, alias “Zeus”, served as head of security for an extradited drug lord. He was first in a civilian prison but then obtained a transfer to the military prison in Tolemaida, where he and other prisoners are alleged to have unsupervised parties.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, January 20, 2011.

* January 20, 2011. Cordoba police have admitted that criminal gangs have infiltrated their ranks. The Police commander, General Luis Alberto Perez outlined plans to combat the infiltration.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, January 20, 2011.

* January 19, 2011. Five former members of the Colombian Army command staff in Casanare Province, along with two civilians, have been indicted in the disappearance and murder of two young men from Villavicencio (Meta Province) on December 2, 2006. According to the indictment, they reported combat in the town of Rio Chiquita (Casanare Province) and reported two guerrillas killed. An investigation showed that the two victims had no connection with any armed group and that there had been no combat. The defendants are charged with aggravated homicide, forced disappearance, and weapons trafficking.

Source: *RCN Radio*, Bogotá and Attorney General’s web site, January 19, 2011.

* January 19, 2011. After reports that former Army Major Cesar Maldonado had escaped from the military prison at Tolemaida Army base (Tolima Province), *El Tiempo* revealed that a number of other former officers with long sentences had escaped previously. The escapees listed included ex-Lieutenant Carlos Alberto Acosta Tarragona, who had been convicted in 1995 of murder and of supporting paramilitaries. He killed a prosecutor, his driver and a guide and threw their bodies in a river. He escaped, was recaptured, and escaped again, to join paramilitaries, who later killed him.



It included ex-Major Diego Fino who killed three people when he was attached to the 4th Brigade. He was in pre-trial custody when he deserted and fled. He was later found guilty of the murders but has not been recaptured.

It included ex-Major David Hernandez Rojas, who was involved in the same murders as Major Fino. He escaped from pre-trial custody and joined the paramilitaries. He was later found guilty of the murders but has not been recaptured. Also

It included ex-Colonel Jorge Plazas, who had been convicted of kidnapping and murder. He had been sentenced to 40 years in prison, but was working as Coordinator of the Office of Human Rights at the military academy when he escaped.

Finally, it included Sergeant Juan Jose Mosquera Romano who escaped while he was under investigation for taking part of the same kidnapping and murder. He has not been recaptured.

* January 19, 2011. The Colombian Army announced that ex-Major Maldonado had been recaptured and that the conditions at the military prison at Tolemaida Army base (Tolima Province), alleged by *El Espectador* to be a “resort”, will be thoroughly investigated. *El Espectador* also reports that Colombia’s Inspector General plans his own investigation.

Source: *RCN Radio*, *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *El Pais*, Cali, January 19, 2011.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 19, 2011.

* January 18, 2011. Three Colombian National Police officers, Heider Rivas Jaramillo, Andres Guerra, and Yufrahi Soto Martinez have been arrested and charged with aggravated kidnapping, aggravated extortion, and illegal use of police weapons. Prosecutors allege that they entered a restaurant in Medellin and demanded money from the owner, threatening to harm his family. They forced him to sell a vehicle for ten million pesos (more than \$500) and took the money.

One month later, according to the complaint they returned to the same victim and demanded 60 million pesos (more than \$3,000). They threatened him with a pistol and drove him around Medellin, forcing him to take money out of automatic teller machines.

Source: *El Universal*, Cartagena, *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and Attorney General’s web site, January 18, 2011.

* January 18, 2011. After a hearing in which prosecutors presented 27 witnesses and 100 documents, they urged the court to find nine former Colombian National Police officers and one civilian guilty of aggravated criminal conspiracy and aggravated forced disappearance. They are accused of “disappearing” to police lieutenants in a dispute regarding their criminal activity.



Source: Attorney General’s web site, *El Espectador* and *Radio Santa Fe*, Bogotá, January 18, 2011.

* January 18, 2011. The Colombian Army has ordered an investigation of prison facilities for members of the Armed Forces convicted of crimes and confined at the Army base at Tolemaida (Tolima Province). It will review compliance with Army rules applicable to Army prison facilities.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 18, 2011.

* January 18, 2011. After the media revealed that the military prison at Tolemaida Army base was being treated a “resort” for Army officers who had been convicted of heinous crimes, authorities ordered the transfer of four prisoners. After the decision was announced, it was discovered that former Army Major Cesar Maldonado had escaped. Authorities believe he escaped when he learned of the transfer, although some claimed he had escaped last year. He had already escaped once before, in 2004. He was recaptured shortly after his escape was discovered.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, and *Semana.com*, Bogotá, January 18, 2011.

* January 17, 2011. *Semana’s* human rights page, *verdadabierto.com.co*, carries a lengthy report on the 10-year anniversary of the massacre at Chengue, where paramilitaries tortured and killed 27 individuals with machetes and garrots and burned 25 homes, while the Colombian Police and Navy did nothing. In 2009, a judge ordered the Colombian government to pay damages to the survivors of those who were killed. In his order, he noted that the villagers had been warning authorities for six months about the paramilitaries’ threats. He also noted that some members of the armed forces had collaborated with the paramilitaries.

A paramilitary, Elkin Valdiris, told authorities that the night before the massacre, the group of killers had run into a police patrol. Prosecutors following up on Valdiris’ testimony found that the police had reported to Lt. Jaime Humberto Gutierrez Munoz, the police commander, that three truckloads of armed men dressed in camouflage were driving toward San Onofre. Lt. Gutierrez told investigators that he had called his superiors several times. Other testimony revealed that there calls between the police and the Navy, leading to a call from Lt. Col. Miguel Angel Yunis to General Quinones, the Commander of the Navy’s First Brigade.

The Inspector General’s investigation showed that in the morning of the massacre, a noncommissioned officer in the Navy had met with a paramilitary commander at a nearby farm and had turned over weapons, camouflage uniforms, and ammunition in exchange for a cash payment. Although several other police officers reported seeing the three truckloads

of armed men, and there was a patrol only eight miles from Chengue, the patrol was never told about the three trucks. The Inspector General also found that Col. Quinonez was told about the paramilitaries when the massacre had just begun, and he had trucks, troops, and helicopters at his disposal, but he gave no order.



Source: *Semana*, Bogota, January 17, 2011.

* January 17, 2011. *El Tiempo* also carried a story about the 10th anniversary of the Chengue massacre. It reports that one prosecutor has asked that cases be re-opened where soldiers were found not guilty of helping the paramilitaries. Demobilized paramilitaries have provided some testimony that would support re-opening the cases. Up to now, no member of the Armed Forces has been found guilty of action or inaction. Several investigations are open.

Source: *El Tiempo*, January 17, 2011.

* January 17, 2011. A Cali Police officer who was intoxicated fired his weapon several times in his residence and was arrested.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, January 17, 2011

* January 17, 2011. The director of Colombia's civilian prison agency, General Gustavo Adolfo Ricaurte Tapia, has ordered all convicts sentenced to more than 25 years to be placed in high security institutions. Among them are a former National Police colonel, former Army Major Juan Carlos Rodriguez, and four other members of the Armed Forces who had also been held at the Tolemaida military base.

Source: *RCN Radio*, Bogotá, January 17, 2011, and *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*. Bogotá, January 18, 2011.

* January 17, 2011. Colombia's civilian prison agency sources told *Caracol Radio* that Army officials at the base in Tolemaida never informed the agency that former Major Juan Carlos Rodriguez received a steady stream of visitors, liquor and prostitutes and had parties at all hours.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, January 17, 2011.

* January 16, 2011. *El Espectador* reveals that Juan Carlos Rodriguez, a former Colombian Army officer who had twice been convicted of serious crimes, is serving his sentences in a vacation cottage at a military base in Tolemaida (Tolima Province) instead of in a civilian prison. Former Major Rodriguez had acted as chief of security for the extradited paramilitary and drug trafficker Diego Leon Montoya, alias "Don Diego". Rodriguez was also in charge of infiltration by paramilitaries and drug traffickers into the Colombian Army. When he was first captured in 2005, he was in possession of 200 kilos of cocaine, 30 million pesos (about \$15,000) in cash, long-range weapons, communications equipment and Army uniforms to be used by the paramilitaries and drug gangs.

Army officers assigned to the base at Tolemaida complained to *El Espectador* that Rodriguez had parties night after night at the cottage, with unlimited liquor, food, and prostitutes, as well as unlimited visits by his family at any time of the day or night. Guards pay no attention. After the Army investigated the complaints, Rodriguez was removed to a civilian prison.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 16, 2011.

* January 15, 2011. Three retired Colombian Army Generals are being investigated for their part in the death of Supreme Court Justice Carlos Uran when the Colombian Army retook the Palace of Justice after guerrillas attacked it in 1985. A TV news station photographed Justice Uran leaving the building but he was later found dead on the 4th floor of the building.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Semana.com*, Bogotá, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, January 15, 2011.

* January 15, 2011. Retired Colombian Army General Ivan Ramirez has been charged with the forced disappearance of a female guerrilla when the Colombian Army retook the Palace of Justice after guerrillas attacked it in 1985. Witnesses testified that they saw her exit the building alive and in custody, but she was never seen again.

Source: *Semana.com* and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Pais*, Cali January 15, 2011.

* January 14, 2011. A retired Colombian Army general, Ivan Ramirez Quintero, and two noncommissioned officers have been indicted for the forced disappearance of a guerrilla, Irma Franco, during the retaking of the Palace of Justice in 1985 after the building was attacked by guerrillas. The evidence shows that Franco was seen alive and in custody, although her capture was not reported and her body has not been found. Two of the witnesses were law students at the time of the attack and retaking of the Palace of Justice by the Army. They testified that they were seized and tortured along with those who have disappeared, but they were released after their identities were confirmed.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 14, 2011.

* January 14, 2011. A retired Colombian Army general, Jesus Armando Arias Cabrales, is being investigated by Colombia's Supreme Court for the murder of a judge, Carlos Horacio Uran, during the retaking of the Palace of Justice in 1985. Two other retired generals, Carlos Fracica and Rafael Hernandez, are also being investigated by the court for the same incident. The Army had claimed that Judge Uran was killed in crossfire, but forensic experts have testified that he was shot at point blank range. Another judge, Manuel Gaona, was killed in the same way and the Court is also investigating his death.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 14, 2011.

* January 13, 2011. Witnesses testified that DAS (Colombian FBI) officials paid a foreign national 20 million pesos (about \$10,000) to spy on then-Senator Piedad Cordoba when she traveled to Mexico City to attend a conference. The spy obtained her original hotel bill and took photos of her. The testimony is part of the investigation of former President of the

Colombian Senate, Nancy Patricia Gutierrez, who is accused of using the information in a debate with Cordoba.

Source: *Semana.com* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, January 13, 2011.



* January 12, 2011. Two Colombian Army soldiers, Miguel Antonio Pineda Hernandez and Fabio Ferney Flores Valencia were arrested and charged with homicide, criminal conspiracy, falsifying a public document and perjury in the death of Carlos Guevara Rincon. Prosecutors allege that on March 15, 2007, the defendants dragged the victim from his house in Labranzagrande (Boyaca Province) and took him to a wooded area. They then killed him and reported him as a guerrilla killed in combat. Colombian Army Lt. Abdon Andres Reyes Argoty was charged in December with the same crime.

Source: Attorney General's web site: January 12, 2011.

* January 11, 2011. Two former Colombian Army soldiers, Eric Fernando Contreras Delgado and Giovany Enrique Carrillo Olmos, murdered a Colombian Navy deserter on December 24, 2006 in Majagual (Sucre Province). They stole his identity documents and reported him as a guerrilla they had killed in combat.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Espectador* and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 11, 2011.

* January 11, 2011. A noncommissioned officer in the Colombian Army has been arrested and charged with voluntary manslaughter in the death of a 6-year-old child when he fired several shots in the air in Maria La Baja (Bolívar Province). He is being held without bail.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Pais*, Cali, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, January 11, 2011.

* January 9, 2011. Two Colombian National Police officials in Riohacha (Guajira Province), Lt. Robert Martinez Montes and 2d Lt. Cesar Enrique Bermudez Peñaloza, have been convicted of bribery for furnishing information to drug traffickers about planned police operations. They have each been sentenced to five years in prison.

Source: *RCN Radio*, Bogotá, January 9, 2011.

* January 8, 2011. Bogotá newsweekly *Semana* interviewed residents of the Caguan River town of Penas Coloradas (Caqueta Province) about their experience with the Colombian Army. They remember the exact date, April 25, 2004, when the Army came to the town of about 700 families and told them they had to leave immediately. They did. Now the armed forces use their abandoned homes as their camp.

The Army denies this, but they permit no reporter or any civilian to enter the town. They have a checkpoint on the riverside and require any person using the river to register. They restrict the amount of food products that can be transported down the river and they

especially limit the transport of medications and gasoline, claiming that it will be furnished to the guerrillas. The subsistence farmers are deprived of those products. A loaf of bread can cost 6,000 pesos (more than \$3). Without gasoline, the electric utility cannot operate. Health centers have been abandoned and there are not even any first aid supplies.



In May 2008, a prosecutor who ordered 28 farmers arrested as terrorists was himself arrested and extradited to the United States, charged with drug trafficking. The 28 farmers were eventually released. The residents know that if the guerrillas think they are helping the Army, they will kill them.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogotá, January 8, 2011.

* January 7, 2011. Colombian Army Corporal Guillermo Gutierrez Salazar has entered into a plea agreement under which he pleaded guilty to aggravated homicide, aggravated criminal conspiracy, and illegal use of weapons. He will be sentenced to 22 years and eight months in prison for his part in the killing of a civilian, Gerardo Quintero Jaimes. The court found that, as part of Anti-Guerrilla Battalion #98, attached to Mobile Brigade #15, he killed a civilian, Gerardo Quintero Jaimes, who was leaving a neighbor's wake. The defendant and the other soldiers reported Quintero as a guerrilla killed in combat, but the evidence showed that there had been no combat.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, January 7, 2011.

* January 6, 2011. Jorge Noguera, former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) has been charged with aggravated criminal conspiracy, illegal wiretapping, and abuse of public office by allowing subordinates to wiretap and spy on Supreme Court justices, journalists, opposition politicians, and representatives of non-governmental organizations. He is already in custody on charges of using DAS facilities to assist paramilitaries and misuse of Plan Colombia funding.

Source: *El Espectador*, and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, January 6, 2011, and *Semana.com*, Bogota, January 7, 2011.

* January 6, 2011. The deputy director of a DAS (Colombian FBI) division, German Villalba, in a plea agreement, has admitted to criminal conspiracy, illegal wiretapping, and abuse of public office. The charges were based on his illegal tapping of telephones and spying on representatives of non-governmental organizations. He is involved in a lawsuit in Madrid, instituted by Spanish human rights defenders who want him investigated for illegal spying in Europe.

Source: *RCN Radio* and *Espectador*, Bogota, January 6, 2011, and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, January 7, 2011.

* January 6, 2011. A Colombian National Police lieutenant has been arrested and charged with sexually abusing his daughter, beginning in December 2007 when she was only 13 years

old. According to the investigation, he threatened her with his service revolver if she told anyone about the abuse. He is being held without bail.

Source: *Semana.com*, *El Espectador* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, January 6, 2011.

* January 5, 2011.

* January 5, 2011. The Colombian National Police have discharged the three officers who accompanied the two young women who disappeared when their car fell into the Medellin River. They have been charged criminally. The Inspector General of the Police stated that they were discharged because of their inconsistent and untruthful versions of what happened, because their car was not properly registered, and they failed to render aid and report the accident.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador* and *Semana.com*, Bogota, *El Herald*, Barranquilla, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, January 5, 2011.

* January 5, 2011. An appeals court upheld the arrest and indictment of five Colombian Air Force technicians at Apiay Air Force Base, Villavencio (Meta Province) on charges of criminal conspiracy and theft of government property. They are accused of stealing airplane parts and selling the parts on the black market.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, January 5, 2011.

* January 4, 2011. Colombian Army Sgt. Jose Wilmer Mancilla Mancilla has admitted taking part in the extrajudicial execution of a civilian in Corozal (Sucre Province). On January 8, 2008, Mancilla presented the victim's body as a "guerrilla killed in combat." Detectives established that the victim was killed on a farm near Corozal and that there had been no combat. For the same incident, two soldiers have been sentenced to 19 years in prison and another to 12 years.

Source: *El Espectador*, *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, January 4, 2011.

* January 4, 2011. A Colombian Navy sailor admitted murdering a physician whose computer he had stolen. He is in custody in a military barracks.

Source: *El Tiempo* and Attorney General's web site, Bogota, January 4, 2011.

* January 4, 2011. The three police officers who drove with Eliana Maria Cardenas and Lina Henao, who disappeared when their car fell into the Medellin River will be investigated by the Attorney General for aggravated homicide after the body of Eliana Cardenas was found in the river.

Source: *El Espectador*, *RCN Radio*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, January 4, 2011.



* January 4, 2011. The Colombian National Police command has lost confidence in the three officers who were with the two young women who have disappeared in the Medellin River. They cite the fact that the three have lied repeatedly and that their car carried a false license plate. The investigation will continue.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, January 4, 2011.

* January 3, 2011. A Colombian Army major and four other soldiers have been indicted on charges of homicide after killing three civilians and then falsely presenting their bodies as “guerrillas killed in combat”. On December 11, 2002 in a rural area of the municipality of Campamento (Antioquia Province), troops attached to the Fourth Brigade seized three men working in a sugarcane field. Their bodies were found with two shotguns.

Colombian authorities are investigating the extrajudicial killings of 2,650 civilians and about 1,100 soldiers are under investigation. At least 272 soldiers have been convicted while 58 have been found not guilty since 2008.

Source: *Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., and *New York Times*, New York, USA, *Semana.com* and Attorney General’s web site, Bogota, *El Herald*, Barranquilla, January 3, 2011 and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, January 4, 2011.

* January 3, 2011. A Colombian National Police lieutenant has been arrested and charged with attempted murder after he fired a shot at a defenseless civilian on June 6, 2010. He and some other officers entered a residence in Medellin (Antioquia Province) where he shot a young man who was on his knees. The victim survived but endured several months in intensive care.

Source: *El Espectador* and Attorney General’s web site, Bogota, January 3, 2011.

* January 2, 2011. *El Tiempo* carries a long story describing how drug trafficker and paramilitary commander Pedro Oliverio Guerrero, alias “Cuchillo” (“The Knife”), killed in a Christmas Eve attack, took over Meta and Guaviare Provinces and maintained control. Investigators from the NGO Nuevo Arco Iris (The New Rainbow) learned from gang sources that the Colombian armed forces aided “Cuchillo”. According to *El Tiempo*, government leaders knew that some Army personnel were working for “Cuchillo” and therefore they assigned the National Police to capture him. Currently the Army has hundreds of disciplinary investigations involving aid to “Cuchillo”. The Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) closed three posts in Meta Province while four detectives were criminally charged with the “disappearance” of one of “Cuchillo”’s victims.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, January 2, 2011.

* January 2, 2011. *El Colombiano* recounts the mysterious accident in which a car holding two young women and three police officers, all returning from a night of partying, fell into the Medellin River with the two young women disappearing and the three officers only slightly injured. The accident took place at 3:20 am, but the transit police did not arrive until

4:50 am and there is no record of any emergency assistance. The Envigado Fire Department was not notified. Two of the police officers ended up at an emergency room, but the driver went home. When the officers were interviewed by their superiors, they said they did not know the women. But a co-worker of one of the women, Lina Marcela Henao Davila, said that the other woman, Eliana Maria Cardenas had been dating one of the officers for some time. Eliana's aunt confirmed that. And the car had false license plates. The investigation is continuing.



Source: *El Colombiano*, January 2, 2011.

* January 1, 2011. A noncommissioned officer and four Colombian Army soldiers have been sentenced to 40 years in prison after their convictions for homicide, torture, and kidnapping. Prosecutors showed that on May 28, 2005, when a patrol from the 4th Artillery Battalion dragged a civilian couple out of their home in the municipality of Granada (Antioquia). On the next day they were reported killed in combat with a gang. Forensic evidence showed that there had been no combat and that the woman had been tortured.

Source: *El Tiempo* and Attorney General's web site, Bogota, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, January 1, 2011.

* January 1, 2011. Colombian Police are examining a notebook and other documents found in the camp where drug trafficker and paramilitary commander Pedro Guerrero, alias "Cuchillo" ("The Knife") died in a Christmas Eve attack. The notebook contains the names of members of the Colombian military who were on Guerrero's payroll. The Army is investigating members of the military who leaked information to the gang and the source of military weapons that the gang was using.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, January 1, 2011.

* January 1, 2011. *El Espectador* relates new testimony in the Attorney General's investigation of illegal spying and wiretapping by the DAS (Colombian FBI). Prosecutors are investigating the possible involvement of former Senator Nancy Patricia Gutierrez, the former DAS director, Andres Penate, who has been punished by the Inspector General and may be facing criminal charges, and the former DAS intelligence director, Fernando Tabares, who has already been sentenced to eight years in prison, have provided new information. Penate insisted that Senator Piedad Cordoba was trying to help Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez bring his "Bolivarian revolution" to Colombia. Thus he felt it was legal to spy on her.

Tabares, the former intelligence director, claimed that the DAS never "ordered" Supreme Court Justices to be followed, but instead "obtained information". He said that he showed Senator Gutierrez the information at the President's order, especially information about then-Senator Piedad Cordoba. He also revealed that after one DAS official, Martha Leal, was already in jail, he and then-director of the DAS, Maria del Pilar Hurtado, visited her and Hurtado asked her if she had told any of the investigators about the information DAS furnished to Senator Gutierrez. Leal said she had not been asked but that she would tell the truth. Hurtado told her she need not mention it.

Tabares and Penate believed that it was their job to find information any way they could, without need for court permission, and to give it to government officials who asked for it.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, January 1, 2011.

* December 31, 2010. After the death of paramilitary commander and drug trafficker Pedro Guerrero, alias “Cuchillo” (“The Knife”) in a Christmas Eve attack, investigators are searching the destroyed camp. They have found a notebook and at least 30 documents containing evidence of corruption and criminal activity, including payoffs to members of the Colombian military.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, 2010.

* December 31, 2010. A Colombian Army lieutenant was arrested and charged with homicide, falsifying a public document and perjury in the death of a civilian on March 15, 2007 in Labranzagrande (Boyaca Province). He is in custody in a military installation.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, December 31, 2010.

* December 30, 2010. *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel* carries a story by Chris Kraul of the *Los Angeles Times* quoting Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos’ announcement of the death of paramilitary commander and drug trafficker Pedro Guerrero, alias “Cuchillo” (“The Knife”). Santos said that Guerrero was responsible for 3,000 deaths, including the 49 civilians murdered at Mapiripan in 1997, where the paramilitaries used chain saws and machetes during a five-day bloodbath. The article notes that the Mapiripan killings were allegedly carried out with the knowledge of the Colombian army and a general was later sentenced to prison for not taking any action.

Source: *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel*, December 30, 2010.

* December 30, 2010. Colombian Army officials are investigating a group of soldiers suspected of leaking confidential information to criminal gangs, particularly in Granada (Meta Province). The Army commandant, General Alejandro Navas explained that the investigation is related to the activities of “Cuchillo”, who recently died in a military attack, and gangs active in the area.

Source: *RCN Radio*, Bogota, December 30, 2010.

* December 30, 2010. Relatives of two women who have disappeared complain that Colombian police officers are involved. The father of one of the women states that an officer had been threatening his daughter for her refusal to sign a document she thought was illegal. Prosecutors are investigating.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, December 30, 2010.



* December 30, 2010. Prosecutors have interrogated one of the three Police officers who appear to be involved in the disappearance of two women who fell into the Medellin River in a traffic accident on December 26. Another group of investigators is examining injuries suffered by a lieutenant and the three officers, and checking on the false license plate on the car involved.



Source: *RCN Radio*, Bogota, December 30, 2010.

* December 29, 2010. Retired Colombian Army General Hector Fandino is being interrogated by Attorney General's Office investigators about the February 2005 massacre of eight people, including a teenager and two children, at San Jose de Apartado. Retired Captain Guillermo Armando Gordillo, who has entered into a plea agreement, has testified that Gen. Fandino instructed him not to admit that Army soldiers had been patrolling along with paramilitaries involved in the massacre. According to Gordillo, Fandino told him that two informants had already testified that the guerrillas had carried out the massacre. Gordillo added that paramilitaries accompanying the soldiers had actual done it. He added that several others of his Army superiors had told him what he should tell the investigators.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, December 29, 2010.

* December 29, 2010. A Colombian Army officer, a noncommissioned officer and two soldiers have been arrested and charged with homicide, criminal conspiracy, fraud, and falsification of a public document in connection with the June 4, 2007 death of a paramilitary who had demobilized. His body was presented as a "criminal killed in combat."

Source: *El Tiempo*, and *RCN Radio*, Bogota and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, December 29, 2010.

* December 29, 2010. In confusing circumstances, patrolling Colombian Army soldiers shot a civilian in the face near the town of Carrizal (Cesar Province). The victim lost an eye and may lose sight in his other eye. According to a relative, he was walking to his brother's farm to pick up a mule and was not carrying a gun. The commander of the 11th Brigade stated that the incident will be investigated.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, December 29, 2010.

* December 28, 2010. A Colombian Army soldier has revealed to Attorney General's Office investigators the manner in which the Colombian Army aided recently killed paramilitary commander and drug trafficker Pedro Guerrero, alias "Cuchillo" ("The Knife"). The government has been searching intensely for Guerrero for over a year but was unable to capture him. According to the witness, this was because Guerrero was paying military officers to protect him. He also testified that some colonels also took part in the drug business and provided "Cuchillo" with weapons to use against his drug trafficking rivals.

Source: *Semana.com*, December 28, 2010.

* December 28, 2010. A Colombian police officer has been arrested and charged with homicide in the death of his girlfriend. He had claimed that he had invited her to lunch and that he had unloaded his service weapon so that children in the house would not be injured but failed to realize that one bullet remained in the chamber. Forensic evidence supported the conclusion that he had shot her in the head intentionally on December 10 at 1:30 pm.



Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, December 28, 2010.

* December 27, 2010. A Colombian Army sergeant was captured in Carepa (Antioquia Province) and charged with killing two civilians in the municipality of Barbosa on December 5, 2004. They were laborers but were reported as paramilitaries killed in combat.

Source: Attorney General's web site, December 27, 2010.

* December 27, 2010. The father of one of the two women who disappeared in the Medellin River after a traffic accident claims that the police are involved in his daughter's disappearance. He believes their statements are inconsistent, and points out that one of them appeared at his house after the accident. The case is being investigated.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, December 27, 2010.

* December 24, 2010. A former chauffeur for Supreme Court Justice Ivan Velasquez, who was tailed and wiretapped by the DAS (Colombian FBI), insists that the stalking and wiretapping was ordered by then-President Alvaro Uribe. He explained that former DAS detective Alba Luz Florez recruited him to spy on the Justice, saying that President Uribe wanted it done. He said his closeness to Justice Velasquez made it possible for him to photocopy Supreme Court documents and turn them over to the DAS. He made his statements in an investigative meeting where he sought a plea bargain in which he would testify against his superiors in the wiretapping scandal.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, December 24, 2010.

* December 23, 2010. A Colombian Army corporal, Luis Alejandro Toledo Sanchez, has been arrested and charged for his alleged responsibility for the disappearance and murder of three civilians in San Benito Abad (Sucre Province). According to the investigation, on June 5, 2007, soldiers reported that three extortionists had been killed in combat. They were reported to have been armed with pistols and a home-made grenade launcher. Investigation revealed that two of the victims operated bicycle taxis and the third worked in construction. They all had been offered work harvesting cotton. Instead they were murdered. Corporal Toledo is already charged in a similar case that took place on November 1, 2007, also in Sucre Province.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, December 23, 2010.

* December 23, 2010. A group of seven Spanish nongovernmental organizations has asked the Colombian government to clarify the "illegal activities" allegedly committed by the secret

actions of the DAS (Colombian FBI) in Spain. In a letter to the Colombian Ambassador to Spain, the group expressed its “concern” in light of a lawsuit filed in Madrid against former Colombian President Álvaro Uribe, charging that the DAS spied on human rights activists in Spain. The lawsuit alleges that the DA intercepted their e-mails and other communications. Another complaint has been filed in Belgium, also claiming that DAS agents spied on human rights activists in Europe.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, December 23, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, December 25, 2010.

* December 23, 2010. Ex-Colombian Army colonel Bayron Carvajal, in prison for the death of 10 police officers and one civilian, is being investigated for his part in two alleged “false positives” committed in Ciénaga (Magdalena Province) in January and May of 1999. Several other soldiers are also being investigated for their part in these crimes.

In another investigation involving Carvahal, demobilized and extradited paramilitary commander Ever Veloza, alias “HH”, testified in 2008 that when Carvajal was a captain attached to the Colombian Army’s 17th Brigade, soldiers under Carvajal’s command regularly patrolled together with the paramilitaries. He claimed that they conspired to “legalize” certain murders in the Turbo municipality (Antioquia Province) including in particular the murder of a family named Álvarez.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, December 23, 2010.

* December 23, 2010. Nine Colombian Army soldiers have each been and sentenced to 30 years in prison after being found guilty of murder in the death of a young man whose body they presented as “guerrilla killed in combat”. On June 6, 2002, they reported that he had threatened them with an AK-47. An investigation revealed that he had been seized in a pool hall in Medellin before he was killed.

Source: *Semana.com* and *RCN Radio*, Bogota, and *El Pais*, Cali, December 23, 2010.

* December 23, 2010. Corporal Luis Toledo Sánchez has been arrested and charged with taking part in the murders of two young men who had been lured with offers of work on a farm and were then murdered and their bodies presented as “guerrillas killed in combat”. Toledo is being held without bail in military barracks in Montería (Córdoba Province).

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, December 23, 2010, and Attorney General’s web site, December 21, 2010.

* December 21, 2010. A former DAS (Colombian FBI) detective, Franklin Gaitán has been extradited to the United States where he is wanted for drug trafficking. He is charged with being the head of security for drug trafficker Julio Alberto Lozada and with being part of the “board of directors” for two other drug traffickers. In Colombia he is accused of selling confidential National Police information to criminal gangs.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, December 21, 2010.

* December 20, 2010. A Colombian Army noncommissioned officer and three soldiers have been arrested and charged with the murder of two civilians. The soldiers' report claimed that the two victims had been in a firefight with Army personnel in the town of El Paraiso (Antioquia Province). Two homemade shotguns and two paramilitary identity bracelets were found next to their bodies. An investigation showed that there had not been any combat. The four defendants are being held without bail.



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

* December 18, 2010. A Colombian Army soldier has been found guilty of murder in the deaths of two civilians whose bodies were presented as "guerrillas killed in combat". The soldier was part of a squadron of the Army's 10th Brigade, known as "Thunder", who reported two guerrillas killed in combat in a rural area of San Diego (Cesar Province). The two civilians were a 24-year-old marketing student, a female, and a 28-year old merchant. The two had been traveling by motorcycle from Los Encantos to Media Luna. The Attorney General's investigation revealed that there had been no combat and the two had been seized at an Army checkpoint. Their bodies showed no sign of their having fired a weapon. At his trial, the defendant testified that when the squadron stopped the motorcycle at the checkpoint, his lieutenant ordered him to shoot the woman because he believed that she was a guerrilla. He testified that the other members of the squadron killed the man. The lieutenant, two noncommissioned officers, and soldiers from the squadron have also been charged.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, December 18, 2010.

* December 17, 2010. Colombia's Inspector General has ordered the discharge of the country's Highway Police commander, Luis Alberto Guevara Díaz. The Inspector General found that Col. Guevara and his wife and another person had defrauded a number of people, promising to help them leave the country illegally by obtaining false visas to Canada. He is also accused of using his office for his own gain and that of his accomplices.

Source: *RCN Radio*, Bogota, December 17, 2010.

* December 17, 2010. The former assistant director of DAS (Colombian Army) section asserts that the former President of Colombia, Álvaro Uribe did indeed know about the illegal spying on the justices of the Colombian Supreme Court, as well as opposition politicians and journalists. William Romero also claimed that he was ordered to carry out illegal wiretaps and that his superior indicated that the President expressed gratitude for their efforts and directed a reward of a million pesos (about \$500) be given to each of his employees.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, December 17, 2010.

* December 17, 2010. Bogota's Superior Court has approved a plea bargain under which Captain Fernando Tabares, former director of intelligence at the DAS (Colombian FBI) pleaded guilty to criminal conspiracy, malfeasance in office, illegal wiretapping and abuse of

authority. He also agreed to testify against other defendants in the continuing cases. He was sentenced to eight years and two months imprisonment.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, December 17, 2010.

* December 16, 2010. A final hearing on the indictment of 13 Colombian Army soldiers for “false positives” was postponed because a fingerprint expert witness was unavailable. The defendants have not been allowed bail and will remain in custody.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, December 16, 2010.

* December 16, 2010. Alba Luz Flórez, a former DAS (Colombian FBI) agent being investigated for illegal spying and wiretapping, urged her former boss, María del Pilar Hurtado, to return from her asylum in Panama and “tell the truth”. Flórez maintained that she was only following orders. Another former DAS section chief, William Romero, also charged, insisted that Hurtado had left the country in order to “protect someone who might be No. 1”. He maintained that he had stalked individuals and destroyed information, sought out sources, manipulated the sources, and destroyed records, all on orders from superiors.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, *El Pais*, Cali, December 16, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, December 17, 2010.

* December 15, 2010. Four Colombian Army soldiers, including a second lieutenant, have been indicted on charges of kidnapping, illegal recruitment and criminal conspiracy in the murder of two laborers on January 11, 2007. Their bodies were presented as guerrillas who recruited children, and who had been “killed in combat”. The four defendants are charged with kidnapping, illegal recruitment, and criminal conspiracy.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, December 15, 2010.

* December 15, 2010. The Colombian Army has assured that Col. Jose Gabriel Castrillon Garcia, now assigned to the OAS in Washington, D.C., will attend an investigative hearing scheduled for January 6, 2011. The Attorney General’s office is investigating his connection with the murder of four civilians whose bodies were presented as guerrillas in Choco Province in 2004. The Army’s decision was announced after Bogota newspaper *El Tiempo* complained that he Castrillon had failed to attend a hearing on December 9 and 10. Eight of his subordinates are being prosecuted for the murder of the four civilians.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, December 15, 2010.

* December 15, 2010. A hearing will be held today to determine whether 13 Colombian soldiers will be released from custody because of the statute of limitations. The soldiers are to be tried for the April 2, 2006 murder of four civilians whose bodies were presented as guerrillas killed in combat. The murders took place in the town of Sabanilla (Guajira Province).

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, December 15, 2010.



* December 14, 2010. A study by the Latin American Working Group (LAWG) based in Washington, D.C. reports that more than 51,000 Colombians have “disappeared” in the last several decades. At least 32,000 were “forced disappearances”, committed by guerrillas, paramilitaries, and members of the Colombian Armed Forces. The authors express concern that the actual totals may be much higher. At least 3,000 forced disappearances were allegedly carried out by the Colombian military.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, December 14, 2010.

* December 14, 2010. Bogota newspaper *El Tiempo* complains that a Colombian Army colonel, Jose Gabriel Castrillon Garcia, had been arrested and jailed, accused of taking part in the murder of four civilians, but was released from jail and assigned to the OAS headquarters in Washington, D.C. The information came to light after he failed to attend an investigative hearing on December 9 and 10. The families of the four victims, whose bodies were presented as guerrillas killed in combat, requested that the government revoke Col. Castrillon’s assignment to Washington.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, December 14, 2010.

* December 13, 2010. A Colombian Army captain, living in Australia, has been identified by Interpol and Australian police as a fugitive, but has not yet been extradited to Colombia. He is involved in the 1992 murder of a civilian in Santa Rosa de Lima (Magdalena Province) by Colombian Army soldiers who presented his body as a guerrilla killed in combat. He was dragged from a bus and witnesses testified that he was tied up and beaten and thrown on the back of a pick-up truck. Investigators found that the soldiers took him to a farm where he was murdered. Two soldiers have been convicted in the case and a warrant for the arrest of a lieutenant has been issued. The victim’s family took the case to the Inter-American Court for Human Rights, where the Colombian government admitted responsibility.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, December 13, 2010.

* December 13, 2010. A Colombian Army officer and a noncommissioned officer, along with two DAS (Colombian FBI) detectives, have been indicted on charges of homicide, aggravated kidnapping, falsifying a public document and obstruction of justice in the death of Ernesto Cruz Becerra in Aguazul (Casanare Province). The body of Cruz was placed next to a rifle and the faked scene was photographed by the detectives.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, *El Espectador*, Bogota, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, December 13, 2010.

* December 13, 2010. *RCN Radio* reports that a study by the Colombian Public Defender’s Office concludes that two million Colombians are at risk of human rights violations. The most vulnerable populations are farmers and displaced people and indigenous and Afro-Colombian people and the greatest risks are murder and forced displacement. The Public

Defender's office reported receiving 4,267 human rights complaints in the last year, including 1,541 by paramilitaries, 1,243 by guerrillas and 171 by the Armed Forces.

Source: *RCN Radio*, December 13, 2010.

* December 12, 2010. A Colombian National Police officer has been charged with murdering his girlfriend, allegedly because of jealousy, although he claims that the victim was shot by accident.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, and *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, December 12, 2010.

* December 12, 2010. Six Colombian Army soldiers have admitted their participation in the murder of a civilian in Corozal (Sucre Province) on January 8, 2008. Because of their confessions, they are eligible to receive reduced sentences. The two who shot the victim were sentenced to 19 years and 8 months in prison, and the four who stood guard were sentenced to 12 years and six months in prison.

Source: Attorney General's web site, December 9, and *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, December 12, 2010.

* December 10, 2010. A group of Colombian nongovernmental organizations, known as the Women, Work, and Conflict Roundtable, reports that violations of women's human rights have increased since a special United Nations report in 2001. The UN recommendations were never carried out. Violations by the Armed Forces have increased from 7.17 % in 2002 to 18.99% in 2008. The report cites specific incidents involving the Colombian military, as follows:

On May 15, 2009, a 14-year-old girl was sexually assaulted by a soldier in Tame (Arauca Province). The soldier was discharged and criminal charges are pending.

On April 8, 2010 in Arauca (Arauca Province) a 14-year-old girl was sexually assaulted and beaten up, allegedly by soldiers from the 17th Brigade. One soldier has been charged criminally.

On October 2, 2010, in the town of Caño Verde (Arauca Province) a young girl was sexually assaulted, allegedly by members of the Vultures Patrol, attached to the Army's Mobile Brigade No. 5. Her mother has filed a criminal complaint.

On October 14, 2010, a 14-year-old girl was sexually assaulted and killed, allegedly by one or more members of the Vultures Patrol in the town of Flor Amarillo (Arauca Province). Her two younger brothers were also murdered. A suspect is in custody.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota, December 10, and *El Pais*, Cali, December 9, 2010.

* December 10, 2010. Wikileaks revealed cables from former U.S. Ambassador to Colombia William Brownfield regarding the "false positives" scandal. In the "false positives" scandal,



Colombian military policy offered rewards to soldiers who could prove they killed a guerrilla. As a result, they would kill civilians and dress them as guerrillas in order to collect the reward. In one message, Brownfield relates that General Carlos Suárez, who was in charge of the Colombian Army investigation, had stated that President Uribe “considered military success in terms of deaths.” Military leaders feared that “the most recent reports of enemy deaths in combat include many who are not guerrillas and this creates a deceptive image of progress”.



In another cable revealed by Wikileaks, Gen. Suarez reports that the practice is widespread. In another, he complains that the Army is resisting the investigation. Finally, Ambassador Brownfield cabled Washington that if the new Minister of Defense (succeeding now-President Santos) lacked commitment to human rights, the progress that has been made would be reversed.

Source: *Semana.com*, December 10, and *El Espectador*, Bogota, December 9, 2010.

* December 9, 2010. Continuing the Wikileaks story, *RCN Radio* reported cables revealing that Colombian Army General Oscar Gonzalez not only tried to impede the discharge of officials who had supported the extrajudicial killings, but also tried to intimidate witnesses who could testify about the murders committed by the 11th Brigade in Sucre Province. General Suarez, assigned to investigate the scandal, stated that retired generals such as Mario Montoya and Rito Alejo del Rio were working with politicians to block the human rights initiatives of the then-Minister of Defense, Juan Manuel Santos, now President of Colombia.

Source: *RCN Radio*, Bogota, December 9, 2010.

* December 9, 2010. Colombia’s Supreme Court has re-opened the investigation of the participation of Colombian Army Lt. Jose Vicente Castro in the massacre at El Aro (Antioquia Province) at the request of the Inter-American Court for Human Rights. Lt. Castro had been found not guilty of participating, but the Court found that interviews with demobilized paramilitaries had uncovered new evidence against him.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, and *El Espectador*, Bogota, December 9, 2010.

* December 9, 2010. A Colombian Army soldier murdered a fellow soldier after a fight in the barracks of the 11th Brigade in Monteria (Cordoba Province). The victim pulled another soldier’s pants down as a joke and the soldier shot him with his service weapon.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, December 9, 2010.

* December 9, 2010. Three persons who recruited victims who were later killed by soldiers and presented as “guerrillas killed in combat” were each sentenced to 37 years and six months in prison. The two victims were killed on March 19, 2007 and two inoperable rifles were placed next to their bodies. The defendants had offered the victims farm work and had their bus fare to the place where the soldiers killed them.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogota.

* December 9, 2010. Six Colombian Army soldiers will be sentenced to 12-19 years in prison after pleading guilty to

* December 9, 2010. *Huffington Post* comments on a report just released by the Latin America Working Group Education Fund and the U.S. Office on Colombia, two U.S. nongovernmental organizations. The report is entitled *Breaking the Silence: In Search of Colombia's Disappeared*. The report states that 51,000 people are registered as “disappeared”, but that the real total is likely to be much higher. It identifies paramilitaries, guerrillas, and Colombian Armed Forces personnel as responsible for the disappearances. The report includes the more than 3,000 people who were killed by soldiers and presented as “guerrillas killed in combat”, the scheme known as “false positives”.



Source: *Huffington Post*, USA, December 9, 2010.

* December 8, 2010. Members of European parliaments urged the Parliament of the European to disapprove the free trade agreement negotiated last May between Colombia and the European Union, They argue that the Colombian armed forces continue to deny human rights to Colombian citizens, emphasizing that so far this year, 41 trade unionists have been murdered.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, December 8, 2010.

* December 8, 2010. A retired Colombian Army captain and two soldiers have been sentenced to 40 years in prison for the murder of two young people in the town of La Honda (Antioquia Province) on March 23, 1997. The two victims, aged 14 and 17, were reported as “guerrillas killed in combat” and a rifle, a revolver and two grenades were found next to their bodies. Witnesses testified that the soldiers had seized the boys and made them walk to the place where they were killed. Experts found that they had been shot at close range and that the rifle placed beside their bodies was inoperable.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, December 8, 2010.

* December 8, 2010. Colombian Army Sergeant Elias Enrique Guerra Martinez has been indicted for aggravated homicide in the deaths of two young people in Saravena (Arauca Province). The investigation revealed that on November 26, 2007, the two young men, one a high school student and one a store clerk, were riding a motorcycle. A few days later their bodies were reported as “guerrillas killed in combat” by Colombian Army troops in the town of El Silencio (Boyaca Province). Forensic evidence showed that there had been no combat and there was no evidence that the two youths had anything to do with guerrillas or armed groups.

Source: *Semana.com*, December 8, 2010.

* December 8, 2010. Colombian Army Major Orlando Arturo Cespedes Escalona has been arrested and charged with homicide, aggravated forced disappearance and criminal conspiracy in connection with the exajudicial execution of 22 young men whose bodies were presented

as “guerrillas killed in combat.” The victims, aged 16 to 28, had been promised farm work in Cordoba and Sucre that would pay them up to 750,000 pesos (about \$375) a month. A retired Colombian Army colonel, Luis Fernando Borja Aristizabal, is also being sought in connection with the case. Some of the recruiters have already been found guilty and sentenced to prison.



Source: *Semana.com*, December 8, 2010.

* December 8, 2010. Colombia’s Inspector General has ordered the discharge of five Colombian Army soldiers attached to the “Boyaca 1” Counter-Guerrillas of the 10th Infantry Battalion, commanded by Col. Atanasio Girardot. According to the investigation, on November 28, 2003, the five seized a farmer without any court order and forced him to go to a secret headquarters they maintained in Ituango (Antioquia Province). There they tried to make him confess that he belonged to a guerrilla group and when he refused, they set him on fire, injuring him. The Inspector General’s Office indicated that there is sufficient evidence for the Attorney General to charge then with torture.

Source: *Semana.com*, December 8, 2010.

* December 7, 2010. A Colombian Army officer and two soldiers have been found guilty of murdering two teenagers in the town of La Honda (Antioquia Province) and sentenced to 40 years in prison. The investigation showed that on March 23, 1997, troops from the 4th Brigade reported the death of the two, aged 14 and 17 in combat with the guerrillas. They also reported that the two were carrying an R-15 rifle, a 38 caliber long revolver and two fragmentation grenades. But witnesses testified that the two had been seized and forced to walk to the place where they were killed. Expert witnesses testified that they had been shot at close range.

Source: *Semana.com*, *El Tiempo*, *Caracol Radio* and Attorney General’s web site, Bogota, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, *El Pais*, Cali, December 7, 2010.

* December 7, 2010. Investigators from the Colombian Attorney General’s Office are interrogating General Hector Fandino, former commander of the Army’s 17th Brigade headquartered at Carepa (Antioquia Province) about the part played by the Army in the massacre of eight people, including four children, at San Jose de Apartado in February 2005. Former Captain Guillermo Armando Gordillo Sanchez has testified that General Fandino ordered him not to reveal that paramilitaries had accompanied 17th Brigade soldiers at the location of the massacre. According to Capt. Gordillo’s testimony, Gen. Fandino told him that two guerrillas had testified that the FARC had carried out the massacre. Gordillo said that other Army superioros had instructed him as to what to say about the role of the soldiers in the massacre.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, December 7, 2010.

* December 7, 2010. Colombia’s Inspector General has urged Colombia’s Supreme Court to find a former Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) Jorge Noguera, guilty of aiding the

paramilitaries while he was in office. Noguera is accused of giving the paramilitaries the names of individuals who should be killed and the paramilitaries then killed them. He is also accused of interfering with investigations of paramilitary activities.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, December 7, 2010.

* December 6, 2010. Cesar Mauricio Velasquez, Colombia's current ambassador to the Vatican, will be interrogated by the Attorney General's Office about his role in meetings where the results of illegal wiretapping by the DAS (Colombian FBI) were discussed. Before becoming ambassador he was former President Alvaro Uribe's press secretary. Several DAS detectives charged in the illegal spying and wiretapping case have mentioned discussing information they obtained about politicians, justices, and journalists with Velasquez and other officials in the President's office.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, and *El Pais*, Cali, December 6, 2010.

* December 6, 2010. Officials of the Colombian National Police have been informed that their 2003 annual report contains some accounting inconsistencies. They promised to investigate.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota and *El Pais*, Cali.

* December 6, 2010. An appellate court in Cundinamarca Province has upheld the sentence of 23 years in prison for Hernando Caballero Vargas, a former DAS detective, who shot two of his subordinates to death and injured four others at a Halloween Party on October 31, 2009. Caballero has admitted his guilt but has given no motive or explanation.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, December 6, 2010.

* December 5, 2010. Journalist Maria Jimena Duzan has spent three years investigating the massacre of her sister and three other journalists at Cimitarra on February 26, 1990. She has written a book about her conclusions, including that the perpetrators have not been punished and that the Colombian armed forces took part in the massacre.

Source: *Verdadabierta.com*, December 5, 2010.

* December 5, 2010. Ten Colombian Army soldiers and six civilians have been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide and aggravated kidnapping in connection with the murders of two laborers on March 2, 2007 in the town of Santa Ana (Guajira Province). Their bodies were presented as "guerrillas killed in combat". Several of the soldiers were also charged with perjury and falsification of a public document.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, December 5, 2010.

* December 3, 2010. Colombian Army 2d Lieutenant Raul Munoz Linares, who has been under arrest for sexually assaulting a 14-year-old girl in Arauca Province, has now been charged

with the murder of the assault victim and her two younger brothers. The three bodies were found in a common grave in some bushes not far from their home. It appeared that their throats had been cut and their father stated that the bodies showed signs of torture.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, *El Espectador* and Attorney General's web site, Bogota, December 3, 2010.



* December 3, 2010. The Foundation for Freedom of the Press (FLIP is the Spanish acronym.) has released a report describing the methods used by the DAS (Colombian FBI) to tail and wiretap five journalists. The report uses information from the Attorney General's criminal investigation. According to the report, the DAS created a "how-to" manual for spying on journalists, including instructions on how to make threatening phone calls. The DAS created a detailed list of reporter Claudia Julieta Duque's activities, including, dates, times, places, and the persons she contacted, including a photo of Duque's daughter taken from the interior of her school.

There was an order to intercept all of Daniel Coronell's e-mails. Coronell heads a news organization. Investigators found evidence that officials of the Uribe administration had information they could not have obtained anywhere else.

For Hollman Morris, who produces a TV news show, there was a thick file that included plans for a campaign to discredit him. They had made videos connecting him with the guerrillas. For Carlos Lozano, who runs a weekly "Voz" ("Voice"), there were 117 pages that reported results from tailing him, plus financial and credit information, photos of his house and office, and even his fingerprints.

One journalist, Gonzalo Guillen, the Colombia correspondent for *El Nuevo Herald* in Miami, actually had to leave Colombia in 2007 because of threats on his life. In July of 2006 he received an e-mail giving him 48 hours to leave the country. When he ignored it, six days later he received another e-mail with threats and with photos of his apartment.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota, December 3, 2010.

* December 3, 2010. Martha Ines Leal, former assistant director of operations of the DAS (Colombian FBI) has agreed to testify against her superiors involved in the DAS wiretapping scandal. Charges of malfeasance in office, abuse of public office, and illegal wiretapping will be dismissed, she will serve five and one-half years in prison, and she will be charged with criminal conspiracy.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, December 3, 2010.

* December 3, 2010. Ten Colombian Army soldiers and six civilians have been charged with the deaths of two laborers, Jose del Carmen Pacheco Pacheco and Luis Alfonso Pabon Perez on March 2, 2007 in the town of Santa Ana (Guajira Province). The two victims were

presented as “guerrillas killed in combat”. The defendants are charged with aggravated kidnapping and aggravated homicide. In addition several are charged with perjury and falsifying public documents.



Source: Attorney General’s web site, Bogota, December 3, 2010.

* December 2, 2010. A resident of Bogota closed his car window when stopped by a police officer. The officer then struck him in the face with his sidearm. The driver had to be off work for 15 days.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, December 2, 2010.

* December 2, 2010. The Colombian Attorney General has charged Jorge Noguera, the former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) with cooperating with the paramilitaries and providing them with information about trade unionists and members of NGO’s supporting human rights. The paramilitaries then murdered them.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, December 2, 2010.

* December 1, 2010. A Colombian Army major and a corporal were sentenced to 32 years and six months in prison after they were found guilty of aggravated homicide and kidnapping. On July 27, 2007, a civilian was seized in an internet café in Villavencio (Meta Province) and murdered. His body was presented as a “guerrilla killed in combat.” The major also ordered a displacement in Villavencio and a lieutenant and two corporals carried it out, using an Army vehicle to transport the victim. They and the other soldiers were sentenced to between 25 and 29 years in prison.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, Bogota, December 1, 2010.

* November 30, 2010. The chief of operations of the DAS (Colombian FBI) has entered into a plea agreement, admitting to criminal conspiracy and illegal wiretapping and agreeing to testify against his superiors.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, and *El Espectador*, Bogota, and *El Pais*, Cali, November 30, 2010.

* November 30, 2010. A number of European NGO’s complain that some of their members have been tailed, wiretapped, and spied on by the DAS (Colombian FBI) even on European soil. They request that Belgian authorities investigate and identify those responsible. They also ask that Belgian authorities act to protect the victims.

Source: *Semana.com*, *Caracol Radio*, *El Espectador*, Bogota, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, *El Pais*, Cali, November 30, 2010.

* November 29, 2010. On November 25, a Colombian Army soldier fired into a vehicle in a rural area, leaving two civilians dead and two others injured.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, November 29 and *El Espectador*, Bogota, November 25, 2010.



* November 26, 2010. On July 2, 2004, two Colombian soldiers knocked at a home in the town of Corrientes (Antioquia Province) and told the 16-year-old boy who answered the door that they could take him to his brother. The next day the bodies of the boy and his brother were reported as “guerrillas killed in combat”. The two soldiers have been indicted on charges of homicide.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, November 26, 2010.

* November 25, 2010. Retired Colombian Army General Miguel Alfredo Maza Marquez has been indicted for his part in the assassination of presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galan Sarmiento on August 18, 1989 in Soacha (Cundinamarca Province).

Source: Attorney General’s web site, Bogota, and *Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., November 25, 2010.

* November 25, 2010. A member of the Colombian Senate, Alexandra Moreno Piraquive, announced that in the past year there have been 94 formal complaints of sexual assault by members of the armed forces. She said most of the complaints have been against Army soldiers and the National Police and that most of the complaints by women and minor girls have been made in Arauca Province.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, November 25, 2010.

* November 25, 2010. Two Colombian National Police officials and three noncommissioned police officers have been arrested, along with 12 other people, for collaborating with a criminal gang. Three of those arrested are former National Police officers.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, November 25, 2010.

* November 24, 2010. A retired Colombian Army colonel, Carlos Alfonso Velasquez, has testified that he complained to superiors about the close relation between General Rito Alejo del Rio, then commander of the Army’s 17th Brigade, and the paramilitaries, but that his superiors did nothing about it. General Alejo, now retired, is being investigated for his collaboration with the paramilitaries and for his part in the murder of a civilian, Marino Lopez Mena. The next hearing is scheduled for January 27, 2011.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, November 24, 2010.

* November 23, 2010. Cali’s *El Pais* reports that a change in judicial assignments will delay a court decision on members of Colombia’s judicial police charged with murdering two of their fellow officers. In October 2008, seven police officers were charged with being part of a criminal gang engaged in bank robberies, street thefts, and murder. They were being investigated for stealing 485 million pesos (about \$242,500) from a bank in August 2008 and

another robbery of an armored car carrying bank funds. The current court proceeding only involves the murder of the two officers.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, November 23, 2010.

* November 23, 2010. Colombia's Inspector General is investigating the use of secret funds by the DAS (Colombian FBI), alleging that millions of pesos were spent to pay informants. The newspaper *El Tiempo* has learned that at least three alleged informants who have received payments actually do not exist and that nonexistent companies also received government funds.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, November 23, 2010.

* November 21, 2010. *Verdadabierta.com*, a section of news magazine *Semana.com*, reports the confession of a paramilitary commander, Carlos Mario Ospina Bedoya, alias Tomato ("Tomato") under Colombia's Justice and Peace law. Ospina described how the paramilitaries took over in Putumayo Province, and how the Colombian armed forces helped them carry out massacres in the communities of El Placer and La Dorada. He said he heard other commanders talking about how the Colombian Army knew that the paramilitaries "are on the side of the angels" and he observed that paramilitaries were allowed to pass checkpoints and they walked right by the Army base at Santa Ana. He said that "everybody knows" that in Puerto Asis, the soldiers regularly played football with the paramilitaries.

Source: *Verdadabierta.com*, Bogotá, November 21, 2010.

* November 21, 2010. Maria del Pilar Hurtado, former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI), has told investigators from the Attorney General's office that she knew that some Supreme Court staff members were leaking confidential information to her staff. She claimed she was concerned that drug traffickers might have infiltrated the court. She stated that when she took over as director, she was told about DAS spying on then-Senator Piedad Cordoba and she knew that the President, the Defense Minister and one of his vice ministers and all of the top military, as well as the President's staff knew about the spying on Sen. Cordoba.

Source: *El Espectador* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, November 21, 2010.

* November 16, 2010. One Colombian Army soldier was killed and two were injured in an incident at battalion headquarters in Chiquinquirá (Sucre Province). A soldier went AWOL and returned to headquarters intoxicated. He began firing a rifle, injuring a sergeant and a corporal and then killed himself.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, November 16, 2010.

* November 15, 2010. An extradited paramilitary commander, Miguel Angel Mejia Munera, alias "El Mellizo" ("The Twin"), making his confession from prison in northern Virginia, USA, testified that he relied on Colombia National Police officials to help his paramilitary



unit take over the municipality of Saravena, just six kilometers from the Venezuela frontier. Another paramilitary commander, Nelson Londono, has also testified about this connection. They said that Police officers picked them up at the airport in Saravena and took them to a house they had rented for them.



Mejia testified about cases where the Police would capture a supposed guerrilla, lock them up at the station, then let them go when paramilitaries were waiting to capture them, torture them and kill them. He also said that Police officials would give the paramilitaries lists of supposed guerrillas to kill. After they were killed, the police would congratulate the paramilitaries. Another paramilitary, in his confession, stated that they went around with the Police, who protected and supported them.

Some citizens of Saravena complained to the Public Defender about the Police and the paramilitaries, and one of them was murdered shortly afterward.

Source: *Verdadabierta.com*, a link at *Semana.com*, Bogota, November 15, 2010.

* November 12, 2010. An article in the news magazine *Semana* outlines “The Seven Plagues” suffered by people who live in Guaviare Province. The guerrillas carry out extortions, “disappearances”, recruitment of children, and drug and weapons trafficking. Food and household needs (rice, salt, soap) are scarce and overpriced. The farmers complain that Colombian Army soldiers break into their houses, accusing them of hiding guerrillas. They take photographs and seize documents and often beat them up.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogotá, November 12, 2010.

* November 12, 2010. Detectives have arrested two Colombian Army officers, one noncommissioned officer and seven soldiers attached to the 6th Brigade in Ibague (Tolima Province) on suspicion of aggravated homicide and theft. On February 2, 2010, when the Army attacked the camp of guerrilla commander Alfonso Cano, the defendants allegedly found 800 million pesos (about \$400,000) that they failed to report and kept for themselves. Another soldier also reported that the defendants found a wounded, unarmed guerrilla and shot him to death.

Source: Attorney General’s web site and *El Espectador*, Bogota, November 12, 2010.

* November 11, 2010. A Colombian police officer has been charged with torture and aggravated homicide in the death of a teenager in a Cali police station. An autopsy showed that the teenager had been beaten and strangled. It also ruled out suicide.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, November 11, 2010.

* November 9, 2010. *Caracol Radio* describes the fear and suspicion in the Tame (Arauca Province) community after the bodies of three children were found in two shallow graves. The bodies of the children showed signs of torture and showed that they were killed with machetes. The body of the youngest child had been pierced by the machete. Residents

suspect that more than one soldier was involved in the sexual assault and murder, and complain that children are now afraid of the soldiers and are afraid to go to school.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, November 9, 2010.

* November 9, 2010. Gustavo Sierra, a former chief of analysis at the DAS (Colombian FBI) has testified that the DAS furnished illegally wiretapped information to the Office of the President, and to the Foreign Ministry, Interior Ministry, Vice President's Office and other offices during President Uribe's administration.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, November 9, 2010.

* November 8, 2010. After two sexual assaults and three murders of children by a Colombian Army lieutenant in Arauca Province, Colombia's Institute of Forensic Medicine has prepared a report on investigations sexual abuse of children by soldiers. It reports on 28 similar cases in 2010, 13 committed by Police and five by the Army, noting that in Norte de Santander Province, a Police officer has been accused of sexually assaulting a three-year-old girl. Also, in Bogota, a Police officer abused a nine-year-old girl.

A similar report for 2009 showed 63 violent acts apparently committed by members of the armed forces: 40 by the Police and 23 by the Army. In 39 of these, the victims were boys and girls under 18 years of age.

In the same article, *El Tiempo* revealed that the lieutenant accused of two sexual assaults and three murders also confessed sexual assaults of two other young girls, whom he called "girlfriends", in the last two months.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, November 8, 2010.

* November 8, 2010. A 3-year-old child was killed in a firefight between guerrillas and the Colombian Army near the town of La Punta (Magdalena Province). Witnesses claim that the soldiers continued firing at the child's residence after the guerrillas had retreated into the woods. After the dead child's family complained, members of the military threatened them. An uncle and a cousin stated that a group of soldiers told them that if they kept on complaining they would get them alone and fix them good.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, November 8, 2010.

* November 8, 2010. A former member of Spain's Congress, Isaura Navarro was also a victim of spying by the DAS (Colombian FBI) when she visited Colombia in 2004 to take part in a conference, according to an NGO headquartered in Valencia, Spain. Apparently the DAS wiretapped communications and tailed members of other Spanish organizations focused on human rights and on the victims of violence. The NGO believes that some of the illegal spying also took place in Spain.

Source: *El Espectador* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, November 8, 2010.



* November 8, 2010. Five Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide and attempted aggravated homicide after they used an Army checkpoint to extort gifts and merchandize from two individuals who passed the c heckpoint. When Limesdes Leonardo Jimenez Lacouture and Albenis Jimenez Calderon refused to comply, the soldiers opened fire on their vehicle and it caught fire. Jimenez Lacouture was killed and Jimenez Calderon was injured.



Source: Attorney General's web site, Bogota and *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, November 8, 2010.

* November 7, 2010. A Senator from the Colombian Green Party, Gilma Jimenez, has urged that the Army be more selective in recruitment so as to avoid persons like Lt. Ruben Munoz who is accused sexual assault and the murder of three children in Tame (Arauca Province). According to unofficial figures, 20 children have been murdered in that province in the lat year.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, November 7, 2010.

* November 5, 2010. A pyramid (Ponzi scheme) was created by two Colombian Air Force colonels. The former commandant of the Air Force was one of the victims. Between 2005 and 2008, they swindled hundreds of soldiers with promises of returns more than ten percent higher than banks were paying. At one time they had 20 billion pesos (about \$20 million). The two colonels are in custody. They are charged with aggravated fraud an criminal conspiracy.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, November 4 and November 5, 2010 and Attorney General's web site and *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, November 5, 2010.

November 5, 2010. In a private meeting, the commandant of the Colombian Army's 8th Division, Gen. Javier Fernandez and the commandant of the 18th Brigade, Gen. Rafael Neira asked the pardon of the family of Jenny and Jimmy Ferney and Jeferon Torres Jaimes, the three children aged 14, 9, and 6, murdered on October 14 by a soldier or soldiers attached to the Brigade. The children's father, Jose Alvaro Torres reported that hehad had to leave his farm in Tame because he was afraid that the soldiers would "disappear" him. The Tame community has complained previously about the actions of the soldiers in the area.

Source: *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, November 5, 2010.

* November 5, 2010. Eight Colombian Army soldiers, an officer, a noncommissioned officer, and six soldiers have been indicted for the crimes of homicide, torture, kidnapping and criminal conspiracy in connection with the deaths of three men on April 6, 2007 in the town of Las Tapias (Casanare Province). The soldiers reported that the three died in combat with the guerrillas, but an investigation reealed that they had been seized as they were leaving a store and taken away and that none of them had any connection with the guerrillas.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, November 5, 2010.

* November 5, 2010. The confessions made by demobilized paramilitary commanders have implicated the Colombian armed forces in the massacre at Barrancabermeja on May 16, 1998. A prosecutor based in Bucaramanga has charged 14 members of the military and two DAS (Colombian FBI) detectives with cooperating with the para-militaries who killed seven people and kidnapped another 25 people who were later shot to death and buried in a common grave. A paramilitary commander, Mario Jaimes, alias “El Panadero” (“The Baker”), making his confession, has indicated that he was aided by the armed forces.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, November 5, 2010.

* November 4, 2010. The Attorney General’s Office has issued warrants for the arrest of 30 individuals who have collaborated with criminal gangs in Antioquia Province, including four former National Police officers. Detectives have obtained tape recordings showing that the officers protected criminal activities and planned the murder of a police officer. Two of the police officer suspects are in custody.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, November 4, 2010.

* November 4, 2010. Colombian Army authorities are investigating whether a group of soldiers who overran a guerrilla camp may have made off with guerrilla property that should have been turned in to the Colombian government. A demobilized guerrilla reported that a group made up of Army officers, noncommissioned officers, and soldiers had taken fifteen million pesos (about \$7500) for their own use.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, November 4, 2010.

* November 4, 2010. A Colombian Army 2d Lieutenant, Raul Munoz Linares, has confessed to the murder of three children near Tame (Arauca Province) and to sexual assault of another 13-year-old girl. The young girl’s testimony led to his arrest because she described his speech impediment. Forensic tests then connected him to the assaults of both girls and the killing of the three children.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, *Caracol Radio*, and Attorney General’s web site, Bogota, and *El Pais*, Cali, November 4, 2010.

* November 3, 2010. The Colombian Army suspended seven officers and soldiers for failing to supervise their troops after the murder of three children in the Tame area (Arauca Province). One of the suspended officers has admitted to raping one of the dead children and also to raping another 13-year-old girl a few days earlier. A unit of the Army’s 5th Mobile Brigade was camped only a few hundred feet from the site where the children’s bodies had been buried in a shallow grave.

Source: *The New York Times*, New York, USA, *El Tiempo*, and *Semana.com*, Bogota, November 3, 2010.

* November 3, 2010. Colombian Army 2d Lieutenant Raul Munoz Linares has been arrested and charged with sexual assault of two young girls on October 2 and October 14, 2010. Forensic tests to establish his guilt for the murders of one of the assault victims and her two brothers have not yet been completed.

Source: *Semana.com*, *El Tiempo*, Bogota, *El Mundo*, Medellin, November 3, 2010, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, November 4, 2010.



* November 2, 2010. Four people, including an Inspector of Police, have been arrested and charged with aggravated criminal conspiracy for promoting and aiding paramilitary activities in the area of Bajo Rionegro (Santander Province). They are being held without bail.

Source: Attorney General's web site, Bogota, November 2, 2010.

* November 1, 2010. The Colombian government, civil society and international groups have all denounced the sexual assault and murder of children in by one or more soldier in Arauca Province. Armando Benedetti, the President of the Colombian Congress, has announced a proposal to establish a committee to investigate all the crimes against children in Arauca.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, November 1, 2010.

* November 1, 2010. After a sexual assault and the murder of three children was announced in Tame (Arauca Province), another parent has filed a complaint of sexual assault of a child by a Colombian Army soldier. A mother told the Attorney General's office that on October 2 at about 2 pm a man dressed in camouflage, carrying a radio and binoculars announced that he was a guerrilla and needed some chickens. He grabbed her 13-year-old daughter's face, made her get the chickens, and then grabbed her by the neck and dragged her into the bushes. He blindfolded her and threatened to harm her if she cried out. He took off her blouse and hit her when she resisted. He assaulted her and then made her wash herself in a puddle. The mother said she knows the rapist was a soldier because soldiers have been all around all week, and because his uniform was labeled Army and he wore a name tag, although the frightened girl did not remember his name. She did recall that he had a speech impediment.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, November 1, 2010.

* November 1, 2010. Colombian newsweekly *Semana* interviews journalist Maria Jimena Duzan who has written a book about the murder of her sister and three others who were working on a documentary on paramilitary violence for a British TV channel. Duzan told the interviewer that government agents took part in the murders, including at three Police officers, the commandant of the National Police in Cimitarra and also the commandant of the Rafael Reyes Army Battalion.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota, November 1, 2010.

* October 31, 2010. Other cases of sexual assaults on young girls by soldiers have been reported in the Tame area of Arauca Province. A 13-year-old girl was assaulted by a soldier

on April 8 of this year. A suspect is in custody. Church spokesmen in the area stated they have received a number of complaints of such crimes.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 31, 2010.

* October 31, 2010. The United States has returned former Colombian Army Major, Julio Cesar Parga Rivas To Colombia to face charges. He is thought to be responsible for at 70 murders-“false positives”-in the Atlantic Coast area, between 2005 and 2007. Several other officers from his batallion will be charged for their connections with emerging criminal gangs and a conspiracy to recruit young men who would later appear as “guerrillas killed in combat. While Parga was in the United States, he identified several of his superiors, including a general, as participating in the conspiracy.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 31, 2010.

* October 31, 2010. The Colombian Public Defender’s Office in Arauca Province has issued an early warning for the municipality of Tame where three young children were found murdered and another was sexually assaulted. The warning states that the civilian population is at risk and vulnerable, and that similar events could take place.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, October 31, 2010.

* October 31, 2010. *El Tiempo* carries a long story of the last day in the lives of the three children who were murdered in Tame (Arauca Province). It tells how their father rose early to go to work, how his daughter Jenny fetched wood to start the fire and fix breakfast for her brothers. Their school was an hour’s walk. The daughter fixed lunch for her father and brothers. Their father went back to the field and when he returned, the children were nowhere to be found. He could not sleep. The next day he asked for help and his neighbors started searching. At nightfall, they found the shallow grave. The neighbors immediately suspected the soldiers because they were around all the time and there had been other complaints of sexual assaults of young girls.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 31, 2010.

* October 30, 2010. The commandant of Colombia’s Army, Gen. Alejandro Navas, made a personal visit to Tame (Arauca Province) to inspect and review the Army’s investigation of the murders of three children.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, October 30, 2010.

* October 29, 2010. A warrant has been issued for the arrest of a retired Colombian Army major, Julio Cesar Parga Rivas, charged with aggravated homicide and criminal conspiracy. Right now Parga is jailed in the United States on narcotics charges but Colombian authorities expect him to be returned. According to the charging documents, in February 2007 two “recruiters” promised nonexistent well-paying ranching jobs to five young men. Once the five arrived at the location of the supposed employment, Major Parga ordered them



to be killed by his soldiers and their bodies were presented as criminals killed in combat. Investigators determined that the victims were not criminals.



Major Parga is also accused of the murder of Dougla Alberto Tavera in 2006. His body was presented as a “guerrilla killed in combat.”

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, October 29, 2010.

* October 29, 2010. Col. Luis Fernando Borja Aristisabal, the former commandant of the Joint Working Group of the Colombian Army in Sucre Province has been arrested and charged with planning the “disappearance” of 11 young men in Toluviejo (Sucre Province). In July 2007 the young men, aged 16-28, were recruited to work on ranches in Cordoba and Sucre Provinces. Later their families were told that they had been killed in combat with the Army in different parts of Cordoba. Col. Borja has been charged with homicide, aggravated forced disappearance and criminal conspiracy.

Source: Attorney General’s web site and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, October 29, 2010, *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 31, 2010, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, October 30, 2010, and *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 27, 2010.

* October 29, 2010. A recruiter who lured young men with promises of good paying jobs at ranches near Monteria (Cordoba Province), knowing that Colombian Army soldiers planned to kill them and present their bodies as “guerrillas killed in combat”, was sentenced to 39 years and nine months in prison. A demobilized paramilitary, he was convicted of aggravated homicide and criminal conspiracy to commit murder. Prosecutors are investigating members of the leadership of the Colombian Army stationed at Monteria.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, Bogota, October 29, 2010.

* October 29, 2010. A retired Colombian Army noncommissioned officer has been interested and charged with selling fake military service cards. When he was arrested, he had six fake cards in his possession. He allegedly sold them for between 300,000 and 500,000 pesos (about \$150-\$250) to 17 individuals.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, October 29, 2010.

* October 29, 2010. *El Mundo* in Medellin, also reports on William Romero’s testimony about the three boxes of evidence in the DAS (Colombian FBI) wiretapping scandal and states that the Supreme Court Justices who were victims of illegal wiretaps by the DAS have complained to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights that the Colombian government is not complying with the interim equitable relief ordered by the Commission. Justice Cesar Julio Valencia Copete complained that the Commission had ordered the government to allow him to examine intelligence files but he has not been permitted to do that. Justice Ivan Velazquez said that the justices have not received the security promised by the National Police.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, October 29, 2010.

* October 29, 2010. Latin America experts for the International Crisis Group, writing for *The Miami Herald*, warn that Colombia's military success against the guerrillas has come at a high cost, because Colombian security forces have a reputation for committing gross human rights abuses with impunity. They have committed extrajudicial executions, rape, torture, looting, mass displacements and restrictions on freedom of movement for civilians. Victims are afraid to cooperate with the justice system because government forces collaborate with illegal armed groups.



Source: *The Miami Herald*, Miami, USA, October 29, 2010.

* October 29, 2010. The United Nations has sent a delegation to observe Colombia's investigation of the murders of three young children in Tame (Arauca Province) allegedly by a member or members of the Colombian military.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, *El Heraldo*, Baranquilla, October 29, 2010, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, October 30, 2010.

* October 28, 2010. Detectives investigating a sexual assault and the murder of three children in Arauca Province state that the soldiers they interviewed have given contradictory testimony. They are planning new interviews and testing DNA samples.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 28, 2010.

* October 28, 2010. Colombia's Acting Attorney General announced that forensic experts have found traces of semen on the school uniform of the 14-year-old girl whose body, along with those of her two younger brothers, was found in a shallow grave near Tame (Arauca Province). They have also found bloodstains on the backpacks of seven Colombian Army soldiers camped in the area. The Minister of Interior and Justice announced that if members of the military are found to be involved, they will be tried in the civil justice system and not in a military court.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, *Semana.com* and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 28, 2010.

* October 28, 2010. William Romero, the former assistant director of a unit in the DAS (Colombian FBI), has delivered three boxes of new evidence in the Attorney General's investigation of illegal spying and wiretapping by the DAS. The boxes contained compact disks, videos and other documents that he had been ordered to destroy. There were files showing the spying on Supreme Court justices and even a copy of Sen. Piedad Cordoba's daily calendar.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga October 28, 2010.

* October 28, 2010. Two Colombian Army soldiers have been sentenced to 56 years in prison after being found guilty of homicide and aggravated kidnapping in the death of Mauricio Hernandez Cuadrado. Hernandez worked at a bus terminal in Tunja (Boyaca

Province). Investigators found that the two soldiers dragged him out of his home and he was next seen dead and reported as a “guerrilla killed in combat”.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, Bogota, October 28, 2010.



* October 28, 2010. The former head of the Colombian Army’s management team in Cordoba Province, Captain Antonio Rozo Valbuena, has been indicted on charges of homicide in the deaths of two young men on March 12, 2007 on a farm near the municipality of San Pelayo (Cordoba Province). A noncommissioned officer and four soldiers have been charged in the same case. The two had been offered well-paid farm work, but were killed and their bodies presented as criminals killed in a confrontation with the Army. The investigation showed that there had been no confrontation and that one of the weapons supposedly used by the victims was inoperable.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, Bogota, and *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, October 28, 2010.

* October 27, 2010. *El Espectador* reports that the “false positives” scandal has reached into the Colombian Army itself. Investigators say that two Colombian Army soldiers were killed by other soldiers and their bodies were presented as “guerrillas killed in combat.”

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 27, 2010.

* October 27, 2010. Colombia’s Attorney General announced that bloodstains found on clothing and tools carried by soldiers stationed in Tame (Arauca Province) where three children were murdered will be examined in Bogota. The investigation will be conducted by the prosecutor’s office in Bogota. The Inspector General has also undertaken an investigation

Source: *Semana.com* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 27, 2010.

* October 27, 2010. Colombian Army Major Orlando Arturo Cespedes Escalona has been arrested and charged with homicide, aggravated forced disappearance, and criminal conspiracy in the deaths of 11 young men aged 16 to 28 in 2007. He was second in command of the Army’s Joint Work Force in Sucre. The young men were promised good paying jobs at ranches in Cordoba and Sucre, but they disappeared. When their families looked for them, they found that their bodies had been presented as “guerrillas killed in combat”.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, Bogota, and *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, October 27, 2010.

* October 27, 2010. Bloodstains have been found on the backpacks of six of the 60 soldiers investigated in the murder of three children, aged 6, 9, and 14 in Tame (Arauca Province). DNA tests of soldiers and of the children’s father will be completed soon. A report by the Catholic Church in Arauca Province states that in the current year, six children have been injured in attacks on their families and five children have been kidnapped.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, October 27, 2010.



* October 27, 2010. The assistant director of one of the divisions of the DAS (Colombian FBI), under interrogation by the Attorney General's Office in the DAS illegal wiretapping scandal, testified the DAS Director of Intelligence, Capt. Fernando Tabares, instructed him to destroy all of the material collected by the illegal spying. He related that he did not follow the order and decided to hide three boxes of material in the homes of family members in Bogota. The boxes contain audio tapes, CD's, DVD's, and documents. There are files detailing spying on former Supreme Court justices and a copy of former Senator Piedad Cordoba's daily calendar.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, October 27, 2010.

* October 26, 2010. Eight Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with murdering three street vendors on April 26, 2006 in a supposed combat in the municipality of Abriaqui (Antioquia Province). The Army's report stated that they had carried three fragmentation grenades, a pistol, and a shotgun. The victims' families reported that they had disappeared from downtown Medellin the day before they were killed, and that one of them had mental problems. A Colombian Army lieutenant, two corporals and three soldiers have been charged with homicide.

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

* October 26, 2010. Colombia's Supreme Court affirmed the sentence of 28 years in prison imposed on a former National Police commander in Itagui (Antioquia Province). The officer had been found guilty of the "disappearance" of four people, a man and three women, including two under-age girls. The four were arrested and taken to the police station but were later removed from the station and were never seen again. The defendant received a reduced sentence because he pleaded guilty to the crime. A second lieutenant and two patrolmen are also involved. The Inspector General had appealed the sentence because he believed the punishment was too light.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and Attorney General's web site, October 26, 2010.

* October 26, 2010. Officials of the Colombian Attorney General's Office, continuing to investigate illegal spying and wiretapping by the DAS (Colombian FBI), have found Colombia's Interior Ministry to be involved. A former DAS official has testified that Interior Ministry officials asked the DAS to infiltrate the ranks of congressional aides to spy on the activities of members of the Colombian Congress. In addition, investigators have found that supposed informants were paid for information downloaded from the internet, and that sources were paid with secret funds.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, October 26, 2010.

* October 26, 2010. Colombia's Inspector General has charged 28 Colombian soldiers with murder in the deaths of two civilians on January 27, 2008. Two colonels, two majors, a

captain, two sergeants, two corporals, and 19 soldiers were charged with, besides murder, a cover-up, obstruction of justice, and failure to report a crime. One of the colonels and two majors have also been charged with aggravated criminal conspiracy. They reported falsely that the two victims were killed in a military operation. In fact, they were murdered and their bodies presented as guerrillas killed in combat.



Source: <http://www.semana.com/wf/ImprimirArticulo.aspx?IdArt=1464425> October 26, 2010 and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, October 25, 2010.

* October 26, 2010. Kathleen Fitzpatrick, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor is investigating possible violations of human rights in the Colombian Army's re-taking of the Palace of Justice in 1985. This week she met with some of the victims and with a group of human rights lawyers who are protesting alleged privileges being allowed to retired Col. Alfonso Plazas Vega. Plazas has been sentenced to prison but continues to be held in Army headquarters.

Human Rights lawyers have also pointed out that defenders of human rights have been persecuted when they complained about the "false positives" scandal, the massacre at the Peace Community at San Jose de Apartado, and the killing of university students. A declassified State Department document states that Col. Plazas "killed a number of M-19 guerrillas and those suspected of collaborating with them outside of combat, and that includes the workers at the Palace cafeteria."

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 26, 2010.

* October 26, 2010. Two demobilized paramilitaries have admitted that they kidnapped a young man and turned him over to soldiers from the Colombian Army's 4th Brigade who killed him and presented his body as a "guerrilla killed in combat". On August 2, 2004, they seized Omar de Jesus Gutierrez, who worked on a bus on the Abejorral-Medellin route. They took him to San Jose (Antioquia Province) and turned him over to the soldiers. In a plea agreement, they will plead guilty to forced disappearance, kidnapping and homicide..

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 26, 2010.

* October 25, 2010. Six Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with homicide in the July 20, 2003 deaths of Alfonso Gomez Gutierrez and Abeladan Posada Amariles. Prosecutors allege that the two victims were murdered and their bodies presented as guerrillas killed in combat. In fact, they had no connection with the insurgency. The defendants include a retired Special Forces major, a lieutenant, a sergeant, and three soldiers.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador* and Attorney General's web site, Bogotá, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, October 25, 2010.

* October 25, 2010. A Colombian Army soldier, Alfonso Lasso Aguiar, has been arrested and charged with murder in the May 11, 2004 deaths of two men whose bodies were presented as guerrillas killed in combat. They were killed in La Florida (Caqueta Province).

An investigation showed that the two victims had been extremely intoxicated at the time of their death and thus were unlikely to have been engaged in combat. The defendant is being held without bail.



Source: *El Espectador* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá and Attorney General's web site, October 25, 2010.

* October 25, 2010. A Court of Appeals in Ibagué (Tolima Province) affirmed the sentence of 15 years in prison, plus a fine, for six Colombian Army noncommissioned officers convicted of torture and bodily injury after a court found that they had beaten, kicked, burned and sexually assaulted recruits as part of their training. Six Colombian Army generals were retired after this incident came to light. Three second lieutenants are awaiting sentencing.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, October 25, 2010.

* October 25, 2010. The Colombian Inspector General's investigation into the "false positives" scandal has involved two forensic specialists and six investigators attached to the Attorney General's office in Ocaña (Norte de Santander Province). They are alleged to have falsified reports on crime scene investigations and victims' autopsies. Some autopsy reports failed to include all of the trauma on the body and failed to state whether the injury occurred before or after death. In addition, the Inspector General found cases where the Judicial Police, instead of preparing reports required by police procedures, allowed members of the armed forces to prepare the reports.

The Inspector General reports 803 open "false positive" cases in the entire country. The Inspector General has filed charges in 44 "false positive" cases and has issued 24 decisions against members of the Colombian Armed Forces. Twenty cases are just beginning to be investigated. Statutes of limitations have expired in 109 investigations.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, October 25, 2010.

* October 24, 2010. A DAS (Colombian FBI) detective being investigated for his part in the illegal spying and wiretapping has produced a letter in which a DAS department head reports being told by his superior that "No. 1" knew about the information being provided to the Executive Office, sent his congratulations, and urged further efforts, promising to see that funds would be available. The document also describes the planning of the illegal spying on the Supreme Court, including strategies, the legal framework, use of secret funds, and the security of the information. The detective is negotiating a plea agreement with the prosecutor's office.

Source: *El País*, Cali and *Vanguardia*, Bucaramanga, October 24, 2010.

* October 24, 2010. In an interview with *Caracol Radio*, the father of the three children murdered in Arauca Province insists that Colombian Army soldiers are guilty of the crimes. He said that soldiers had moved into the area on October 8 and set up their camp some 250 meters from his home. He said that a group of soldiers had come to his home the next day

when the children were home alone and had subsequently come to his house several times, asking the children about him.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, October 24, 2010.

* October 23, 2010. Because members of the Colombian Armed Forces are rumored to be involved in the murder of three children in Tame (Arauca Province) The Commandant of the Colombian Army has asked the Attorney General to take over the investigation of the murders and has offered the Attorney General the Army's complete cooperation.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 23, 2010.

* October 21, 2010. The web site of Colombian newsweekly *Semana* announced that Jorge Lagos, the former counterintelligence chief of the DAS (Colombian FBI), sentenced to eight years in prison for "directing and coordinating" illegal stalking of the justices of the Colombian Supreme Court and opposition politicians, has testified that he was ordered to meet with President Uribe's staff to furnish them with the illegally wiretapped information. Lagos received a reduced sentence in return for his testimony in the ongoing investigation of illegal spying by the DAS. He testified that he believed that the President's staff was trying to discredit the Supreme Court justices, both nationally and internationally.

Source: http://www.semana.com/wf_ImprimirArticulo.aspx?IdArt=146209

* October 21, 2010. The trial of three middle managers of the DAS (Colombian FBI) is scheduled to begin on November 2. The three are Gustavo Sierra Prieto, former deputy director of the Analysis Section; Bernardo Murillo Cajamarca, former coordinator of the Anti-Corruption Group of the DAS; and Luz Marina Rodriguez, former deputy director of Operations. They are charged with illegally stalking the justices of the Colombian Supreme Court and with having illegally wiretapped and otherwise gained access to confidential personal information about the justices, as well as about opposition members of the Colombian Congress, and about journalists.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, October 21, 2010.

* October 21, 2010. A judge has found Jose Joaquin Aldana, the former Colombian National Police Chief in Tolima Province, guilty of murdering his wife, dismembering her body, and leaving parts of her body in bags in the countryside. The court set a date of March 1, 2011 for sentencing. He faces a maximum sentence of 40 years in prison.

Source: Attorney General's web site, *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, October 21, 2010.

* October 21, 2010. Colombia's Inspector General opines that the Army's extrajudicial killings of civilians, "false positives" were the results of commanders' pressure for "results" in the battle against the guerrillas. The Inspector General has charged two colonels, two majors, one captain, four noncommissioned officers and 18 soldiers in the case of two of the 19 young



men who were recruited in Soacha and murdered by soldiers in Catatumbo (Cesar Province). The Inspector General asserts that the “false positives” were part of “a criminal plan whose only purpose was to satisfy an institutional demand born out of the need to show the high command and, why not just say it, the government, that they were winning the battle against the guerrillas.”



The charges allege that Col. Gabriel Rincon Amado, operational commander of the now discontinued 15th Mobile Brigade, and soldiers under his command “agreed to kill Julio Cesar Mesa Vargas and Jhonatan Orlando Soto Bermudez on January 27, 2008, in Ocana.” According to the charge, they were seeking recognition of an operational accomplishment because the unit had not been successful for quite some time. Col. Ruben Dario Castro Gomez is charged with covering up the murders.

The tasks were divided up as follows: Some were assigned to provide the operation with a veneer of legality, producing the necessary documents. Others were to obtain the victims and see that they were placed at the site agreed-upon for their murder. Still others were to actually carry out the killing. The investigation cites Col. Rincon as one of the “brains” of the plan, and his immediate superior, Col. Castro was to initiate an internal investigation, a mere formality to avoid action by the civilian justice system.

According to the Inspector General, the patrol fired 250 shots against the two supposed criminals, and they also altered the crime scene.

The Attorney General has now obtained court decisions in 95 cases, resulting in guilty verdicts against 280 members of the Armed Forces. This includes three colonels, the highest grade that has been investigated to date. In fifty-two cases, the defendants pleaded guilty and were sentenced to between 15 and 20 years in prison.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 21, 2010.

* October 20, 2010. Fifteen Colombian Army soldiers attached to Battalion No. 5, headquartered in Cordova Province, have been charged with homicide in connection with the murder of Ramon David Marino Riatiga and his son, Edwin Alberto Marino Rodriguez. The two were dragged out of their house in the town of Corea in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta on September 14, 2006 and killed. The defendants include a lieutenant, a noncommissioned officer, and 13 soldiers.

Source: Attorney General’s web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador> October 20 and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, October 21, 2010.

* October 20, 2010. A Colombian National Police Patrolman has been sentenced to 13 years in prison for the sexual assault of a minor girl in Bogota.. He was found guilty of sexually abusing a 14-year-old girl who was developmentally disabled.

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



* October 20, 2010. Six Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested in Cali, charged with being part of a criminal drug trafficking gang “Los Rastrojos”. They are charged with aggravated criminal conspiracy, revealing confidential law enforcement information and bribery.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 20, 2010.

* October 20, 2010. A Colombian Army noncommissioned officer, whose name was not released, has been arrested in connection with the killing of three farmers on September 11, 2006 in a rural area of Pasto (Narino Province). According to the investigation, the three were dragged out of their houses, killed, and presented as guerrillas killed in combat. Three more soldiers are being investigated in connection with the case. One of them has entered into a plea bargain. They are charged with aggravated criminal conspiracy, homicide, and forced “disappearance”.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 20, 2010.

October 20, 2010. An extradited paramilitary commander, Diego Ruiz Arroyave, making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, has testified that his cousin Miguel Arroyave, also a paramilitary commander and now deceased, met with Colombian Army General Mario Montoya in Santa Marta “to clear up” whether Montoya was the one who had ordered a capture operation for supposed damages done to a ranch belonging to the general’s brother. Arroyave testified that Montoya denied giving the order.

Arroyave’s testimony agrees with that of “Don Mario” and other paramilitary commanders. It was transmitted by satellite from a prison in Florida.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 20, 2010.

* October 19, 2010. Baranoa (Atlantico Province) Police are mystified by the theft of about 180 million pesos (about \$100,000) from a bank located about ten meters from the police station. The deputy police commander has asked that lie detector tests be given to police officers who may have been involved.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, October 19, 2010.

* October 19, 2010. Colombia’s Inspector General has ordered the discharge of two Colombian Army officers, seven noncommissioned officers and one soldier, all attached to the Las Piedras Battalion in Honda (Tolima Province). He found that on January 25, 2006, they

tortured and sexually abused three recruits they were training in counter-guerrilla tactics. The ten will not be permitted to occupy any public office or employment for 20 years. According to the Inspector General's conclusions, the recruits were bound, blindfolded, beaten, burned, and nearly drowned in a well. Three of them were forced to take off their clothes and touch their faces to the buttocks and genitals of the others.



Besides punishment by the Inspector General, 13 of the 14 noncommissioned officers involved were sentenced to between 14 and 16 years in prison.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 19, 2010.

* October 18, 2010. Retired Colombian National Police Lieutenant Jose Fernando Berrio, who commanded the National Police in Trujillo (Valle Province) at the time of the notorious Trujillo massacre has been charged for his part in the killings. Prosecutors charge that "by his permissive conduct he facilitated the unleashing of these tragic events." They claim that he failed in his duty and allowed paramilitaries to take over the community and that men under his command actually connived with the criminals who terrified the population. Some 352 farmers were murdered in Trujillo between 1986 and 1994. Police were seen taking seven farmers away and the farmers were never seen again. Lt. Berrio was informed about threats against certain victims, but he did nothing, and the victims were murdered and "disappeared". Berrio is a fugitive.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 18, 2010.

* October 18, 2010. A Colombian soldier has complained to the Attorney General that his superiors have collaborated with the paramilitary commander and drug trafficker Pedro Oliverio Guerrero, alias "Cuchillo" (The Knife). The soldier, Jhon Quirama, told the Attorney General's office that the Army has not been able to capture "Cuchillo" because Army officers are in the drug trafficker's pay. He also claims that some Army officers are involved in drug trafficking, and that, when two criminal gangs fought over territory, an Army colonel helped "Cuchillo's" gang prevail.

Quirama also testified that the Army worked with paramilitaries to kill at least 22 civilians and present their bodies as guerrillas killed in combat. Because of his testimony, Quirama has received death threats.

Source: http://www.semana.com/wf_ImprimirArticulo.aspx?IdArt=146102

* October 18, 2010. The Colombian government announced that it will provide protection for Jhon Quirama, the soldier who has accused his superior of protecting the paramilitary commander and drug trafficker Pedro Oliverio Guerrero alias "Cuchillo" ("The Knife").

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, October 18, 2010.

* October 18, 2010. The bodies of three young brothers, aged 6, 9, and 14, were found in a common grave in the municipality of Tame (Arauca Province). Their bodies showed signs

of strangulation and wounds produced by handguns. Their father, Jose Alvaro Torres had reported them missing two days earlier. The Public Defender had previously issued a report outlining the risks to the civilian population in Tame, especially because children have been victims of violence. Citizens have complained about guerrillas and criminal gangs and also about abuses by the Colombian Armed Forces.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 18, 2010.

* October 15, 2010. Martha Ines Leal Llanos, former deputy director of operations for the DAS (Colombian FBI), testifying in the Colombian Attorney General's criminal investigation, stated that her superior told her that the information DAS obtained by illegal wiretaps was "requested by President Uribe". She also testified that the order to follow Liberal Party Senator Piedad Cordoba was issued by her superior, who told her that it was at President Uribe's order.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, *El Tiempo*, and *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 15, 2010.

* October 15, 2010. Four Colombian Judicial Police officers have been arrested and charged with aggravated kidnapping for extortion, aggravated kidnapping, and aggravated theft in the kidnapping of a merchant and a companion in Medellin in June of this year. The companion was released immediately, but the merchant was not freed until September 2 by Colombian National Police in the municipality of Bello (Antioquia Province).

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, *El Espectador*, Bogota, and Attorney General's web site, October 15, 2010.

* October 14, 2010. Investigators from the Attorney General's Office have captured three Colombian Navy officers, two noncommissioned officers, and one Marine who are suspected of being connected to the criminal gang "Los Rastrojos". According to prosecutors, they had specific responsibilities with the gang, such as giving information on how to evade capture and assisting with criminal activities on the Pacific coast.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, *El Pais*, Cali, and Attorney General's web site.

* October 13, 2010. A demobilized paramilitary, making his confession under the Justice and Peace Law, corrected testimony he had given on June 8, 2010, in which he had named the wrong Colombian Army officer who had allegedly collaborated with paramilitaries in 2002-2004 in the provinces of Meta, Guaviare, Casanare, and parts of Cundinamarca. He had confused two officers with the same surname. He now testifies that it was an officer named Rosero Belalcazar, assigned to the 4th Mobile Brigade, operating in the municipality of Mesetas (Meta Province) who had worked with the paramilitaries.

Source: [http://www.verdadabierta.com/component/content/article/54-generales ...
-rectifica-nombre-di-militar-salpicado?tmpl=component&print=1&page=](http://www.verdadabierta.com/component/content/article/54-generales...-rectifica-nombre-di-militar-salpicado?tmpl=component&print=1&page=)

* October 11, 2010. A Bogota criminal court has sentenced retired Colombian Army Major Alirio Antonio Urena Jaramillo to 44 years in prison for his part in the Trujillo massacre where 342 people were killed or “disappeared” between 1986 and 1994. He was found guilty of aggravated homicide. According to the judgment, Major Urena joined with two paramilitary groups that committed at least 103 murders in Norte del Valle Province. Investigators found that the bodies of the victims were thrown into the Cauca River in order to destroy evidence of the crimes.



Source: *RCNRadio* and *Semana.com*, Bogota. http://www.semana.com/wf_ImprimirArticulo.aspx?IdArt=145825

* October 11, 2010. Six Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged in connection with the deaths of three young men. The three were in a park in Medellin when they were lured to a town in Montebello (Antioquia) where Army troops killed them and presented their bodies as guerrillas killed in combat. The defendants, attached to the Fourth Brigade’s Special Urban Forces, are being held without bail.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 11, 2010.

* October 11, 2010. Seven members of the leadership team of the Colombian Army in Casanare Province have been convicted of homicide in the death of Eduardo Perez Vega on July 27, 2007. The commander, Major Gustavo Enrique Soto Bracamonte has also been charged with other “false positive” murders committed by the same group. The prosecution proved that the soldiers seized the victim in an internet café. His body was found two days later and the soldiers claimed that he was a “guerrilla killed in combat”.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 11, 2010.

* October 7, 2010. A “recruiter” who in October 2009 was sentenced to 17 years in prison for recruiting young men to be killed by soldiers and presented as guerrillas killed in combat in Sincelejo (Sucre Province) has been found guilty of “recruiting” victims for soldiers to kill in Toluviéjo (Sucre Province). He confessed to prosecutors that he promised the victims jobs paying 500,000 pesos (about \$250) per month at a ranch in Nechi, and he testified that a soldier paid him 100,000 pesos (about \$50) for each victim he recruited. Three other “recruiters” have also been charged and five soldiers have been charged with aggravated homicide, forced “disappearance” and aggravated criminal conspiracy in connection with the deaths of the victims.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 7, 2010.

* October 7, 2010. Colombian Army Major Orlando Arturo Cespedes has been charged with homicide, aggravated forced disappearance and criminal conspiracy in connection with the deaths of 11 young men in Toluviéjo (Sucre Province) in 2007. According to the investigation, the victims were offered jobs on ranches in Cordoba and Sucre Provinces, but they were killed and reported as unidentified guerrillas killed in combat. Several “recruiters” employed by the Army have already been found guilty and sentenced to prison. Besides

Major Cespedes, a warrant for the arrest of a retired Colombian Army colonel, Col. Luis Fernando Borja Aristizabal, has been issued in connection with the case.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, October 7, 2010.

* October 5, 2010. A Colombian Army First Sergeant, Ramiro Rafael Castano Chavez, has been arrested and charged with weapons fabrication, weapons trafficking, and illegal private use of military weapons and theft after he was found transporting military weapons on his motorcycle. The weapons consisted in fifty 40 mm. fragmentation grenades, intended for use with a rifle. He was stopped at a checkpoint in the town of Buenavista near Villavicencio (Meta Province).

Source: *Caracol Radio*, *El Espectador* and Attorney General's web site, Bogota, October 5, 2010.

* October 5, 2010. A U.S. NGO, the Center for Justice and International Law has criticized the Colombian Army for allowing retired Col. Luis Alfonso Plazas Vega, who has been convicted of forced "disappearance", extrajudicial executions and torture, to instruct Army officers in history, conflict and administration. The Center points out that Plazas Vega has been sentenced to prison, but has cited poor health as a reason for remaining in a military hospital.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 5, 2010.

* October 4, 2010. Retired Colombian Army Sgt. Belkis Margarita Villaruel Molina has been indicted on charges of kidnapping two FARC guerrillas who were being held at the headquarters of the 17th Army Brigade. On December 20, 1995, paramilitaries and soldiers working together seized the two, who had been captured two days earlier. They were never seen again. One of the paramilitaries has been found guilty and sentenced to prison in connection with the kidnapping and another Colombian Army sergeant, retired Sgt. Hector Gutierrez Velez has been arrested and charged.

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

* October 4, 2010. Captured drug trafficker and paramilitary commander, Daniel Rendon Herrera, alias "Don Mario", and other captured paramilitary commanders, testifying in the Attorney General's investigation, assert that the paramilitaries counted on the cooperation of the Colombian military and the National Police. They said they had cooperation from almost every police station and military headquarters, so that they could move about the area as they wished. These connections made it possible for them to know when the Police or the Army planned to move against them. They gave prosecutors a list of the names of police officers who cooperated with them.

Luis Miguel Hidalgo, alias "Raton" ("Rat"), said that "... most of the police knew who we were, where we were, and what we were doing. In those towns we killed somebody every third

day, sometimes every day.” The paramilitaries paid the police and in return, the police made sure there were no traces of the people we killed. Another paramilitary testified “They insisted that we not leave the bodies lying around in their jurisdictions.”



Orozman Osten Blanco, alias “Flechas” (“Arrows”) said that the same was true in Meta Province. He said the paramilitaries paid bribes to every officer in the police station, “from the lowest to the highest”. A patrolman earned 200,000 pesos (about \$100), a corporal earned 500,000 pesos (about \$250), and a commander earned a million pesos (about \$500). The paramilitaries said that in Paratebuena (Cundinamarca Province) paramilitaries walked the streets freely in uniform and carrying weapons. “Flechas” testified that paramilitaries would drag people out of their houses to make them explain what they were doing there. He said that they also bribed police officers in Medina (Cundinamarca Province) where they coordinated with a police captain “ . . . so that nobody gave us any trouble . . .” He said they paid two million pesos (about \$1,000) to the captain and the sergeant one million pesos (about \$500).

They also met with soldiers, to make sure the Army did not interfere in their activities. The defendants identified numerous other Army, police, and political officials whom they paid. One Army officer asked the paramilitaries to pretend to fight with the Army so that paramilitaries killed could be presented by the soldiers as “paramilitaries killed in combat.” Another time, the paramilitaries killed two civilians near Medina, “who had nothing to do with the paramilitaries” and left their bodies where an Army patrol would find them. The two victims were presented to the media as paramilitaries killed in combat by the Army.

“Flechas” testified that soldiers sold them munitions, uniforms, mortars, and rifles. He bought some 45,000 cartridges for 75 cents each. The soldiers joked “We’ll sell you the whole batallion if you want it.”

Source: *verdadabierta.com*, a link of newsweekly *Semana.com*, Bogota, October 4, 2010.

* October 4, 2010. Twelve Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with the murder of Atencio Orozco on February 11, 2007. They presented his body as a “guerrilla killed in combat” in Villanueva (Guajira Province). Investigators found that their had been no combat.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, October 4, 2010.

* October 4, 2010. A retired Colombian Army sergeant, Belkis Margarita Villaruel Molina, has been arrested and charged with kidnapping for his part in the kidnapping of two alleged guerrillas that were being held at the headquarters of the Army’s 17th Brigade. Allegedly on orders of paramilitary commander Carlos Castano Gil, and with the help of the military, the two were taken from the military headquarters on December 20, 1995 and disappeared. Another Colombian army sergeant, Hector Gutierrez Velez is awaiting trial for his part in the kidnapping.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, October 4, 2010.



* October 4, 2010. Twelve Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged in connection with the murder of Yilber de Jesus Atencio Orozco on February 11, 2007 in Villanueva (Guajira Province). The soldiers presented the body of Atencio Orozco as a “guerrilla killed in combat.” Investigators determined that the victim had been murdered by the soldiers and not killed in combat. Two of the soldiers have been charged with aggravated homicide and false reporting. Four of the soldiers were charged with aggravated homicide and perjury. Five soldiers were charged with covering up the murder and the last soldier was charged with murder. All of the defendants are being held without bail.

Source: Attorney General’s web site and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, October 4, 2010.

* October 4, 2010. Colombia’s Inspector General has ordered the discharge of the top managers and detectives of the DAS (Colombian FBI), finding them guilty of illegal spying and wiretapping on journalists, opposition politicians, and Supreme Court Justices.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota, and *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., October 4, 2010.

* October 1, 2010. Colombian Army Sergeant Elias Enrique Guerra Martinez has been indicted on charges of aggravated homicide in the deaths John Carlos Nocua Rueda, who clerked in a store, and Samuel Navia Moreno, a ninth grader. The two victims had rented a motorcycle in Saravena (Arauca Province) and were never seen again until their bodies were presented as gang members killed in combat on November 26, 2007, in the town of El Silencio (Boyaca Province). Investigators determined that there had been no combat and the two victims had no connection with any gang. In connection with these killings, a complaint has also been filed against 14 Colombian Army soldiers before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

Source: Attorney General’s web site and *El Espectador*, Bogota.

* October 1, 2010. A pamphlet circulating in the municipality of San Pablo (Bolívar Province) accuses the Colombian National Police and the Judicial Police, as well as the Attorney General’s Office, of supporting a drug trafficking gang. The Police deny the accusation. The pamphlet was delivered door to door.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, October 1, 2010.

* September 30, 2010. So far in 2010, Colombia’s military justice system has issued 682 verdicts in criminal cases brought against members of the Colombian armed forces, such as homicide, loss of weapons, theft and bribery, and criminal conspiracy, among others. Of those, 566 have been guilty verdicts and 116 have been not guilty verdicts. In 2009, there were 2,096 verdicts, 1710 guilty verdicts and 386 not guilty verdicts. Right now, there are 16,439 open cases and 646 cases where jurisdiction is at issue.

As of August 2010, 102 cases alleging homicide have been referred to the civilian justice system and there are 160 parallel processes where both the military justice system and the Attorney

General's office are conducting investigations. At present, 1,447 soldiers, included those convicted and those charged, but not yet convicted, are confined to military barracks.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 30, 2010.

* September 29, 2010. The Criminal Branch of Colombia's Supreme Court has asked that the cooperation between the Colombian military and paramilitaries in Tolima Province be investigated. It made the request based on the testimony of demobilized paramilitary commanders about such cooperation.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 29, 2010.

* September 29, 2010. A witness in the Attorney General's investigation of former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) Jorge Noguera has testified that she believes Noguera was involved in the murder of former congressman Fernando Piscioti and also in the murder of three trade unionists. In her interrogation, she stated that the two had talked in a bank just a month before Piscioti's assassination. She said that some paramilitary commanders had invited Piscioti to a farm that was serving as their base, but Piscioti refused to go. She also said that they had been threatened in 2002 because of their electoral support for Horacio Serpa.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 29, 2010.

* September 29, 2010. Recently declassified U.S. documents show that U.S. Ambassador to Colombia Curtis Kamman knew and reported to his superiors that the then-commander of the Colombian Army's 17th Brigade, Rito Alejo del Rio, "... systematically armed and equipped the aggressive paramilitaries in the area, because it was crucial to his military success" in northern Colombia. According to the documents, Del Rio came under suspicion in 1996 after his second in command, Col. Carlos Alfonso Velasquez wrote an internal memo asking his superiors to investigate the connection between the Brigade and the paramilitaries. But the Army then discharged Velasquez as insubordinate.

Velasquez was interviewed at the U.S. Embassy in Bogota in December 1997 where he complained about the "emphasis on body counts" that he thought was an incentive for human rights violations. He also thought that cooperation with the paramilitaries had got worse under Alejo del Rio. A subsequent U.S. Ambassador, Myles Frechette, cabled in January 1998 that General Rito Alejo del Rio "was pretty friendly with the paramilitaries". In February 1998 he cabled that it was "more than a coincidence" that the only Army attacks on the paramilitaries took place when Gen. Alejo del Rio was away. Frechette believed that Alejo del Rio ignored the paramilitaries "or worse". A report in March 1998 repeated that Alejo del Rio "presumably is connected not just to the paramilitaries on the northern coast and the Uraba region, but also, earlier, with the troubled region of Magdalena Medio" and was also "implicated in the theft of a Colombian arms shipment meant for the paramilitaries in the Magdalena Medio in 1985".



In January 1999 two senior officials of the U.S. State Department wrote the Ambassador in Colombia expressing concern with Colombian progress in human rights, especially “naming to key positions generals who are credibly alleged to be connected to the paramilitaries.” They included Alejo del Rio, who had recently been named Director of Operations of the Colombian Army. The U.S. State Department decided to cancel his visa for “drug trafficking and terrorist activity”. This ended his military career in 1999.



Source: *Caracol Radio, El Espectador, and verdadabierta.com*, part of *Semana.com*, Bogota, September 29, 2010.

* September 29, 2010. A judge in Valledupar (Cesar Province), Franklin Martinez, condemned the Colombian Ministry of Defense #029, issued in 2005, that established rewards for soldiers who captured or killed members of illegal groups. He called the directive “spits in the eye of the rule of law.” He made the statement in sentencing seven retired Colombian Army soldiers who murdered three civilians in May 2007. The judge also ordered an investigation into the judge in the military judicial system who closed the military investigation in spite of the quantity of the evidence against the defendants.

Prosecutors proved that three men from Barranquilla were offered jobs planting yucca on a farm. They were promised \$700,000 pesos (about \$350) a month. The three were never heard from again. On the morning of May 14, 2007, their unidentified bodies were reported as members of an extortion gang that also stole cattle. They had no criminal records and no victims had reported any such crimes. In 2008, detectives from the Attorney General’s office located the victims’ relatives and forensic examiners determined that there had been no combat and the three had been murdered. All seven defendants were sentenced to 40 years in prison.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 29, 2010.

* September 29, 2010. The head of the municipal jail in Santa Rosa de Osos (Antioquia Province) has been arrested and charged with bribery. Prosecutors allege that he demanded money from prisoners in return for conjugal visits and reduction of their sentences.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, Bogota, September 29, 2010.

* September 29, 2010. The Criminal Division of Colombia’s Supreme Court has asked the Attorney General for an investigation of collaboration by Colombian Armed Forces and National Police with the Tolima Bloc of the paramilitaries. The Court was responding to testimony by demobilized paramilitaries who reported meetings with police and military officials.

Source: *El Espectador.com*, Bogota, September 29, 2010.

* September 28, 2010. An appellate court in Medellin reversed a lower court verdict that had found five Colombian Army soldiers and four civilians not guilty of kidnapping and trying to rob a priest, a nun, and three other people at a ranch named Vereda San Andres. The

appellate court found two Army officers guilty and sentenced them to 17 years in prison and found three soldiers guilty and sentenced them to 16 years in prison. On May 31, 2006, a military patrol, along with some civilians, barged into a ranch house pretending to be searching for materials cached by guerrillas. They were intending to steal cash and jewelry. They tied up and gagged the priest, the nun and the others who were there, but they were surprised and captured by police.



Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 28, 2010.

* September 28, 2010. Seven Colombian Army soldiers were sentenced to 34 years in prison in a "false positive" case. Prosecutors proved that on May 13, 2007, the soldiers reported the death of an unidentified guerrilla in a clash in the town of Costa Rica (Cesar Province). Investigators determined that the victim was Baltazar de Jesus Arango Rua, a farmer who had been dragged out of his house by the soldiers. They had placed a shotgun and a grenade beside his body.

Source: Attorney General's web site, September 28, 2010.

* September 27, 2010. The current director of the DAS (Colombian FBI), Felipe Munoz, may be investigated in the DAS illegal spying and wiretapping case, because of allegations that he hindered the Attorney General's investigation into the case. Former employees claim that he ordered the destruction of relevant documents.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, September 27, 2010.

* September 27, 2010. Six members of a gang that sold Colombian Army weapons to the guerrillas have been recaptured. They had been released on bail but did not comply with bail conditions. All the members of the gang, except a retired Colombian Army officer, Jose Hildebrando Morales, have confessed to charges of traffic and sale of military weapons for private use.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 27, 2010.

September 26, 2010. Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos criticized a judge's decision to allow house arrest for a retired Army colonel, Nestor Sanchez, accused of stealing military weapons to sell to the guerrillas. The President emphasized that the defendant was indeed a danger to society, contrary to the judge's finding.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 26, 2010.

* September 24, 2010. Six members of the Colombian Armed Forces pleaded guilty to trafficking weapons belonging to the Armed Forces. Prosecutors alleged that the defendants planned to sell the weapons to the guerrillas. Four of the defendants have refused to plead guilty and will be tried.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 23, 2010, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, September 24, 2010.

* September 24, 2010. The criminal branch of Colombia's Supreme Court upheld the extradition of a retired Colombian National Police captain Carlos Alberto Florez Cardenas who had reported DEA plans to a drug trafficker "Don Lucho". According to the investigation, he obstructed several investigations planned by US agencies, providing the drug traffickers with information about the location of radar and control points. The traffickers paid him millions of pesos.



Source: *Caracol Radio* and Bogota, September 24, 2010.

* September 24, 2010. Eleven DAS (Colombian FBI) detectives charged with illegal spying and wiretapping all allege that they were following orders from Jose Miguel Narvaez, the former DAS Assistant Director of Intelligence.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 24, 2010.

* September 23, 2010. The illegal spying and wiretapping by the DAS (Colombian FBI) extended to the office of Colombia's Inspector General. The Attorney General's review of documents showed that the DAS has illegally recorded meetings the Inspector General held with his staff. There is also additional evidence of spying on opposition politicians, including dozens of photos of then-Senator Piedad Cordoba. There were also illegally recorded meetings of Colombia's Supreme Court.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota and *El Pais*, Cali, September 22, and *Semana.com*, Bogota, September 23, 2010.

* September 22, 2010. Five Colombian Army sergeants, a retired colonel, five police officers and two civilians have been arrested and will be charged with trafficking weapons to the guerrillas.

Source: Attorney General's web site, Bogota, September 22, 2010.

* September 22, 2010. Four Colombian Army soldiers, including a captain and a sergeant, have been indicted on charges of homicide in a "false positive" case. They are accused of murdering Alejandro Uribe Chacon in the town of Las Culebras (Bolívar Province) and reporting him as a "guerrilla killed in combat".

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, September 22, 2010, *El Tiempo* and Attorney General's web site, Bogota, September 21, 2010.

* September 21, 2010. A Bogota City Council member complains that the police were complicit in an attack by "skinheads" on two young man who were seriously injured. He alleges that they delayed 40 minutes in arriving on the scene of the attack and when they did arrive, they failed to arrest the attackers and take their weapons away from them. The two victims suffered brain injury, skull fracture and serious foot and leg injuries.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 21, 2010.

* September 21, 2010. A former Colombian Army colonel, Carlos Alfonso Velasquez, revealed a report he had submitted on May 31, 1996. The report warned the then commandant of Colombia's Armed Forces, Gen. Harold Bedoya, that Gen Rito Alejo del Rio had connections to paramilitary groups in the Uraba region (Antioquia Province) and in Choco Province. Alejo del Rio is now on trial for the murder of a farmer on February 27, 1997, and the Velasquez report was offered during the trial. The report states that some soldiers told inspectors about the protection the Army was providing to the paramilitaries.



Source: *verdadabierta.com*, a link at *Semana.com*, Bogota, September 21, 2010.

* September 21, 2010. Colombia's Supreme Court has ordered the re-opening of 1991 decisions finding drug traffickers Henry Loaiza, alias "El Alacran" ("The Scorpion"), Diego Montoya, alias "Don Diego", Colombian Army Major Alirio Urena (retired) and Diego Rodriguez not guilty in the Trujillo (Cauca Province) massacres. Between 245 and 342 people were murdered there between 1986 and 1994. One example was the torture and murder of Fr. Tiberio Fernandez, who was mutilated, castrated, beheaded and cut in pieces before being thrown in the Cauca River. He had made complaints about the barbarism in the Trujillo area.

Drug traffickers, paramilitaries, National Police and the Colombian Army joined together to commit the massacres. The Court re-opened the cases because of new information revealed in a report published in 2008 by the National Commission for Reparation and Reconciliation (CNRR is the Spanish acronym.) The report details the destruction of evidence and intimidation and murder of witnesses. The crimes are not subject to the statute of limitations in Colombia because the Court has identified them as crimes against humanity.

Source: *verdadabierta.com*, a link at *Semana.com*, Bogota, September 21, 2010.

* September 21, 2010. *Semana.com*, Colombian newsweekly, carries a report by investigators from the NGO, "Historical Memory Group", an update on the massacre of twelve judicial investigators in 1989. The twelve had come to investigate a series of murders and disappearances. They were killed by 40 armed paramilitaries. The attack was planned by paramilitaries, soldiers, drug traffickers, and even politicians. The investigation of the massacre has taken years, many witnesses killed and much evidence destroyed. Many of the planners are dead, including General Farouk Yanine Diaz. In 2006 the Inter-American Court for Human Rights found the government guilty of the massacre and the government was ordered to continue trying to bring the killers to justice.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota, September 21, 2010.

* September 21, 2010. Detectives from the Colombian Attorney General's Office have arrested 44 members of a gang that stole military weapons and sold them to the guerrillas. Included in the gang were seven Army and Police noncommissioned officers and 12 retired military, including a colonel. In an attack in early September that killed eight Police officers

in Putumayo, guerrillas used explosives purchased from this gang. The gang allegedly took in 100 million pesos (about \$50,000) every month.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, September 21, 2010.

* September 21, 2010. A Colombian Army soldier, Alfredo Ivan Lozano Acosta, visiting his father in the El Bosque Penitentiary (Atlantico Province) was found to be carrying four 5.56 rifle cartridges in his wallet.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, September 21, 2010.

* September 21, 2010. Eight Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged in connection with the murder of a whole family, father, mother and a 3-year-old child. Prosecutors allege that on November 26, 2006, the three were riding a motorcycle, and that there was no ambush or combat as the soldiers had alleged.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 20, 2010, and *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 21, 2010.

* September 21, 2010. On August 2, 1996, paramilitaries put up signs threatening the citizens of San Jose de Apartado (Antioquia Province). That same day, the mayor, Gloria Cuartas, sent a letter to General Rito Alejo del Rio, then the commandant of the Colombian Army's 17th Brigade, headquartered nearby at Carepa. He refused to do anything and Mayor Cuartas then realized that he worked with the paramilitaries. She described this incident in a hearing in Bogota on charges of ordering the killing of a farmer and community leader. She testified that she once went to see paramilitary commander Carlos Castano and Castano warned her to keep quiet, stop her complaining, and not to interfere with General Rito Alejo.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, September 21, 2010.

* September 20, 2010. A former DAS (Colombian FBI) official claims that a DAS official murdered two fellow detectives and injured another. The victims were allegedly looking for clues about the financing of a Colombian election campaign by a foreign government.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 20, 2010.

* September 20, 2010. Six Colombian Army soldiers and two members of the Colombian National Police have been arrested and charged with being part of a gang of 40 people who illegally stole and sold weapons and other military equipment to criminal gangs.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 20, 2010.



* September 20, 2010. Fabio Duarte Translavina is one of the 11 DAS (Colombian FBI) officials being investigated by the Inspector General for illegal spying and wiretapping. He testified that the DAS has been following and wiretapping Senator Piedad Cordoba since 1979.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 20, 2010.



* September 19, 2010.

* September 17, 2010. Colombian news service Colprensa reports on the statement given by Fernando Tabares, former Intelligence Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) to a court investigating illegal spying and wiretapping by the DAS. Tabares is seeking to negotiate a plea agreement. He stated that there were several meetings between DAS officials and the former secretary general of the President's office, Bernardo Moreno, and other President's office officials. According to Tabares, the President's office wanted information obtained by DAS wiretaps of judges and opposition politicians.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, September 17, 2010.

* September 17, 2010. Maria Torres, a cafeteria employee at the Colombian Supreme Court, has told investigators that a co-worker, Janeth Maldonado, introduced her to "Samantha". "Samantha" was really Alba Luz Florez, a DAS (Colombian FBI) detective. "Samantha" wanted the two workers to place recording equipment in the Supreme Court's chambers, because the DAS wanted to hear the Justices' discussions of certain cases. "Samantha" promised them money and told them that nothing would ever happen to them. She told investigators that she had given Maria 500,000 pesos (about \$250).

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, September 17, 2010.

* September 17, 2010. Luis Andres Ramos Salas has been arrested on a warrant charging aggravated homicide in the deaths of Jose del Carmen Pacheco Pacheco and Luis Alfonso Pabon Perez on March 2, 2007 in the town of Santa Ana (Guajira Province). Prosecutors allege that he guided soldiers of the Colombian Army to the victims' location and that the soldiers killed them.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, September 17, 2010.

* September 17, 2010. *Semana.com* charges that the DAS (Colombian FBI) acted like "political police" when they spied on and denigrated former Senator and presidential candidate Gustavo Petro. The DAS recorded minute details about friends and members of his family, along with their telephone numbers, and detailed his preparations for Senate debates. They noted motions he planned to make, names of those expected to support the motions, and what arguments he planned to offer. They gathered information on his assistants and his meetings, recording subjects they discussed. They even recorded meetings with paramilitaries and other politicians where attempts on Petro's life were discussed.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota, September 17, 2010.

* September 16, 2010. Colombian National Police officials discovered that a bank robber killed in a gunfight with a security guard had been a police officer. He had been discharged for “psychiatric problems” and subsequently fired from a retail job for stealing.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, September 16, 2010.



* September 16, 2010. Five Colombian Army soldiers and two noncommissioned officers were sentenced to 40 years in prison for the murder of three farmers. They were attached to La Popa Battalion in Valledupar (Cesar Province). The court found that the defendants had approached three men in a rural area near Valledupar on May 14, 2007, promised them nonexistent jobs, and taken them to a place where they killed them. Their bodies were presented as “guerrillas killed in combat”. Prosecutors proved that they had no connection with any illegal armed group and that there had been no combat.

Source: *Semana.com* and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, September 16, 2010.

* September 15, 2010. The former operations commander of the Colombian National Police in Tolima, former Colonel Joaquin Aldana, is being tried for the murder and dismemberment of his wife. A decision is expected next week.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, September 15, 2010.

* September 15, 2010. Colombian Senator Juan Manuel Galan believes that a former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI), General Miguel Maza Marquez, was involved in the murder of his father, Luis Carlos Galan Sarmiento. General Maza has denied any participation.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, September 15, 2010.

* September 15, 2010. Colombia’s Inspector General has asked the Attorney General to file criminal charges against retired General Miguel Maza Marquez for helping plan the murder of presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galan Sarmiento. Galan was shot to death on August 18, 1989. Three demobilized paramilitaries have testified that General Maza was involved and one of them testified that the assassins arrived at the site in a DAS car. The Inspector General has also accused retired Colonel Manuel Antonio Gonzalez Henriquez, the former DAS Chief of Protection of taking part in the assassination plan.

Source: *Semana.com* and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, and *El Pais*, Cali, September 15, 2010, and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 16, 2010..

* September 15, 2010. A former DAS (Colombian FBI) department head, William Romero, who is seeking a plea bargain in his illegal wiretapping and criminal conspiracy prosecution, has delivered boxes of documents he had been ordered to destroy. The documents reveal the DAS method of illegal spying on courts, politicians and journalists. The documents include a complete transcription of two executive committee meetings of an opposition political party,

detailed data on every aspect of the life of Gustavo Petro, the party's Senator and presidential candidate, including members of his family. The file of another Senator, Juan Fernando Cristo, included spying on his mother, his brother, his sister-in-law, and his nephews. The DAS had infiltrated the bodyguard squad assigned to Senator Piedad Cordoba.



Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota, September 15, 2010.

* September 15, 2010. Twenty-nine Colombian Army soldiers have been charged with murder in the deaths of two civilians, Frank Enrique Martinez and Claudino Manuel Olmedo, on May 14, 2005. The two victims were presented as “guerrillas killed in combat”, but investigators found that the two were not guerrillas and there had been no combat. Frank Martinez was developmentally disabled, and Claudino Olmedo was a shoe repairman.

Source: *Semana.com*, *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and Attorney General's web site, Bogota, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *El Pais*, Cali, September 15, 2010.

* September 11, 2010. The former Colombian Supreme Court cafeteria employee, Yaneth Maldonado, who assisted the DAS (Colombian FBI) in spying on the Supreme Court justices, has been questioned by investigators. She said that she and her family have been threatened. Another Supreme Court cafeteria employee was also involved in placing recording equipment in the Court's conference room. A DAS employee states that Supreme Court Justice Ivan Velasquez' driver, Manuel Pinzon, is also being questioned.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, September 11, 2010.

* September 10, 2010. Six Colombian Army soldiers were sentenced to 40 years in prison for their part in the murder of Edwin Legarda, an indigenous leader in Cauca Province.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota and *El Pais*, Cali, September 10, 2010.

* September 10, 2010. One detective from the Colombian Attorney General's Office and two members of the Judicial Police are charged with abuse of process, falsifying a public document illegal wiretapping and criminal conspiracy in the continuing investigation of the illegal spying and wiretapping by the DAS (Colombian FBI).

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 10, 2010.

* September 10, 2010. The exhumed remains of five civilians who were murdered and later presented as “guerrillas killed in combat” will be returned to their families at a ceremony in Barranquilla (Atlantico Province). The five were killed in Caimito (Sucre Province) on February 2, 2007. The killers of two of them have already entered guilty pleas in plea agreements. A civilian has been convicted in the death of two victims and the remaining death is being investigated. The investigation involves 15 Colombian Army soldiers.

Source: *El Espectador* and *Semana.com*, Bogota, September 10, 2010.

* September 9, 2010. The current Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI), Felipe Munoz Gomez, states that he has cooperated with the ongoing investigation of DAS illegal spying and wiretapping, and that so far there have been 45 criminal complaints, six complaints to the Inspector General and 939 internal disciplinary procedures.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 9, 2010.

* September 9, 2010. Christian Salazar, the Colombia representative of the United Nations Commission for Human Rights, urges that the investigations of extrajudicial executions by the military (“false positives”) be transferred to the civilian justice system. He said that in 2009, 267 “false positive” cases were transferred to the civilian justice system, but that so far in 2010, only seven have been transferred. The Attorney General’s Office is investigation some 1,400 cases, involving 2,400 victims, 126 of whom are minor children.

* *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 9, 2010, and *Semana.com*, Bogota, September 11, 2010.

* September 9, 2010. The Colombian Attorney General’s Office, which is investigating the discovery of an unknown number of unidentified bodies in a municipal cemetery in La Macarena (Meta Province) has found that three of the 11 bodies exhumed so far may be victims of extrajudicial (“false positive”) killings. It appears that there may be another 450 unidentified bodies not yet exhumed.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 9, 2010.

* September 9, 2010. One Spanish and two Colombian journalists were detained by the Colombian Army when they traveled to Catatumbo (North Santander Province) to investigate the death of a young man in a supposed confrontation between the community of Catatumbo and the Army. The journalists complain that they almost lost their material because of the actions of Mobile Batallion 23, who photographed and filmed their activities.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, September 9, 2010.

* September 8, 2010. Former DAS (Colombian FBI) officials being questioned by the Attorney General’s Office in connection with their illegal spying and wiretapping claim that they were acting on the orders of the DAS Director Maria del Pilar Hurtado.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 8, 2010.

* September 8, 2010. Retired Colombian Army Lt. Colonel Gabriel de Jesus Rincon Amado has been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide, aggravated criminal conspiracy, abuse of process, falsifying a public document, and weapons trafficking in connection with the death of a civilian in Ocana (North Santander Province) on April 26, 2007. He is also being charged in the deaths of two others on January 26, 2008. One of those was a minor.

Source: Attorney General’s web site and *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 8, 2010.

* September 8, 2010. Four Colombian National Police Officers are being questioned by the Attorney General's Office in connection with the pursuit of Supreme Court Justice Sigifredo Espinoza. Justice Espinoza has complained that the four had taken part in trailing him on an automobile trip he took from Bogota to Medellin.



Source: *El Espectador* and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 8, 2010.

* September 7, 2010. A U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) employee, attached to the U.S. Embassy in Bogota blew the whistle on the illegal wiretapping by the DAS (Colombian FBI), according to a DAS official testifying in the Attorney General's investigation. The DEA agent, Joseph Gelbor, alerted the Attorney General's Office to the illegal wiretaps by the DAS of Justice Ivan Velasquez, and the Attorney General then began the investigation.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 7, 2010.

* September 7, 2010. Even the employee who served coffee in the Colombian Supreme Court was recruited by the DAS (Colombian FBI) to spy on the justices. Justice Ivan Velasquez' driver, Manuel Pinzon Casallas, who was also recruited by the DAS, claims that he believed exaggerations, lies, and "dirty work" when he agreed to work with the DAS.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, September 7, 2010.

* September 7, 2010. The Colombian Supreme Court employees who were involved in the DAS (Colombian FBI) spying and wiretapping of Supreme Court Justices have agreed to help the prosecution in return for reduced penalties. They are Janeth Maldonado, a cafeteria employee, Major Julian LaVerde, Police Sgt. Daniel Garcia, and the driver, Ivan Pinzon.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 7, 2010.

* September 6, 2010. The two Colombian Supreme Court cafeteria employees who aided the DAS (Colombian FBI) in spying on the Court will receive witness protection after they and their families were threatened. The Court will decide soon if the two are to be discharged from their employment.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 6, 2010.

* September 4, 2010. Criminal proceedings against former DAS (Colombian FBI) detective Alba Luz Gomez Gelvez were halted temporarily after she agreed to testify for the prosecution. She has confessed that William Romero, a higher DAS official ordered her to infiltrate the Court in 2007. She contacted Police Captain Julio Hernando Laverde, the Court's chief of security. She says she used a romance to get him to help her get inside the court. She used another officer, Manuel Pinzon Casallas, the driver and bodyguard for one of the Justices, the one who headed an investigation into political crimes. She was able to obtain copies of the files that her superiors wanted to see. Gomez also said that a maid was paid to leave a tape recorder in the room where the Justices met for their conferences.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, September 4, 2010.

* September 4, 2010. The Colombian National Police have opened a disciplinary investigation of two officers named by a former DAS (Colombian FBI) official, Alba Luz Gomez Gelvez, as officers who helped her infiltrate the Colombian Supreme Court and obtain confidential documents and records. Gomez has confessed that she spied on the Court in order to keep the government informed about Court's sessions and key documents.



Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, and *El Pais*, Cali, September 4, 2010.

* September 4, 2010. Less than 72 hours after warrants were issued for the arrest of seven Colombian Marines attached to the First Brigade for "false positives", the farmers living in the village of Santa Fe (Sucre Province) complained that the troops were attacking and threatening them. One of the Santa Fe residents complained that Thursday around 8 p.m. a group of men in Marine uniforms and armed with rifles, entered a house and seized five people. One of them escaped and warned the rest of the town. The Police Chief determined that the intruders were Marines. According to the complaint, the Marines intimidated the residents and told them they would be carrying out a massacre. "They took our cell phones and yelled at us and hit us, including an elderly lady", according to a complaint filed with a city official.

Seven Marines are in custody, charged with murdering a farmer, Patricio Florez Severo, in February 2007, and presenting his body as a guerrilla killed in combat ("false positive").

Source: *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, and Attorney General's web site, September 4, 2010.

* September 4, 2010. William Romero Sanchez, former head of the DAS (Colombian FBI) department of "human sources", will not be allowed a plea agreement in the charges against him for his part in the DAS illegal spying and wiretapping scandal. He is being charged with aggravated criminal conspiracy, malfeasance in office, illegal wiretapping and abuse of public authority. He is alleged to have coordinated the infiltration of the Supreme Court and authorized the use of available money to fund the illegal activities.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 4, 2010.

* September 3, 2010. The City Clerk of Riohacha (Guajira Province) complains that residents of the city have no confidence in the police. He stated that his office has received numerous complaints by citizens who know of illegal acts committed by police officers.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, September 3, 2010.

* September 3, 2010. *Semana.com* reports on investigations by a Colombian military judge, Alexander Cortes, of extrajudicial executions ("false positives") between 2007 and 2008. When he was assigned to Carepa (Antioquia Province) in 2007, he discovered that the 17th Brigade's body count reports seemed irregular. He sent them to the Attorney General's Office for investigation and also re-opened some older cases that had been closed without any action. A "guerrilla killed in combat" in El Palmar, Jesus Alfonso Bedoya, had just been released from the hospital, where he had been treated for anemia and renal insufficiency. He had had a very high fever the night before he was killed.

In another case, the judge found that young teen-agers were among the six “guerrillas killed in combat” in the town of La India. They were dressed in too-large uniforms and brand new boots and one youngster had his boots on the wrong feet. Their gunshot wounds were at point-blank range. Their bodies have never been identified.



Just two months later, an Army captain was heard asking paramilitaries to provide weapons to place beside the bodies of victims who had already been killed. The next day the Army reported the capture of the weapons.

Between August 2008 and April 2009, Judge Cortes found 17 cases he suspected of being “false positives”, just by the 17th Brigade, headquartered in Carepa.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota, September 3, 2010.

* September 2, 2010. Both the Colombian Attorney General and Inspector General are investigating complaints that DAS (Colombian FBI) officials may have been involved in contract fraud. The DAS apparently ordered six “spy vehicles” at a cost totaling 2.2 million dollars, but committed 3.2 million dollars, with the extra million apparently going to an “intermediary”. The DAS has already paid 75% of the cost, but has not received any vehicles. A Senator, Juan Manuel Galan, claims that two DAS officials conspired to favor the “intermediary” with a million-dollar commission. He argues that there was no need for an intermediary.

Source: *semana.com*, September 2, 2010. http://www.semana.com/wf_imprimirArticulo.aspx?IdArt=143909

* September 2, 2010. Martha Leal, former Director of Intelligence of the DAS (Colombian FBI) will enter into a plea agreement under which she will provide testimony about the April 23, 2008 meeting in the President’s Palace where the political spokesman for the paramilitaries, Antonio Lopez, alias “Job” met with members of the President’s staff and DAS officials. In her 66-page confession, she relates how she was ordered to meet with defense attorneys representing paramilitary commanders. The paramilitaries wanted to discredit Justices of the Supreme Court who one day would be ruling on their cases. Carrying out orders, she became a messenger between attorneys for the paramilitaries and the President’s office. She and her superiors worked out plans to discredit individuals who might testify against the paramilitaries. She also admitted stalking Piedad Cordoba and Gustavo Petro, members of Congress at that time and furnishing information about them to a member of Congress friendly to the administration. She explained that they followed a journalist, Daniel Coronell, in order to find out who was giving him information.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, September 2, 2010, and *El Espectador*, Bogota, September 4, 2010.

* September 2, 2010. Two Colombian Army soldiers, Oscar Javier Hernandez Martinez and Hector Javier Arias Medellin, have been arrested and charged with murdering Tiberio Garcia

Cuellar, president of the community action board in the town of Aguas Claras (Tolima Province) on May 28, 2006. The soldiers claimed that Garcia had activated a mine field but investigators found that he was a farmer walking to another town to find a cow.

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



* September 1, 2010. A former Colombian Army soldier, Jose Edinson Clavijo Pantoja, was captured after being charged with aggravated homicide in the death of Giovanni Ovallos Trigos on September 7, 2007 in Teorama (North Santander Province). At that time, Clavijo Pantoja was attached to the 22d Vultures Group of the 95th Counter-Guerrilla Battalion. The victim was beaten and killed by soldiers who later presented him as a guerrilla killed in combat. The Attorney General's detectives established that he was a farmer on his way home from working in the fields.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, September 1, 2010.

* September 1, 2010. A Colombian Army lieutenant forced his way into a hotel room and shot a noncommissioned officer dead. Authorities believe the victim was with the shooter's wife.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 1, 2010.

* September 1, 2010. A former Vice Minister of Defense, Jorge Mario Eastman, will be interrogated by the Colombian Attorney General's Office as part of the investigation of illegal wiretapping and spying by the DAS (Colombian FBI).

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, September 1, 2010.

* September 1, 2010. A former DAS (Colombian FBI) detective, Alba Luz Florez, may be the fourth defendant in less than three weeks to enter into a plea agreement with prosecutors in the illegal wiretapping case. Her supervisors assigned her to provide security services to Justices of the Colombian Supreme Court, intending that she spy on them. She was able to record meetings of the Justices and examine key documents. She turned the information over to her supervisor, Gustavo Sierra, who has also turned states evidence in the prosecution.

Source: *Semana.com*, <http://www.semana.com/wf/ImprimirArticulo.aspx?IdArt=143906>

* September 1, 2010. Three retired Colombian Army generals were called to testify in the investigation of the murder of Supreme Court Justice Carlos Horacio Uran in the 1985 attack on the Palace of Justice, just before the investigating prosecutor, Angela Maria Buitrago, was relieved of responsibility in the case. Justice Uran was seen leaving the Palace alive on November 7, 1985. His body was later found in the Bogota morgue along with those of persons killed in the battle to retake the building. A 2006 investigation found that he had been killed with one shot from a 9mm gun and that his body had been washed before it was found. His wallet and other permanent belongings appeared in a secret vault at an Army

base. Last January prosecutor Buitrago ordered his body exhumed and experts concluded that he had not died in the fighting but was executed by one bullet at point blank range. Prosecutors will try to determine why the Army announced that Uran and other survivors died in the fire, when there is evidence that they left the building alive.



Source: *Semana.com*, http://www.semana.com/wf_imprimirArticulo.aspx?IdArt=143891

* August 31, 2010. A sergeant and a 2d lieutenant in the Colombia National Police have been arrested and charged with aggravated criminal conspiracy, along with two other retired lieutenants. They were photographed in the company of paramilitaries wanted by law enforcement, but they claimed they had been kidnapped. Prosecutors dispute their claim, since they were wearing their service weapons in the photo, and they never reported any kidnapping.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 31, 2010

* August 31, 2010. Formal charges of aggravated criminal conspiracy, abuse of public office, and malfeasance have been filed against Mario Aranguren, the former director of the Special Administrative Unit on Financial Information and Analysis, who allegedly furnished confidential information on financial transactions, health records, vehicle and cell phone records and other private information to the DAS (Colombian FBI). DAS officials are being prosecuted for illegal wiretapping, stalking, and spying on Supreme Court justices, opposition politicians, journalists and NGO members.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, August 31, 2010.

* August 30, 2010. A retired Colombian Army noncommissioned officer, Sgt. Juan Carlos Gamarra, who has been found guilty of taking part in the Mapiripan (Meta Province) massacre where 49 farmers were killed, has been absent without leave from his military base at Tolemaida (Tolima Province).

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, August 30, 2010.

* August 30, 2010. Two regional DAS (Colombian FBI) officials, Jesus Antonio Cadena, and his bodyguard, Jose Antonio Sarmiento have been arrested in connection with the shooting of a citizen in Girardot (Cundinamarca Province). Prosecutors allege that both the defendants were drunk and carrying weapons without appropriate permits.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, August 30, 2010, and *El Pais*, Cali, August 31, 2010.

* August 27, 2010. A Bogota Criminal Court approved a plea agreement between the Attorney General's Office and Capt. Jorge Lagos, the former chief of counter-intelligence at the DAS (Colombian FBI), charged with spying and illegal wiretapping. Under the agreement, Capt. Lagos will plead guilty to aggravated criminal conspiracy, malfeasance in office, abuse of public functions and aggravated illegal wiretapping. He will serve eight years in prison and pay a fine, and will be required to ask pardon publicly of those harmed

by his actions. In a 16 page document, he confessed that he had “directed, coordinated, and was aware of the illegal activities carried out against the Justices of the Colombian Supreme Court and against Senators Piedad Cordoba and Gustavo Petro”. He confessed that “the object of those investigations was to discredit the Court (. . .) and disparage the Senators”.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, August 27, 2010.

* August 26, 2010. A Colombian Army captain, a sergeant and five soldiers have been arrested and charged in connection with the murder of two civilians in La Pipiola, near the town of Taraza. (Antioquia Province) on March 22, 2006. The defendants claim that the two victims were extortionists, but prosecutors found no criminal activity on the part of the victims and allege that the armed confrontation claimed by the defendants did not take place. The soldiers belong to Counter-Guerrilla Battalion No. 20 of the Army's 11th Brigade. They are being held without bail.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, and Attorney General's web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controladr/controlador>

* August 25, 2010. A Colombian Army 2d lieutenant and seven soldiers are under arrest, charged with the torture and murder of a two civilians, a father and his son on September 14, 2006 in the town of Corea (Magdalena Province). A witness testified that the soldiers entered the home at about 5 a.m., seized the father and son and began to beat them. Later they took them to a rural school, beat them some more, and then shot them dead and presented their bodies as guerrillas killed in combat.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 25, 2010.

* August 24, 2010. Two DAS (Colombian FBI) detectives have been charged formally with aggravated forced disappearance, criminal conspiracy, and misuse of confidential official information. They are accused of aiding the illegal armed group run by Pedro Oliverio Guerrero Castillo, alias “Cuchillo” (“The Knife”). The charges allege that on October 2, 2009, they helped the gang set up a checkpoint to stop a bus. One of the passengers had stolen 300 million pesos (about \$150,000) from the gang. The thief was taken off the bus and put in a DAS vehicle, and was never seen again.

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

* August 23, 2010. The former Deputy Director of Operations for the DAS (Colombian FBI), Martha Leal, is said to be negotiating with prosecutors for a plea agreement. She is accused of participating in meetings with representatives of the President's Office to coordinate spying on Supreme Court Justices, as well as trying to set up a dispute between two Senators for political reasons.

Source: *Semana.com* and *El Tiempo*, Bogota.

* August 23, 2010. A retired Colombian Police Sergeant, Johny Rafael Acosta Cortinez, alias “Sargento Loco” (“Sergeant Crazy”) has been charged with being a party to the murder of Jaime David Ramos Redondo. Ramos had filed complaints about extortion by paramilitaries and later was killed and decapitated at a checkpoint set up by paramilitaries in Baranoa (Atlantic Province). The purpose was to intimidate anyone who might complain about the paramilitaries’ criminal activities. Prosecutors allege that Sgt. Acosta Cortinez furnished important information to the paramilitaries about the victim, thus aiding them in the commission of the crime.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, *El Pais*, Cali, and Attorney General’s web site.

* August 22, 2010. Prosecutors are making final preparations for the trials of two former DAS (Colombian FBI) chiefs of intelligence and counter-intelligence and three other former DAS officials on charges of spying and illegal wire-tapping of judges, journalists, opposition politicians and NGO leaders. Lawyers for two of the defendants are negotiating plea agreements. Prosecutors say they will offer 127 pieces of evidence, documents and tapes, demonstrating that the defendants planned a campaign of disparagement against the Justices of Colombia’s Supreme Court. They plan to show that the defendants wire-tapped and prepared complete reports on the Justices, including personal and financial information, and even infiltrated the Court to tape conversations and obtain confidential material.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, and *El Pais*, Cali, August 22, 2010.

* August 21, 2010. Military bodyguards assaulted female police officers in Bogota, according to *Caracol Radio*. Five female police officers asked the bodyguards to remove their vehicles from a public area in northern Bogota, and the bodyguards, guarding the former commander of the Colombian Navy, reacted with insults, blows and threats with their weapons.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, August 21, 2010.

* August 20, 2010. The Court of Appeals in Cali affirmed the sentence of 21 years in prison for two former Colombian National Police officers, Oscar Mauricio Noriega Narvaez and Luis Eduardo Huila Perez. They were convicted of kidnapping a merchant in Valle in August 2009.

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

* August 20, 2010. The retired commander of Mobile Brigade No. 15, Col. Santiago Herrera Fajardo, has been arrested and charged in connection with extrajudicial executions of civilians in Ocana (North Santander Province). He is being held without bail, charged with aggravated homicide, aggravated criminal conspiracy, falsifying a public document, and fabricating, trafficking and allowing private use of military weapons. Prosecutors allege that four soldiers under his command murdered a civilian, Luis Antonio Sanchez on April 16,

2007, claiming a combat that never took place. Fifteen other soldiers are being investigated for their part in the incident.

Source: *El Espectador*, and Attorney General's web site, Bogota, August 20, 2010.



* August 20, 2010. Retired Colombian National Police Lieutenant Jose Alexander Zamora Guaba has been formally charged with aggravated homicide in the death of John Berrio Lopez. He was transporting the victim and another man after arresting them in a street fight, and claimed that some men on a motorcycle had fired the fatal shots. Experts allege that the fatal bullets came from his weapon and the driver testified that Zamora became enraged when the arrestee insulted him.

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

* August 19, 2010. Three Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with a "false positive" murder. Prosecutors allege that they killed a laborer, Rivera Gutierrez near his home in Penalosa (Huila Province) on March 17, 2006 while he and his sons were working on their farm.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, *semana.com* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, and Attorney General's web site, August 19, 2010.

* August 19, 2010. Jorge Lagos the former deputy director of counterintelligence of the DAS (Colombian FBI) is negotiating a plea agreement on the charges of criminal conspiracy, malfeasance in office, abuse of public authority and illegal wiretapping in connection with the DAS wiretapping scandal. If the agreement is finalized and approved by the court, Lagos will plead guilty to the charges, apologize publicly, and serve eight years in prison.

Source: *Caracol Radio* and *semana.com*, Bogota, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 19, 2010.

* August 18, 2010. *Semana.com* carries a long article describing how the Castanos and other paramilitary commanders took over the eastern plains of Colombia, with the help of the Colombian armed forces. Demobilized paramilitary commanders, making their confession under the Justice and Peace law, explained that the Castano "model" included massacres, cutting people in pieces, disappearances, and cooperation with the Colombian military. One of the commanders described how the uniformed paramilitaries, with weapons, traveled to the Apartado airport, passing police and army checkpoints without being stopped because "everything had been coordinated with the Police and the Army." Apartado airport police paid no attention to the loading of weapons.

When the paramilitaries and their weapons landed in San Jose de Guaviare, where the airport abuts a military base, they were not questioned by the military. No authorities stopped them as they headed for Mapiripan. There, on July 15, 1997, they selected victims from a list given to them, cut them in pieces and threw them in the river. They stayed in Mapiripan five days,

killing about 60 farmers, without any interference by Colombian Police or Army troops. The inhabitants did call the Army base and the Army eventually arrived, but first they warned the paramilitaries to leave.

Source: *semana.com*, August 18, 2010. <http://www.semana.com/wf/ImprimirArticulo.aspx?IdArt=143203>



* August 17, 2010. Eight Colombian Army noncommissioned officers have been arrested and charged with kidnapping and aggravated homicide in the murder of two civilians. Prosecutors allege that on November 23, 2006, the two victims were lured to the Army's location with promises of employment. They were then murdered and presented as guerrillas killed in combat. Investigators found that the victims had no connection with the guerrillas and there had been no combat.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, *El Pais*, Cali, and Attorney General's web site.

* August 17, 2010. Colombia's Inspector General has asked a court to overturn a finding that the Colombian government is responsible for damages done to a taxi driver by Colombian soldiers in Socorro (Santander Province). The Inspector General argues that, while it is true that the soldiers seized all of the taxi driver's possessions and injured him with a weapon, they were not performing a state function at the time and the government should not be responsible.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, August 17, 2010.

* August 17, 2010. The former Colombian President's Legal Counsel will be interrogated in the DAS (Colombian FBI) spying and wiretapping investigation. He will be questioned about his part in meetings where stalking and wiretapping of Supreme Court Justices was planned and a former paramilitary was present. The former President's former press secretary, and his secretary general will also be interrogated about the stalking and wiretapping.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, August 17, 2010.

* August 16, 2010. A first level appellate court found ten Colombian soldiers not guilty of participating in the February 21 massacre of civilians, including three children, in San Jose de Apartado. The trial court had found them guilty. The families of the victims predicted an appeal, pointing out that officers had confessed to their participation.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, August 16, 2010.

* August 16, 2010. A Colombian Army soldier killed a fellow soldier in Santa Maria (Huila Province) A preliminary investigation concludes that there was an angry argument about a cell phone.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, August 16, 2010.

* August 13, 2010. Three Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with kidnapping and aggravated homicide in the “false positive” murder of Rodrigo Alonso Borja Valle on February 20, 2005 in Cascada (Magdalena Province). An investigation showed that there had been no combat and the victim was a farmer, not a guerrilla.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 13, 2010.



* August 10, 2010. Computer files reveal how DAS (Colombian FBI) officials planned the stalking of Senator Piedad Cordoba and Supreme Court Justice Cesar Valencia. The computer used by Martha Leal Llanos, former chief of operations in the DAS, contained details on these offenses.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, August 10, 2010.

* August 10, 2010. Five Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide and torture in the April 26, 2005 killing of two civilians. An investigation revealed that there was no combat and that one of the victims was tortured.

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

* August 3, 2010. Wearing his Colombian National Police uniform, Lt. Cesar William Rivera De La Victoria, was arrested while transporting 2.5 kilos of cocaine in his private car. He was charged with drug trafficking.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 3, 2010.

* August 3, 2010. The Colombian Attorney General’s Office revealed the “smoking gun” in its investigation of illegal spying and wiretapping by the DAS (Colombian FBI). Investigators revealed tapes of Supreme Court Justices conferring on their cases. Witnesses allege that the tapes were furnished to the President’s office.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, August 3, 2010.

* August 3, 2010. Spanish judge Baltasar Garzon, now employed as a prosecutor in the International Criminal Court, is visiting Colombia and warns that if Colombia cannot provide justice to victims of violence and displacement, the cases could go to the International Criminal Court.

Source: *Caracol Radio, El Tiempo, El Espectador, Semana.com, Bogota, El Pais, Cali, El Heraldo, Barranquilla, El Colombiano, Medellin*, August 3, 2010.

* July 31, 2010. According to *El Espectador*, by the end of 2007, the DAS (Colombian FBI) was already circulating information about the assets, cell phones and bank accounts of the Supreme Court Justices. But they wanted to know more. First they placed two DAS detectives among the Justices’ drivers and bodyguards. Finally, bribing with money, gifts and access

to good schools, they got a low-level Court employee to place a microphone in the Justices' conference room. The detectives and the agent who bribed the employee have already confessed and some of the illegal tapes have now been released. The DAS studied the Justices' routines and personal tastes, opened their mail, and even went through their garbage.



The DAS was especially interested in Justice Ivan Velasquez. They investigated his wife and listened in on his children. And the tapes show that the Justices were deeply suspicious of the DAS, believed that their conversations were being recorded somehow, and joked that the President must be behind it.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, July 31, 2010.

* July 29, 2010. Colombian Army Major Juan Carlos del Rio Crespo was arrested on a warrant issued when he was charged with the death of three civilians, members of the same family. Prosecutors allege that, on December 11, 2002, in the municipality of Campamento (Antioquia Province), troops under his command seized the three while they were working. Later they reported the three as “guerrillas killed combat”, but the evidence showed that there was no combat. One of the victims was found with a shotgun at his side, although he had only one arm.

Source: Attorney General's web site, Bogota, July 29, 2010.

* July 29, 2010. An Antioquia appellate court upheld the sentence of 30 years in prison for two Colombian Army officers and three soldiers who were convicted of killing a farmer, German Dario Hernandez Galeano on June 3, 2004 in the municipality of Cocorna (Antioquia Province). He was reported killed in combat and a revolver and a radio were found next to his body.

Source: Attorney General's web site, Bogota, July 29, 2010.

* July 28, 2010. Colombian Supreme Court Justice Sigifredo Espinsa complained to the Attorney General that, travelling from Bogota to Medellin on June 9, 2009, his car had been threatened by two trucks belonging to the National Police. He had complained immediately, but had never received any response.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, July 28, 2010, and *El Pais*, Cali, July 29, 2010..

* July 1, 2010. A detective attached to the Attorney General's Office and two member of the Judicial Police remain in custody, charged with illegally wiretapping Supreme Court Justice Ivan Velasquez.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, July 1, 2010.

* July 2, 2010. A 19-year-old Colombian has passed for an Army corporal for three months. She had always dreamed of being in the military. Her lawyer blames the Army's failure to investigate and asserts that, while she did "infiltrate", it was not with "terrorist" intentions.

Source: *Semana.com*, *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, *Caracol Radio*, and Attorney General's web site July 2, 2010.



* July 12, 2010.

* July 16, 2010. Three Colombian Army soldiers and four private citizens were arrested and charged with aggravated kidnapping and aggravated homicide in the death of Tatiana Patricia Arrieta Duenas on March 26, 2006 in Los Barriales (Guajira Province). She was reported as a "guerrilla killed in combat" but the investigation showed that there had been no combat and that she was not connected to any armed group.

Source: Attorney General's web site, July 16, 2010.

* July 16, 2010. Colombian Army Colonel Cesar Augusto Tavera Cardona has been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide and torture in the deaths of two civilians in Taraza (Antioquia Province). He and his troops represented the two as "guerrillas killed in combat", but the investigation showed that there had been no combat and that the two victims had been tortured.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Pais*, Cali, July 16, 2010.

* July 16, 2010. Colombia's Supreme Court overturned an appellate court decision and upheld a trial court that found two Colombian National Police officers guilty of killing two minors and sentenced them to 40 years in prison. The two victims had witnessed the defendants' participation in a massacre that took place 12 years ago.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, and *El Pais*, Cali, July 16, 2010.

* July 16, 2010. The United Nations Human Rights Commission has asked whether the secret directive offering rewards to Colombian Army soldiers for killing guerrillas is still in effect. Fabian Salvioli, speaking in Geneva for the Commission, pointed out that more than 1,000 poor citizens of Colombia were murdered by soldiers, solely to obtain a reward.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, July 16, 2010.

* July 17, 2010. *Semana.com* interviews one of the "Mothers of Soacha", mothers of "false positives", young men who were lured from Soacha, a Bogota suburb, to North Santander where they were murdered by Colombian soldiers and reported as "guerrillas killed in combat". Maria Sanabria's son was a high school student when he was killed as a "false positive". She complains that there has been no progress in the prosecution of the murderers and that she and other mothers have received death threats. They have filed a complaint with the International Criminal Court.

* July 31, 2010. The Human Rights Committee of the United Nations, meeting in Geneva, expressed concern about evidence of connivance between Colombia's armed forces and paramilitary groups. The Committee's report also criticized Colombia's lack of progress in investigating serious human rights violations and the prevalence of attacks on human rights activists.



Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, July 31, 2010.

* July 28, 2010. A retired Colombian Army Colonel, Alvaro Tamayo, and six soldiers have been charged with aggravated homicide, criminal conspiracy, forced disappearance, and falsifying documents in another "false positives" case. According to prosecutors, Col. Tamayo signed, manipulated and endorsed orders to his troops, when they killed Julian Oviedo Monroy, one of the young men who disappeared from Soacha in March of last year. Tamayo is also one of the officers discharged last November when the "false positive" scandal was publicized. Prosecutors intend to offer photos of the victims' bodies when they were exhumed, as well as forensic evidence.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, July 28, 2010.

* July 28, 2010. Prosecutors allege that Fernando Tabares, former Chief of Intelligence for the DAS (Colombian FBI), Jorge Lagos, former Chief of Counterintelligence, and DAS officials Gustavo Sierra, Bernardo Murille and Luz Marina Rodriguez all planned and carried out illegal spying and wiretapping, hoping to discredit Colombian Supreme Court Justices. The prosecutors plan to offer 127 documents as evidence. They claim that the five defendants also leaked confidential information to the press as part of their plan to harm the reputations of the Justices.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, July 28, 2010.

* July 27, 2010. Fernando Tabares, former Chief of Intelligence for the DAS (Colombian FBI) has turned state's evidence in the hope of achieving a plea bargain. He insists that all of the illegal spying and wiretapping carried out by the DAS was at the request of the President's Office. He said that one of the President's aides told him and his boss, DAS Director Maria del Pilar Hurtado, that the president wanted to be kept informed about four items: the Supreme Court, Senator Piedad Cordoba, Senator Gustavo Petro, and journalist Daniel Coronell. They had already been compiling information on the two Senators.

Tabares confirms that the DAS had infiltrated the Supreme Court, and he claims that all of the information obtained from those sources was supposed to be turned over to the President's Office. He also claimed that DAS officials wiretapped Senator Piedad Cordoba and turned the information over to another Senator to use in debate. He described a meeting between paramilitaries, DAS officials, and the President's aides, and he states that the purpose of the meeting was to find a way to discredit Supreme Court Justice Ivan Velasquez. He also claims that the DAS has destroyed numerous documents evidencing the illegal activities.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota, July 27, 2010.

* July 27, 2010. Extradited former paramilitary commander Rodrigo Tovar Pupo, alias “Jorge 40”, will testify from the United States against the former Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) Jorge Noguera Cotes. Noguera is charged with providing confidential intelligence information to the paramilitaries and allowing paramilitaries to infiltrate the DAS.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, July 27, 2010.

* July 27, 2010. A Medellin appellate court has upheld the 30-year prison sentence given by a trial court to Colombian Army Lieutenant Alejandro Ramirez Riano. He was convicted of killing Orlando de Jesus Idarraga Tobon on September 9, 2002 in the municipality of Cocoma (Antioquia Province), and presenting his body as a “guerrilla killed in combat”. Prosecutors proved that Idarraga was a farmer on his way to a meeting at a school when the soldiers seized him.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, Bogota, July 27, 2010.

* July 27, 2010. Two retired Colombian National Police Officers were sentenced to 12 years in prison after being found guilty of aggravated torture. Prosecutors proved that on August 21, 2008, they beat up three laborers and a minor child and threatened to kill them in the municipality of San Martin (Meta Province). At the time of the incident, the two served as Chief and Deputy Chief of Police in the municipality.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, Bogota, July 27, 2010.

* July 27, 2010. Colombian Army Major Juan Carlos Rios Crespo has been arrested on a warrant and has been charged with homicide in the killing of three members of one family on December 11, 2002, in the municipality of Campamento (Antioquia Province). The three laborers were seized by Army troops, killed, and their bodies were presented as “guerrillas killed in combat”. The investigation showed that the three were unarmed and had no connection with any illegal group.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, July 27, 2010.

* July 26, 2010. Retired Colombian Army General Maza Marquez has been arrested and charged with aggravated fraud in connection with a foundation he heads. Between 1999 and 2002 the foundation has offered an academic program that is not accredited, swindling students of more than 1 billion pesos (about \$500,000). Besides General Maza, six other foundation board members were charged.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and Attorney General’s web site, Bogotá, July 26, 2010.

* July 26, 2010. Retired Colombian Army Brigadier General Carlos Enrique Sanchez Molina, former commander of the Army’s 3d Brigade, headquartered in Cali, has been cited by the Inspector General to testify about the massacre at Jamundi (Valle Province). At Jamundi, Colombian Army soldiers massacred ten National Police officers on May 22, 2006 when the police planned a search for drug traffickers. The Inspector General has already

initiated discharge proceedings against the 15 soldiers who carried out the killing. The soldiers have been convicted in criminal court and, after appealing their original sentences of 54 years in prison, they received reduced sentences of 29 years in prison.



* July 21, 2010. An extradited paramilitary commander, Miguel Angel Mejia Munera, alias “El Mellizo” (“The Twin”), making his confession from the U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., testified that his paramilitary unit counted on the support of the Colombian military. He described the murder of principal witnesses against the Colombian Air Force in the bombing at Santo Domingo where 17 civilians were killed in 1998. One witness was murdered in downtown Tame (Arauca Province) less than four blocks from the police station and the other witness was taken away in a truck. The fleeing killers encountered an Army checkpoint and were given five minutes in which to kill the second witness.

Mejia also recounted that in September 2001 the Army gave the paramilitaries a list of license plates of vehicles supposedly being driven by guerrilla collaborators. One Wilson Pedraza had just bought a taxi but the license plate number was on the “hit list”. At 7pm on September 27 the paramilitaries got into his car and made him drive to an address near the Army base. When they encountered an Army checkpoint, the paramilitary told the soldiers, “It’s us”, and they passed through. The taxi driver was then killed.

Source: *Verdadabierta.com*, a link from *Semana.com*, Bogotá, July 21, 2010.

* July 15, 2010. A judge denied a motion to release eight Colombian Army soldiers, in custody on charges of aggravated homicide in the deaths of four civilians. According to prosecutors, on January 14, 2007, in La Reforma (Putumayo Province) the defendants shot four civilians to death.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, July 15, 2010.

* July 14, 2010. The former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI), Maria del Pilar Hurtado, is being questioned by prosecutors about illegal spying and wiretapping by the DAS. She testifies that the President’s office gave her information and asked her to verify it. Representatives of the President’s office will testify next week.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, July 14, 2010, and *El Pais*, Cali, July 15, 2010.

* July 12, 2010. The National Police captured a fugitive Colombian marine, Ignacio Garces Grueso. He has been convicted of furnishing the guerrillas with information that allowed them to attack the Iscuande marine base (Narino Province) in 2005 and has been sentenced to 50 years in prison. Another marine, Raul Obando Obando is accused of taking part in the plan. Sixteen marines were killed and 25 were injured in the attack.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, July 12, 2010.



* July 12, 2010. Warrants have been issued for the arrest of Colombian Army Colonels Wilfredo Ruiz Silva and Hernan Contreras in connection with the Trujillo massacre in 1990. Contreras is in custody. Ruiz will be charged with aggravated homicide, kidnapping and criminal conspiracy for actions he is alleged to have taken between March and April of 1990 in Trujillo (Cauca Valley Province). Between 1988 and 1993 between 240 and 350 people were killed in Trujillo by drug traffickers and paramilitaries. In 1995, the Inter-American Court for Human Rights found the Colombian government guilty of failing to protect the community. Investigators have found that members of the Colombian armed forces collaborated with the drug traffickers and paramilitaries.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, *El Pais*, Cali, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, July 12, 2010.

* July 11, 2010. A municipal councilman, Jose de Jesus German Segura, who protested the connections of Colombian Army General Rito Alejo del Rio with the paramilitaries, was murdered on September 8, 2001. He had been a key witness in the prosecution of General del Rio. A Colombian administrative court in Bogota has ordered the government to pay damages to his mother, his two children, and his three brothers because the Interior Ministry and the DAS (Colombian FBI) were responsible for the killing. They withdrew his bodyguards even though he had received numerous threats on his life. The case against General del Rio was closed in 2004 but was reopened in 2009.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, July 11, 2010.

* July 10, 2010. The former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI), Maria del Pilar Hurtado, is being questioned by investigators from the Attorney General's Office about meetings she had with representatives of the President's Office in which she revealed the results of illegal spying and wiretapping by the DAS. Two former DAS officials have already described these meetings. She has claimed that DAS officials were concerned that drug traffickers might have infiltrated the Supreme Court and they spied on and wiretapped the Justices because of that.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *El Herald*, Barranquilla, and *El Pais*, Cali, July 10, 2010.

* July 10, 2010. The Guayaquil, Ecuador newspaper *El Universo* admits that it provided authorities with confidential information about spying by the DAS (Colombian FBI) on Ecuadorian officials. The paper plans to turn over evidence that the DAS wiretapped the officials' phone calls. According to *El Universo*, the DAS installed a "mobile platform" in various places in Quito, intercepting the phone calls of President Correa, his staff, the military, and journalists. The Ecuadorian government may establish a committee to investigate, and the Attorney General is also investigating.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, *El Espectador* and *Semana.com*, Bogotá, July 10, 2010.

* July 10, 2010. A Colombian marine, Ignacio Garces Grueso, a fugitive convicted of collaborating with the guerrillas in a 2005 attack on the Colombian Naval Base at Iscuande

(Narino Province) was captured. He has been sentenced to 50 years in prison. Sixteen marines were killed in the attack, and 26 were injured.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, July 10, 2010.

* July 9, 2010. A former colonel in the Colombian National Police, Joaquin Aldana, is on trial for the murder and dismemberment of his wife in the municipality of Alvarado (Tolima Province). The trial will continue next week.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, June 9, 2010.

* July 9, 2010. A member of the Colombian National Police and an official of the Colombian prison system are among the recently captured members of the criminal gang led by Diego Fernando Rios Ospina, alias “El Carnicero”, (“The Butcher”). The gang members are charged with criminal conspiracy, aggravated homicide, weapons trafficking and bribery.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, July 9, 2010.

* July 9, 2010. Marilu Ramirez Baquero, on trial for terrorism, attempted homicide, personal injury and property damage, will not be released on bail. Ramirez allegedly infiltrated the Colombian Army in 2006, took military courses and moved freely among high-ranking commanders. She is alleged to have provided information to the guerrillas.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 9, 2010.

* July 8, 2010. Three members of President Uribe’s staff, Press Secretary Cesar Mauricio Velasquez, Legal Counsel Edmundo del Castillo, and former aide Jose Obdulio Gaviria will be questioned by investigators from the Attorney General’s Office in the case of illegal spying and wiretapping by the DAS (Colombian FBI). They will be questioned about meetings where they were allegedly given the results of the illegal searches.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, June 8, 2010.

* July 8, 2010. A demobilized military commander, Jorge Ivan Laverde, alias “El Iguano”, making his confession under the Justice and Peace Law, revealed how the paramilitaries had infiltrated every level of government in areas they controlled. He revealed that Army commanders, Col. William Montezuma of the National Police, prosecutors from the Attorney General’s Office, prison officials, and senators, governors and mayors were on their side. According to “El Iguano” and other demobilized paramilitaries, Col. Montezuma gave them information, told them about planned investigations and warned them in advance about police operations. Another paramilitary has testified that they murdered Maria Ruth Granados and her two children in 2003 on information that then-Major Montezuma gave them. Col. Montezuma is the current commander of Police in Narino Province.

“El Iguano” testified that when he arrived in Cucuta, the paramilitaries there had already established a relationship with now-retired Col. Victor Hugo Matamoros. He said that in



1999 all of their actions were thanks to Col. Matamoros, who made sure the armed forces never saw a paramilitary operation, but prosecutors say that some of the soldiers under his command joined the paramilitaries. Col Matamoros has been in custody since 2008 because of his participation the massacre at La Gabarra (North Santander Province) where more than 30 civilians were murdered.



Now-retired Major Mauricio Llorente, headquartered in Tibu (North Santander Province) was another officer who helped the paramilitaries. He was sentenced 1997 to 40 years in prison after being found guilty of allowing several truckloads of paramilitaries to travel to La Gabarra for the massacre.

Another witness, Giovanni Velazquez, alias “Bryan”, a former soldier, testified that Col. Matamoros and Major Llorente sent him to Cordoba to work with the Castano brothers to organize the arrival of paramilitaries in North Santander Province.

Prosecutors also argued that Army soldiers worked with paramilitaries to obtain “false positives”. “El Iguano” testified that he and another paramilitary killed a paramilitary who had got drunk and killed a young woman, who turned out to be the daughter of a Council member in Cucuta. The next day, an Army spokesman told the local newspaper that they had killed the victim in combat.

Prosecutors also pointed out that prison authorities have been infiltrated by paramilitaries. When “El Iguano” was first captured in November 2000, he escaped a few days later. “El Iguano” now says that paramilitary leaders met with the director and assistant director of the prison to plan his flight and that the two were paid 180 million pesos (about \$90,000) for their help in freeing another paramilitary, “Gustavo 18”.

Prosecutors have evidence that Jorge Enrique Diaz, a regional director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) actively cooperated with the paramilitaries, giving them information and identifying people to be killed. According to “El Iguano”, Diaz was “more of a paramilitary than a DAS official”. “El Iguano” also testified that he had met with Diaz and General Rito Alejo del Rio, who headed the Army’s 17th Brigade.

Source: *verdadabierta.com*, a link from *Semana.com*, Bogotá, July 8, 2010.

* July 7, 2010. Guayaquil’s newspaper *El Universo* relates that nine active DAS (Colombian FBI) agents had wiretapped telephone conversations of Ecuador’s President Rafael Correa, and also of business owners, journalists, and members of the military. The nine agents have admitted the spying.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, July 7, 2010.

* July 6, 2010. A judge refused to release eight Colombian Army soldiers who are in custody, charged with aggravated homicide in the murder of four civilians whose bodies they then presented as kidnappers killed in combat.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, July 6, 2010.

* July 2, 2010. *El Espectador* asks “How did she manage to infiltrate the Army”, reporting that Adriana Marcela Cantor Avila, 19 years old, “passed” as a soldier and stayed at an Army base for three months. She has confessed to charges of illegal use of uniforms and insignias and falsely claiming to be a member of the military. She bought her uniform and insignia in a store in Bogotá in January 2009 and was even sent to Artillery School, where she pretended to be an Army Corporal, until her pretense was discovered.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, July 2, 2010.

* July 2, 2010. Two members of the Colombian National Police have been arrested and charged with criminal conspiracy for cooperating with a gang of drug traffickers. According to the investigation, they provided information to the gang about police activities.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, July 2, 2010.

* July 2, 2010. Demobilized paramilitary commanders, making their confessions under the Justice and Peace Law, have testified that Jose Miguel Narvaez, former deputy director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) was the one who decided on the murder of a writer and humorist, Jaime Garzon. They also testified that Narvaez had a lot of influence with Carlos Castano, founder of a paramilitary group and a top commander, and convinced Castano that Garzon ought to be killed.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, July 2, 2010.

* July 2, 2010. Nine members of Colombia’s Judicial Police are being tried in the forced disappearance of two of their fellow officers, and for belonging to a criminal gang. A key witness who had been missing has re-appeared and will give testimony. The witness took part in some of the thefts committed by the gang.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, July 2, 2010.

* July 2, 2010. Two Colombian Army soldiers got into a fight in their barracks after one of their comrades hid some belongings as a joke. One shot the other dead with a rifle. However, the victim’s father does not believe the Army’s version of the event.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, July 2, 2010.

* July 1, 2010. A former Colombian Police Officer, Edwin Nicolas Acuna Torrado, charged with taking part in the illegal spying and wiretapping by the DAS (Colombian FBI) has entered into a plea agreement and will testify for the prosecution.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, July 1, 2010.

* July 1, 2010. Three Colombian Army officers, a detective attached to the Attorney General's Office, and a Colombian National Police Officer have been charged in connection with illegal spying and wiretapping of a Supreme Court Justice, Ivan Velasquez.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Mundo*, Medellín, July 1, 2010.



* June 30, 2010. The indictment against Mario Aranguren, Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) Investigation and Financial Analysis Section, alleges that he was not seeking criminal intelligence when he contacted individuals employed in Colombia's Supreme Court in order to obtain confidential personal information about the Justices and their activities. According to the indictment, Aranguren did the same with Senators Piedad Cordoba and Gustavo Petro. Aranguren remains in custody.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 30, 2010.

* June 30, 2010. A former Colombian National Police patrolman, James Jair Jimenez Vega, alias "Centella" ("Lightning Bolt"), has been sentenced to 15 years and four months in prison, after confessing to attempted murder, perjury, and weapons trafficking. On October 14, 2009, he attempted the murder of a judge, who was not injured. Three other defendants have been sentenced to prison for the murder attempt.

Source: Attorney General's web site, Bogotá, June 30, 2010.

* June 29, 2010. Colombia's Attorney General has ordered the arrest of Jose Miguel Narvaez, the former assistant director of the DAS (Colombian FBI), charged with planning the murder of a journalist, Jaime Garzon, in August 1999. In 2009 Narvaez was connected with Garzon's murder and also with the assassination of Senator Manuel Cepeda Vargas. Demobilized paramilitary commanders have testified that Narvaez was involved in the kidnapping of Senator Piedad Cordoba by paramilitaries, and that Narvaez trained paramilitaries to "fight communists".

Narvaez claims that his predecessor, Enrique Ariza, had identified individuals who were to be killed, and that DAS officials had stolen investigative files that connected a drug trafficker with military officials. The files were turned over to the drug trafficker.

Extradited paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso has also testified that Narvaez met regularly with paramilitaries and presented himself as a professor in Colombia's War College, providing them with instruction. Another demobilized paramilitary commander, alias "El Iguano" has also testified about these classes. Narvaez allegedly taught the paramilitaries to justify the extermination of social sectors that he believed were involved with the guerrillas, including trade unionists and certain politicians. Mancuso thought Narvaez was too radical. "He thinks everyone is a guerrilla."

Source: *verdadabierta.com*, a link from *Semana.com*, *El Espectador*, and Attorney General's web site, Bogotá, and *El Pais*, Cali, June 29, 2010.

* June 29, 2010. The Attorney General of Ecuador announced an investigation into alleged illegal wiretapping in Ecuador by the DAS (Colombian FBI). A Guayaquil newspaper, *El Universo*, reported that DAS agents tapped telephones in the office of President Correa in Quito. A DAS spokesman denied the claim.



Source: *Semana.com*, *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *El Mundo*, Medellín, *El Herald*, Barranquilla, June 29, 2010, and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, June 28, 2010.

* June 28, 2010. Retired Colombian National Police Major Juan Carlos Meneses has furnished the Attorney General of Argentina with evidence he believes will connect Santiago Uribe, the brother of Colombia's President Alvaro Uribe, with the paramilitary group known as "The Twelve Apostles". Meneses gave the Attorney General a tape recording in which he speaks with retired Captain Pedro Manuel Benavides and Captain Benavides talks of operations conducted together with "The Twelve Apostles". Captain Benavides now denies that. In a conversation with another news service, *Noticias Uno*, both former soldiers admitted that they had received money for permitting the paramilitaries to act, but denied that they committed any murders themselves.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogotá, June 28, 2010.

* June 28, 2010. Victor Patino Fomeque, a Colombian Police Officer who joined the drug traffickers in the 1980's, is returning to Colombia after serving a prison sentence in the United States. A federal court in Florida convicted Patino of drug trafficking and money laundering. The investigation revealed his connection to Colombian Police Col. Danilo Gonzalez,

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, June 28, 2010.

* June 28, 2010. Five paramilitaries have been sentenced for their part in the February 21, 2005 massacre at San Jose de Apartado. They will serve between 40 years and six years in prison. A Colombian Army captain has already been sentenced to 20 years and ten soldiers are awaiting trial.

Source: Attorney General's web site, *El Tiempo*, *Semana.com*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, June 28, 2010.

* June 27, 2010. An official from the Colombian Attorney General's office traveled to Buenos Aires Argentina to take the testimony of retired Colombian Police Major Juan Carlos Meneses. Argentinean newspaper *Pagina 12* covered his appearance. In testimony that lasted more than four hours, Meneses recounted that there was a group of Colombian National Police and paramilitaries that operated from the La Carolina ranch, a ranch that belongs to Santiago Uribe, the brother of Colombia's President Alvaro Uribe. He said that the police officials in the area received a monthly stipend in return for letting the "Twelve Apostles" paramilitary group act with impunity and for providing them with weapons and logistic support. He also said that Santiago Uribe himself assured them that his brother, first a Senator and then Governor of Antioquia Province, would provide political and judicial

protection for any crimes committed by the Twelve Apostles.

Meneses also admitted that he overlooked crimes committed by the Twelve Apostles, on orders from Santiago Uribe. He identified crimes that were committed in 1993 when Meneses was Yarumal's Police Chief. He said that in one case, he refused to act on a murder committed by one of the paramilitaries in the middle of the street, in bright daylight, just a few meters away from the police station. He said that in another case where the Twelve Apostles ordered the extrajudicial execution of a supposed extortionist, it ended up in a massacre where the intended victim was killed as well as his father, and two young children were also killed.



Source: *Pagina 12*, Buenos Aires, Argentina, June 27, 2010.

* June 26, 2010. Bucaramanga Metropolitan Police have captured a demobilized paramilitary and a Colombian soldier. The two will be charged with the murder of three young men, one a minor, in Bucaramanga (Santander Province). The two are being held without bail.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, June 26, 2010.

* June 26, 2010. Bogotá newspaper *El Tiempo* claims that five DAS (Colombian FBI) officials in Meta Province who have just been fired were involved in the attempted murder of a prominent emerald dealer, Victor Carranza. A criminal gang run by "Cuchillo" ("The Knife") is said to be behind the attempt. Eleven DAS officials in Meta Province have been fired for furnishing intelligence information to "Cuchillo". *El Tiempo* speculates that the five may have been involved in the murder of another DAS official who may have been part of "Cuchillo's" gang.

El Tiempo notes that the DAS knew about the attempt on Carranza's life a month before it took place, and knew how it was planned to be done. The DAS even warned Carranza's head of security that nine hit men were training at a security business owned by a retired Army officer. A gun that was recovered at the scene of the attempt appears to be an Army weapon.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 26, 2010.

* June 25, 2010. Colombian Army Corporal Luis Alfonso Tangarife Narvaez has been arrested and charged with homicide in the death of two brothers, one a minor, in the town of Corrientes (Antioquia Province). According to the investigation, on July 2, 2004, troops of the Army's 4th Brigade entered a home and took away the 16-year-old son, demanding that he take them to his brother's home. The next day the two brothers were reported as "guerrillas killed in combat." In the same case, a sergeant has pleaded guilty as part of a plea bargain.

Source: Attorney General's web site, Bogotá, June 25, 2010.

* June 25, 2010. Mario Aranguren, Director of Investigation and Financial Analysis of the DAS (Colombian FBI) has been indicted on charges of illegal spying and wiretapping. He is accused of having illegal access to personal financial records of Supreme Court Justices and of illegally listening in on confidential Supreme Court case conferences.



Source: *Caracol Radio*, *El Tiempo*, and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, June 25, 2010.

* June 25, 2010. An appellate court in Cali (Cauca Valley Province) upheld the convictions of retired Colombian Army Lieutenant Colonel Byron Carvajal, another officer and 15 soldiers for the massacre of ten Police Officers and one civilian on May 22, 2006. The court reduced the sentences of the two officers from 54 and 52 years to 29 years in prison. The defendants were convicted of aggravated homicide on May 7, 2008. The 50-year sentences of the 13 other soldiers were reduced to eight years in prison and will have to pay fines. The appellate court will also investigate the unauthorized transfer of 14 soldiers to a military prison.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *Caracol Radio*, and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, June 25, 2010.

* June 24, 2010. Detectives attached to the Attorney General's Office have arrested 29 paramilitaries connected to the massacre of eight people at San Jose de Apartado on February 21, 2005. A judge in Medellin has already sentenced Colombian Army Captain Guillermo Gordillo to 20 years in prison for his part in the massacre and three paramilitaries have confessed their involvement, part of plea agreements. The killers murdered Luis Eduardo Guerra, his partner Beyanira Areiza, and Guerra's 12-year old son. Later they murdered Alejandro Perez, Alfonso Bolivar Tuberquia and his wife Sandra Milena Munoz, and their two young children.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, June 24, 2010.

* June 24, 2010. A 2d lieutenant of the Colombian National Police was arrested by detectives attached to the Attorney General's Office, charged with shooting a young man in a discothèque in Cali (Cauca Valley Province). The two argued about the telephone number of the officer's girlfriend.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, June 24, 2010.

* June 24, 2010. The Inter-American Court for Human Rights has found the government of Colombia guilty in the murder of Senator Manuel Cepeda Vargas in 1994. The Court found that the government failed to investigate threats against the Senator or punish the killers, who included members of the Colombian military. The Colombian government admitted responsibility several months ago.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Pais*, Cali, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, June 24, 2010., and *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., USA, June 26, 2010.

* June 24 2010. Colombia's Inspector General has ordered the discharge of three members of the Colombian National Police, a major, a captain, and a 2d lieutenant. According to the Inspector General's investigation, on June 19, 2007, they found a dead body in a Medellin suburb and, contrary to required procedures, the Major ordered the others not to report it. On June 21, 2007, the body was found in another municipality.



Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, June 24, 2010.

* June 24, 2010. Colombian and European non-governmental organizations have asked the European Parliament to establish a special committee to investigate illegal spying and wiretapping in Europe by the DAS (Colombian FBI). Organization leaders complain that they have been threatened, stalked, and wiretapped by the DAS and that these activities have taken place in Europe.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, June 24, 2010.

* June 23, 2010. The Inter-American Court for Human Rights has ruled that the government of Colombia was responsible for the assassination of Senator Manuel Cepeda on August 9, 1994. The Court found that there had been a systematic pattern of murders of members of Cepeda's political party, the Patriotic Union Party, and that, although threats against Cepeda's life were well known, the government did nothing to protect him. After he was killed by two Colombian Army sergeants, Colombian courts made little effort to solve the crime and punish those who planned it. The two who committed the murder were each sentenced to 43 years in prison, but the sentence was reduced several times and they continued to commit crimes while they were supposed to be incarcerated.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota, June 23, 2010.

* June 23, 2010. Juan Carlos Meneses, a retired Colombian National Police official, who is living in exile in Argentina, was questioned by a Colombian prosecutor after he claimed that Santiago Uribe, the brother of Colombia's President Alvaro Uribe, was a paramilitary commander in the town of Yarumal (Antioquia Province). The group had murdered a number of people living in the area. Meneses had commanded the Yarumal police force in 1994 and has claimed that he and Uribe planned killings.

Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., USA, and *El Tiempo*, June 23, 2010.

* June 23, 2010. A 2d lieutenant and two patrolmen of the Colombian National Police were arrested and charged with aggravated homicide in the killing of Manson Acosta Gonzalez, a man who painted automobiles for a living. According to the investigation, they detained the victim, who asked to be let go. When the police refused, he fled and they shot him in the back.

Source: Attorney General's web site, Bogota, June 23, 2010.

* June 23, 2010. The motion by five former DAS (Colombian FBI) officials to dismiss charges against them in the DAS illegal spying and wiretapping scandal was denied by an appellate court in Bogota.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota and *El Pais*, Cali, June 23, 2010.



* June 23, 2010. The Inter-American Court for Human Rights has ordered the government of Colombia not to provide favors such as reduced sentences and confinement in military installations when members of the military are found guilty of crimes against humanity. The Court's order was part of its ruling in the case where it held the government of Colombia responsible for the assassination of Senator Manuel Cepeda Vargas.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, June 23, 2010.

* June 22, 2010. A Colombian Army sergeant, Wilson Pencue Hurtado, has been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide and attempted aggravated homicide in the deaths of three civilians and injury of another on June 7, 2006. The investigation revealed that soldiers from Infantry Battalion No. 3 killed three civilians and injured another, later claiming that the deaths had been in combat. One of the dead was a child named Harold Arley Imbachy who was asleep at home when he was killed.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Espectador*, Bogota, June 22, 2010.

* June 22, 2010. Nine Colombian Army soldiers have been indicted in the killing of two young men from Soacha (Cundinamarca Province). According to the investigation, on January 26, 2008, the two victims, Julio Cesar Mesa, 28 years old and a student, Jonathan Orlando Soto, a minor, disappeared. On the next day, Mesa was reported killed in a battle with guerrillas in the town of El Espejo (North Santander Province). The soldiers reported that the same thing happened to Soto in the town of Chircas. They are charged with aggravated forced disappearance, aggravated homicide and criminal conspiracy.

Source: Attorney General's web site Bogota, June 22, 2010.

* June 22, 2010. A Colombian Army Colonel, Hernan Mejia and four others are on trial, charged with homicide, criminal conspiracy and aiding the paramilitaries. A prosecution witness, John Jairo Hernandez Sanchez, alias "Daniel Centella", a former soldier and a demobilized paramilitary revealed details about Col. Mejia's relationship with the paramilitaries. He testified that Col. Mejia met regularly with the paramilitary commander known as "39" and that the paramilitaries occasionally brought the soldiers people who could be killed and presented as "guerrillas killed in combat. In exchange, the paramilitaries would receive military equipment, uniforms, boots, tents, ammunition, grenades and portable radios, among other things.

"Centella" also testified that in October of 2002, paramilitary commander "39" planned an internal purge of his own troops that he considered insubordinate. He delivered 18 of them to the Army to be killed and presented as "guerrillas killed in combat." Another prosecution

witness testified that Col. Mejia and extradited paramilitary commander “Jorge 40 agreed that Mejia would receive 30 million pesos (about \$15,000) every month if the Army would not interfere with the paramilitaries. Mejia also provided paramilitary commander “39” with rifles if he would furnish the Army with “false positives”, civilians who could be killed and presented as “guerrillas killed in combat”.



Source: *verdadabierta.com*, part of *Semana.com*, Bogota, June 22, 2010.

* June 21, 2010. Nine former paramilitaries were arrested for their part in the February 21 massacre of eight civilians, including three children, at San Jose de Apartado (Antioquia Province). Paramilitaries served as guides to soldiers from the 17th Brigade and ten soldiers are now on trial for the murders. One Army officer and three paramilitaries have entered into plea bargains, pleading guilty to murder and receiving reduced sentences.

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

* June 19, 2010. Two DAS (Colombian FBI) officials, wanted for murder and criminal conspiracy in the killing of a trade union leader, have turned themselves in.

Source: *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, and *El Pais*, Cali, June 19, 2010.

* June 18, 2010. Two Colombian Army soldiers, Sergeant Luis Fernando Castaneda Arredondo and Private Marco Vinicio Villegas Cervantes, have each been sentenced to 28 years in prison for their part in an extrajudicial killing of two civilians. An officer and four other soldiers have already been sentenced in this case. On March 5, 2006, the soldiers reported two men supposedly killed in combat with an illegal armed group. Prosecutors proved that there was no combat at that place and time and the two civilians had been murdered. A civilian “recruiter” who had offered nonexistent jobs to the victims to lure them to the location of the murders has entered into a plea agreement.

Source: Attorney General’s web site and *El Espectador*, Bogota, June 18, 2010.

* June 17, 2010. The Colombian Supreme Court has upheld sentences of 50 years in prison given to two Colombian marines for aiding guerrillas in an attack on their base. Sixteen marines were killed in the attack. The defendants knew in advance about the planned attack, and they actively cooperated in other operations carried out by the guerrillas. They sold munitions and uniforms to the guerrillas. The sentences were imposed by a trial court on September 3, 2008.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, June 17, 2010.

* June 16, 2010. Colombia’s Attorney General’s Office continues to investigate the killings of 50 people in Yarumal (Antioquia Province) in 1993. Witnesses, including a priest, a municipal official, and a former police commander who has fled the country, have testified

that other members of the military and a rancher, Santiago Uribe, the brother of Colombia's President Alvaro Uribe, were involved in the killings.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, June 16, 2010.

* June 16, 2010. Two Colombian Army officers and two soldiers have been indicted on charges of homicide and attempted homicide in the death of a civilian, Diego Silver Garcia Suaza on May 29, 2006. Alvaro de Jesus Rios Zapata, who was injured but survived, has testified that there was no combat as the soldiers claimed and that the soldiers gave them drugs to make them look more like criminals.

Source: Attorney General's web site, June 16, 2010.

* June 15, 2010. Four former DAS (Colombian FBI) officials have been arrested and charged with aggravated criminal conspiracy, malfeasance in office, abuse of authority, and illegal wiretapping in the DAS illegal spying and wiretapping scandal.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, June 15, 2010.

* June 14, 2010. In a lengthy interview, Colombia's acting Attorney General, Guillermo Mendoza Diago, told news agency *Colprensa* that his office has received four formal complaints, three in 2009 and one in 2010, against high government officials, including the President, the Minister of Defense, the commanders of the Army and of the Armed Forces, as well a numerous Army generals, colonels, and other officers, in connection with the extrajudicial killings of civilians by military personnel in order to gain promotions, days off, and other benefits. Mendoza stated that the complaints will be investigated.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, June 14, 2010.

* June 14, 2010. An official in the Colombian Attorney General's Office has requested an investigation into retired General Mario Montoya's connections with paramilitaries after demobilized paramilitary commander Daniel Rendon Herrera, alias "Don Mario", making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, testified that he had worked with General Montoya and that in 2004 he had given General Montoya 1,500,000,000 pesos (about \$750,000) in return for his support of the paramilitary group. In addition, he testified, another paramilitary commander, Miguel Arroyave, had given General Montoya a secure apartment in Bogota, valued at 400,000,000 pesos (about \$200,000). General Motoya has denied the allegations.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, June 14, 2010.

* June 12, 2010. Juan Forero of *The Washington Post* credits Fr. Javier Giraldo, a Colombian priest, with seeking out evidence from witnesses, resulting in a 30-year prison sentence for a retired Colombian Army colonel convicted of responsibility for the disappearance of 11 civilians in 1985. Giraldo has spent 30 years investigating Colombian human rights abuses, and has revealed other offenses by Colombian armed forces. Most recently, he accompanied



a former major in the Colombian National Police, Juan Carlos Meneses, to Buenos Aires, Argentina, where his story of committing murders along with paramilitaries in 1994 was videotaped. Because of his painstaking research and revelations of atrocities committed with the cooperation of the armed forces, his life has been threatened repeatedly.



Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., USA, June 12, 2010.

* June 11, 2010. A judge has found six Colombian soldiers guilty of murder in the death of Edwin Legarda, husband of an indigenous leader, Ayda Quilcue. On December 16, 2008, on the road from Inza to Totoro (Cauca Province), Legarda was driving a jeep that received 101 gunshots by an Army patrol. The soldiers insisted that Legarda refused to obey an order to stop at a checkpoint, but other witnesses testify that there had been no order to stop. Prosecutors argued that the soldiers had not followed any military procedure, were not wearing identification, had not set up checkpoint equipment, and were not wearing the reflecting vests required for night time checkpoints.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and Attorney General's web site, Bogota, and *El Pais*, Cali, June 11, 2010.

* June 11, 2010. Amnesty International has criticized Colombia's President Uribe for proposing legislation that would give the Armed Forces special legal protection, at the same time that the United Nations praised the conviction of a retired officer for his part in the disappearance of eleven civilians 24 years ago. At present members of the Armed Forces accused of crimes are prosecuted in the civilian justice system, not in military courts as they were several years ago. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights urged that the conviction decision be respected and that the judge who sentenced the retired officer to 30 years in prison receive protection. She has received numerous death threats.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, June 11, 2010.

* June 7, 2010. Major Giovanni Enrique Pinzon Vargas of the Colombian Antinarcotics Police and a civilian accomplice were arrested with 50 kilos of cocaine. The civilian confessed to drug trafficking.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, June 7, 2010.

* June 3, 2010. On the night of October 2, 2000, a Colombian police officer armed with an Uzi shot and killed a teenaged boy, without saying a word to him. While members of his patrol ran to inform superiors, he took the victim's body to a nearby location and dismembered it, placing the body parts in three bags. He put the bags in a garbage dump. The Council of State, Colombia's highest administrative court, ordered the National Police to pay the boy's mother about 100,000,000 pesos (about \$50,000) and about 50,000,000 pesos (about \$25,000) to his brother and grandmother. The killer was sentenced to 20 years in prison.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, June 3, 2010.

* June 1, 2010. Retired Colombian Army General Rito Alejo del Rio is awaiting trial on charges of aiding paramilitaries and murdering a young farmer. He insists that the charges are a plot orchestrated by various nongovernmental organizations. Another general, Pauselino La Torre, still on active duty is on trial for drug trafficking and criminal conspiracy. He is accused of working with a drug trafficking organization that has laundered more than 2 billion pesos (about \$1 million).



Source: *El Tiempo*, June 1, 2010.

* May 31, 2010. Journalist and university professor Juan Diego Restrepo E. reports on his investigation of what he calls “impunity in Antioquia Province”. He notes that the story about retired Colombian National Police major Juan Carlos Meneses Quintero implicating Santiago Uribe, the brother of Colombia’s President Alvaro Uribe, in murders carried out by paramilitaries working with the National Police has been carried in *The Washington Post* and in Argentina’s *Pagina/12*. Meneses claimed that Uribe’s “private justice” group carried out “social cleansing” in Yarumal (Antioquia Province) and nearby localities in 1993 and 1994.

Restrepo talked to a witness who had been a city official in Yarumal at the time of the killings. The witness explained that the investigation was difficult because the witnesses were terrified, knowing that “important” people were involved. Further, the Police were accomplices to the murders, yet took part in the investigation. Thus no charges were ever brought. He reported that a search by the Attorney General’s Office of a paramilitary headquarters in Medellin in April 1998 revealed 497 bank accounts belonging to businessmen, factory owners, ranchers, military officers and police, all of whom had financial dealings with the paramilitaries. Several of the detectives involved were killed or had to leave the country.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota, May 31, 2010.

* May 31, 2010. After hearing of the testimony of retired Colombian National Police Major Juan Carlos Meneses, linking rancher Santiago Uribe, brother of President Alvaro Uribe, to paramilitary groups and murders of civilians in Antioquia Province, acting Attorney General Guillermo Mendoza Diago states that the investigation may have to be re-opened. No charges were ever brought in those murders.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota, May 31, 2010.

* May 31, 2010. A Colombian Army officer, a noncommissioned officer, and two soldiers have been indicted on charges of aggravated homicide in the death of a farmer in Chaparral municipality (Tolima Province). According to the investigation, on May 6, 2006, the defendants reported combat with an illegal armed group, resulting in the death of Diemer Vergera Perez. A fragmentation grenade was found next to his body. In fact, there had been no combat, and the victim was a local farmer.

Source: Attorney General’s web site Bogota, May 31, 2010.

* May 27, 2010. An officer of Colombia's Judicial Police has been charged with bribery, obstruction of justice, and concealing a public document. Taking part in an investigation, he manipulated documents to favor a defendant, in return for money.

Source: Attorney General's web site, Bogota, May 27, 2010.



* May 27, 2010. Philip Alston, sent by the United Nations to investigate the "false positive" killings by the Colombian Army has issued a report finding that the number of killings is estimated to be from several hundred to more than 2,000 and that they were systematic and "a pattern", not isolated incidents. Alston expressed concern that the vast majority of incidents have not resulted in criminal charges and punishment.

Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., USA, *El Tiempo*, Bogota, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, May 27, 2010.

* May 27, 2010. Colombia's Supreme Court Justices expressed concern about findings by the Attorney General's Office that DAS (Colombian FBI) officials spied on them, wiretapped their messages, and followed their families. They called it "terrifying". They were particularly concerned about allegations that the spying was requested by officials from the President's office.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, May 27, 2010.

* May 26, 2010. Colombian Vice President Francisco Santos, Minister of Defense Gabriel Silva and General Oscar Naranjo all deny the testimony of retired Colombian National Police Major Juan Carlos Meneses connecting President Alvaro Uribe's brother Santiago Uribe with paramilitary death squads in Antioquia Province in the '90's. Santiago Uribe has written to *The Washington Post* where the charges were first outlined. Meneses told *The Washington Post* that Santiago Uribe headed a paramilitary group known as "The Twelve Apostles" and that the group killed or ordered the killing of "common criminals", "guerrilla sympathizers", and "supposed subversives", all with the help of the Colombian Armed Forces. Meneses also claimed that paramilitary troops trained at the Uribe ranch, La Carolina, near Yarumal (Antioquia Province).

The case was filed away more than 10 years ago, for lack of evidence, but the Attorney General's Office is considering re-opening the case.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, May 26, 2010.

* May 24, 2010. *The Washington Post* reports that retired Colombian National Police Major Juan Carlos Meneses, fearing that he would be killed for "knowing too much" has fled to Argentina and is giving testimony about paramilitary groups connected to Santiago Uribe, the brother of President Alvaro Uribe, and about his own connections with the groups. Meneses said that, as Police commander, he would meet with Santiago Uribe and they would

discuss who should be killed next. It was his job to see that no police would be around when a killing was to take place. They killed drug addicts, small time criminals, and people they thought might be guerrilla sympathizers.

Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., USA, *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, May 24, 2010.



* May 24, 2010. *Washington Post* reporter Juan Forero interviewed retired Colombian National Police Major Juan Carlos Meneses in Argentina on May 12. Meneses told Forero that Santiago Uribe had told him that his brother, President Alvaro Uribe knew all about the paramilitary group he was forming. He said that when he was first assigned to head the National Police in Yarumal, he was told that he would receive 1,500,000 pesos (less than \$2,000) a month from the paramilitaries and that other police officials had the same arrangement. He told about a room right next to the police station where the paramilitaries stored their gear and about a police hit man who killed people that the group told him to kill. He believes that most of those killed were innocent people.

Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., USA, May 24, 2010.

* May 24, 2010. A dispute between the two top leaders of the DAS (Colombian FBI) has brought infiltration of the DAS by paramilitaries and drug traffickers to light. A detective who had been fired revealed that he had been ordered to “buy” an investigative file on a drug trafficker from a prosecutor, for five million pesos (about \$2,500). The detective obeyed the order and gave the file to the drug trafficker. But after he was fired, he threatened to reveal what happened unless he was re-hired. But his threat had been recorded and turned over to prosecutors. Then it was revealed that two other detectives were planning to start a company that would sell information to paramilitaries. As investigation proceeded, it became clear that numerous DAS employees were working for the paramilitaries.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota, May 24, 2010.

* May 23, 2010. A retired Colombian National Police Colonel, Juan Carlos Meneses Quintero, has fled to Argentina and told his story to a group of representatives of international human rights organizations in Buenos Aires. A Nobel Peace Prize winner, Adolfo Perez Esquivel, was among the listeners. Meneses related that he was assigned to Yarumal because it was a very dangerous place. He said his predecessor, Col. Benavidez, told him that there was a group of people here who are doing “social cleansing” and “disappearing” people whom they identified as guerrillas, thieves, kidnappers, extortionists, or just promoters of vice, or patrons of it. So the only thing you have to do is cooperate with them.

Meneses said that Benavidez told him that the head of the group was named Santiago Uribe Velez and that Uribe was the brother of then-Senator Alvaro Uribe. Benavidez said that he had cooperated with the group, so that every time they planned to go out and commit a murder, you just have to make sure the police don't interfere. Benavidez took him to meet Santiago Uribe and Uribe told him that he would receive a monthly payment in return for his cooperation. Benavidez reassured Meneses that that was OK with his superiors. Meneses

said he did as he was told, but in 1993 it became a scandal and he was relieved and sent to another town. But the group had committed several murders while he was at Yarumal.



Meneses told how he was invited to Santiago Uribe's ranch and was shown a paramilitary training facility with numerous weapons. Uribe also showed him a list of people that the group was planning to kill. He described five separate crimes the group had committed with his protection. They attacked a toll booth and killed two people. They murdered a bus driver who allegedly gave supplies to the guerrillas. The group worked with the police to set a trap for an extortionist and police helped the group kill the extortionist when he came to collect the money. One of the extortionists escaped, but they located him and the police went and killed both him and his father, also injuring two young children. Meneses said he was arrested for that murder, but he was not held very long. He claims that Santiago Uribe "fixed the problem". Finally he related sending 15 police and three paramilitaries to kill some guerrillas

Source: *Pagina 12*, Buenos Aires, Argentina, and *El Espectador*, Bogota, May 23, 2010.

* May 22, 2010. Twenty-two ranchers, businessmen and employees of palm oil companies have been arrested and charged with forced displacement, criminal conspiracy, damage to ecologically sensitive areas after the Attorney General's investigation of one of the largest displacements of small farmers in the history of Colombia. The displacement was carried out by paramilitaries and the Colombian military, working together. Farmers were killed and their houses burned in Nueva Esperanza, Bella Flor Remacho and Santa Fe de Curima in 2001 and in Pueblo Nuevo and Puerto Lleras in 2003.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, 2010.

* May 21, 2010. Nine Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with murder in the death of a woman, Maria Helena Rios Herrera, on July 30, 2004, in Medellin (Antioquia Province). Investigators found that there was no combat as the soldiers had claimed when they presented her body as a "guerrilla killed in combat."

Source: Attorney General's web site, Bogota, May 21, 2010.

* May 20, 2010. Colombian Attorney General's Office detectives captured a National Police patrolman who is charged with kidnapping for ransom. He is accused of luring a civilian out of his house and taking him to a hiding place, tying and gagging him and demanding ransom. The victim was able to escape.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, May 20, 2010.

* May 20, 2010. The prosecution of nine former officers of Colombia's Judicial Police and one civilian for the murder of two other officers has been delayed because of the disappearance of a key witness. In preliminary proceedings, the witness testified under oath

that the defendants were part of a gang of bank robbers. He testified that the officers asked him to murder the two officers but he refused, and the civilian being charged carried out the killings. He also testified that 18 Judicial Police officers were part of the gang.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, May 20, 2010.

* May 20, 2010. As part of the prosecution of former DAS (Colombian FBI) Director Jorge Noguera for illegal spying and wiretapping of Supreme Court Justices, journalists, and opposition politicians, the former Deputy Director, Jose Miguel Narvaez, testified that the defendant Noguera had set up a separate spying operation for the use of the paramilitary leader known as “Macaco”.

Source: *El Espectador* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, *El Pais*, Cali, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, May 20, 2010.

* May 20, 2010. As part of the continuing investigation into the DAS (Colombian FBI) illegal wiretapping activities, a DAS detective testified that DAS officials managed to tape record confidential case discussions by the Colombian Supreme Court.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota, May 20, 2010 and *El Espectador*, Bogota, May 16, 2010.

* May 20, 2010. Another witness in the continuing investigation into the DAS (Colombian FBI) illegal spying and wiretapping activities has testified that in 2007 he was ordered to gather information on political issues of concern to the Office of the President of Colombia and another testified that in 2008 and 2009 he made several trips to the President’s Office to turn over wiretapped information the President’s aides had requested.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota and *El Pais*, Cali, May 20, 2010.

* May 20, 2010. A Colombian Army sergeant and another soldier were found guilty of homicide by a criminal court judge in Bucaramanga for participating in “false positive” killings in a rural area in San Andres (Santander Province) in 2006. The two were part of an Engineers Battalion and murdered two farmers, then reported them as “guerrillas killed in combat”. A submachine gun and two shotguns had been placed next to their dead bodies. The two defendants are in custody and will be sentenced in a few days.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, May 20, 2010.

* May 20, 2010. The former deputy director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) Jose Miguel Narvaez, being investigated for his part in the illegal spying and wiretapping by the DAS, has testified that the DAS was infiltrated by paramilitaries and that he complained about it, but the Attorney General refused to investigate. He was told that DAS agents were planning a special parallel intelligence agency to be at the service of the paramilitary commander, alias “Macaco”. Another time, a discharged DAS agent told him that he had killed people at the order of Enrique Ariza, the former head of the DAS intelligence unit. Narvaez also claimed that Ariza had sold intelligence information to a paramilitary commander, Miguel Arroyave, for 150 million pesos (about \$75,000).



Paramilitary commanders, however, have claimed that Narvaez met with them and helped them. Salvatore Mancuso, now extradited to the United States, has testified that Narvaez presented himself to the paramilitaries as a professor in Colombia's War College who gave them military instruction.



In June 2008, another paramilitary commander, alias "El Iguano" also referred to that instruction. "El Iguano" also testified that Narvaez instigated the kidnapping of Senator Piedad Cordoba.

Mancuso also testified that he received weekly intelligence reports from an active member of the National Police in Cordoba.

Source: *verdadabierta.com*, a link from *Semana.com*, Bogota, May 20, 2010.

* May 19, 2010. A Colombian constitutional lawyer, German Calderon Espana has written a new book, "The Innocence of the Grave; The History of the "False Positives". He believes that the "false positive" killings constitute a crime against humanity because they are systematic and generalized, not isolated incidents.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, May 19, 2010.

* May 18, 2010. Colombia's Attorney General, investigating the DAS (Colombian FBI) illegal spying and wiretapping scandal, will subpoena Bernardo Moreno, the Secretary General of the President's office to testify as to his connection with the illegal spying.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, May 18, 2010.

* May 15, 2010. A court in Santa Rosa de Biterbo (Boyaca Province) has sentenced a Colombian Army corporal to 58 years in prison and three soldiers to 45 years in prison each for murdering a farmer in Chita (Boyaca Province). The evidence showed that they dragged the farmer out of his house, shot him to death, and presented his body as a "guerrilla killed in combat". The defendants were also ordered to pay damages to the victim's family.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, May 15, 2010.

* May 14, 2010. A Colombian Army major, a sergeant, and four soldiers have been indicted on charges of aggravated homicide in the death of Galvis Osorio Estrada Vidal on May 15, 2006 in Alto del Pino (Guajira Province). His body was presented as a "guerrilla killed in combat", but investigators showed that there had been no combat and that Estrada was not connected to any armed group.

Source: Attorney General's web site, Bogota, May 14, 2010.

* May 13, 2010. Captured drug trafficker and paramilitary commander, Daniel Rendon Herrera, alias "Don Mario", testified that his troops had committed at least 120 killings

agreed-upon with the Colombian armed forces. Counting killings by other paramilitary groups, *El Tiempo's* investigation revealed 424 such cases. The victims were presented by the Colombian armed forces as “guerrillas killed in combat”, although some of them were children and some of them were actually paramilitaries. For example a battalion in Valledupar (Cesar Province) presented three bodies as “paramilitaries killed in combat” on September 9, 2004. But captured paramilitary commander Jhon Jairo Hernandez Sanchez, alias “Centella” testified that the three victims were civilians and not paramilitaries. “Centella” testified that he had turned them over to a Colombian Army sergeant who was on his payroll, receiving 2 million pesos (about \$2000) monthly.



El Tiempo's investigation revealed other examples: Colombian soldiers presented the bodies of Carlos Caceres and Uriel Arias as “guerrillas killed in combat” but a paramilitary commander testified that the combat was carried out by the Army and paramilitaries working together, trying to accumulate “body counts”.

On November 14, 2003, Colombia's Judicial Police claimed to have killed alias “Jean Carlos”, a paramilitary. But a captured paramilitary commander testified that the Police had asked the paramilitaries to turn him over to them—he had been involved in robberies—so that they could add him to their “body count”. But the paramilitaries did not want to turn him over so they captured a civilian who looked like him and the Judicial Police killed the civilian and presented him as alias “Jean Carlos”.

On October 10, 2002, soldiers in Valledupar (Cesar Province) presented 18 “guerrillas killed in combat”. But “Centella” testified that the dead were paramilitaries who had fallen out of favor and were turned over to the soldiers so that they could report a “positive”. He said, “We did that because we wanted to work with them.”

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, May 13, 2010.

* May 13, 2010. Two former Colombian National Police officers, Oscar Mauricio Noriega Narvaez and Luis Eduardo Huila Perez, have been found guilty of kidnapping and have been sentenced to 11 years in prison and fined 1,800 million pesos (about \$900,000). On August 6, 2009, they failed to search a vehicle in which kidnappers were transporting their victims, even though they stopped the car for an ordinance violation.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, May 13, 2010.

* May 13, 2010. Attorney General's Office investigators believe that the DAS (Colombian FBI) illegal spying and wiretapping was intended to tie Supreme Court Justices and opposition politicians to drug trafficking.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, May 13, 2010 and *El Pais*, Cali, May 16, 2010.

* May 13, 2010. Colombian Attorney General's Office detectives captured a Colombian National Police officer accused of aggravated homicide, criminal conspiracy and illegal use of

weapons. He is accused of being an accomplice to the murder of three officers who were shot on December 3, 2002. According to prosecutors, the officer received a million pesos and a pistol in return for information as to the whereabouts of the intended victims.



Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, May 13, 2010.

* May 12, 2010. Two former Colombian National Police officers, Javier Mauricio Murcia Sanchez and Luis Fernando Pino Cortes, have been indicted on charges of aggravated theft and attempted theft. Prosecutors allege that on February 8, 2006, after a car was stopped for a license check and the driver got out, three people took over the car and seized his belongings. The defendants were identified as carrying out the robbery.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, May 12, 2010.

* May 11, 2010. Witnesses in the investigation of illegal spying and wiretapping by the DAS (Colombian FBI) state that the current DAS director, Felipe Munoz, has tried to impede the Attorney General's investigation by manipulating electronic evidence and withholding documents.

Source: *Semana.com*, May 11, 2010.

* May 11, 2010. Three Colombian Army soldiers, attached to the 4th Brigade, have been arrested and charged with trafficking more than four tons of marijuana in a military truck on January 30, 2010. They were stopped on the road from Jamundi to Cali (Cauca Valley Province).

Source: Attorney General's web site, Bogota, May 10, 2010, and *El Pais*, Cali, May 11, 2010.

* May 11, 2010. Colombian National Police captured four Colombian Army soldiers who gagged and terrified a taxi driver with knives in order to rob him of 150,000 pesos (about \$75). They confessed to aggravated robbery. They were absent without leave and are under investigation by the military.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, and *El Espectador*, Bogota, May 11, 2010.

* May 11, 2010. Five former DAS (Colombian FBI) officials have been charged in the illegal spying and wiretapping scandal. Fernando Tabares, former Chief of Intelligence, and Jorge Lagos, former Director of Counterintelligence, are charged with criminal conspiracy, abuse of authority, malfeasance and illegal wiretapping. Three others are charged and at least one is seeking a plea bargain.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and Attorney General's web site, Bogota, *El Pais*, Cali, and *El Heraldo*, Baranquilla, May 11, 2010.

* May 11, 2010. A Court of Appeals in Medellin (Antioquia Province) has upheld the conviction and sentence of 33 years in prison for a Colombian Army lieutenant and three

soldiers for the murder of a laborer, Gabriel Valencia Ocampo. They reported him as a “guerrilla killed in combat” on October 5, 2005 in Argelia (Antioquia Province). Investigators found that he had been seized the day before by soldiers. He managed to escape and went to the police station for help but the soldiers told the police he was a deserter and took him away. The police did not ask the soldiers for any proof of their assertion.



Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, May 11, 2010, and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, May 10, 2010.

* May 9, 2010. Two former paramilitary commanders, “Chatarro” and “Julian”, making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, reported that their paramilitary troops delivered the bodies of dozens of former paramilitaries and murdered civilians to the Colombian Army. Soldiers then presented the bodies as “guerrillas killed in combat. The two said that this was part of an agreement between paramilitary commanders and Army officers in Meta Province, especially Batallion 21 Vargas.

Two other former paramilitary commanders, Manuel de Jesus Piraban, alias “Jorge Pirata” (George the Pirate) and Benjamin Parra, alias “Cony”, identified Col. Hernan Cabuya de Leon, Major Ricardo Efrain Arcos Rosero, Capt. Ricardo Rivera Sanchez, Capt. Tamayo, Capt. Pena, Sgt. Londono, and Lieutenants Bastidas and Torres from Batallion 21 Vargas and from Mobil Brigade No. 4 as the officers they worked with.

The paramilitaries confessed that they went out at night, took young men to bars and brothels, got them drunk, then dressed them in camouflage and killed them. Their bodies appeared in various municipalities so that the soldiers could show “results” to their superiors. At the same time, the cooperation meant that the Army reduced its pressure on the paramilitaries.

The top paramilitary commander, Daniel Rendon, alias “Don Mario”, testified that he furnished 100,000,000,000 pesos (about \$50 million) to “Chatarro” to use in coordinating plans with Col. Cabuya for the operations. He also said that once the paramilitaries had helped fake the capture of a guerrilla camp and that was publicized as a successful operation by the Vargas Batallion. “Don Mario”, in other testimony, has estimated that between 2002 and 2004 the Colombian Army had presented some 100 murder victims as guerrillas killed in combat.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, May 9, 2010.

* May 8, 2010. An investigator attached to the Colombian Attorney General’s office presented chilling testimony in the ongoing trial of the former DAS (Colombian FBI) director Jorge Noguera. In two hours of testimony, he described how a DAS detective had fabricated evidence showing that professor Correa de Andreis was part of the guerrillas. The detective performed illegal searches, altered photographs, and invented nonexistent witnesses. After the case against him was dismissed, Correa was murdered. After the murder, defendant Noguera promoted the detective who fabricated the evidence.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, May 8, 2010.

* May 8, 2010. A Colombian Army officer, Major Jorge Alexander Gomez, was arrested and charged with aggravated homicide, aggravated kidnapping, criminal trespass, falsifying a public document and abuse of process in the “false positive” death of Ernesto Cruz Guevara on April 22, 2006 in El Retiro (Casanare Province). The prosecution alleges that a noncommissioned officer under the defendant’s command entered a house and seized the victim, dressed him in camouflage and killed him. Then they placed a rifle beside his corpse, helicoptered him to a morgue, and presented him as a guerrilla killed in combat.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, May 8, 2010.

* May 8, 2010. The bodies of four murder victims, “false positives”, were returned to their families by the National Commission on Reparation and Reconciliation in Barranquilla’s Metropolitan Cathedral. The Commission Director announced that five more bodies of “false positives” will be release within a month. He believes that there will be a total of 15 “false positive” victims from Barranquilla.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, May 8, 2010.

* May 7, 2010. Newsweekly *Semana*, on its web site, *Semana.com*, carried the same story as *El Tiempo* on May 9, but with added details. Paramilitary commander “Chatarro” agreed with Col. Cabuya de Leon to create a phony guerrilla battle scene, so that prosecutors would believe that the murder victims were guerrillas killed in combat. According to “Chatarro”, the prosecutors knew what was going on, but were afraid to report it. “Chatarro” also related that Army soldiers gave the paramilitaries Army weapons to place in the hands of the murder victims, so that the scene would look more like a combat scene. Paramilitaries also used this system to have soldiers kill paramilitary troops who had violated paramilitary rules, and when paramilitaries were killed in combat with the guerrillas, their bodies were sometimes turned over to the Army to be reported as “guerrillas killed in combat”.

Paramilitaries would sometimes recruit victims to their own ranks, use them for a week or two, and then turn them over to the Army to be killed and reported as guerrillas. The paramilitaries even created fake “guerrilla camps” that soldiers could “overrun” and create the false impression of combat. Paramilitary commander “Julian” testified that if the paramilitaries killed some guerrillas in a real combat, they would often give the bodies to the soldiers to use as a “positive”. They knew the soldiers were under pressure for “results” and if the paramilitaries gave them some “results” the soldiers would put less pressure on the paramilitaries.

Source: <http://www.verdadabierta.com/component/content/article/195-justicia...e-hicieron-falsos-positivos-en-el-meta?tmpl=component&print=1&page=>, May 7, 2010.

* May 7, 2010. A Colombian National Police Commander in La Guajira Province, his Deputy Commander, and five police officers were relieved of their duties pending an investigation into possible reward fraud. A most-wanted guerrilla commander, Oscar Cardona Villalobos, was captured in a routine search of a bus. A 250 million peso (about \$125,000) reward had been offered for his arrest. The Police Commander stated that the

reward had gone to a source who had followed the captive, but investigators believe that the officers shared the reward among themselves.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, May 7, 2010.

* May 7, 2010. A former DAS (Colombian FBI) detective, whom *El Tiempo* refused to name, has been offered amnesty and witness protection in exchange for his testimony about the actions of DAS officials in stalking and compiling private information about Colombia's Supreme Court justices. The detective allegedly knows how the DAS infiltrated the Court and recorded secret deliberations.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, May 7, 2010.

* May 5, 2010. An Appeals Court in Medellin upheld sentences of 30 years in prison for ten Colombian Army soldiers convicted of murder in the deaths of two vendors on May 25, 2005. The two victims were stopped by a patrol in Medellin and a day later they were reported as "guerrillas killed in combat". A revolver, some explosives and a nonfunctional rifle were found next to their bodies. Four other soldiers were sentenced to two years in prison for taking part in the cover-up.

Source: Attorney General's web site, *El Tiempo*, Bogota, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, *El Pais*, Cali, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, May 5, 2010, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, May 6, 2010.

* May 5, 2010. A Colombian Army soldier shot his corporal after the soldier had been absent without leave and was to be punished.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, May 5, 2010.

* May 5, 2010.

* May 4, 2010. The former Director of Intelligence of the DAS (Colombian FBI), Carlos Arzayus, although he claims he is innocent, will enter into a plea bargain with prosecutors in the illegal stalking and wiretapping scandal.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, May 4, 2010.

* May 4, 2010. The former Director of Intelligence of the DAS (Colombian FBI), Carlos Arzayus, revealed that the DAS always kept a list of 18 people who were being followed constantly. On the list were the former Mayor of Bogotá, Luis Eduardo Garzon, Alvaro Leyva Duran, Senator Gustavo Petro, Antonio Navarro, Council member Carlos Vicente de Roux, former Justices of the Constitutional Court Clara Ines Vargas and Alfredo Beltran, as well as a number of attorneys. He said the DAS had been following Wilson Borja (labor leader and member of Congress) since 1993, and that they had opened a "secret" file on Senator Piedad Cordoba.



Source: *verdadabierta.com*, a link from *Semana.com*, *Caracol Radio*, and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, May 4, 2010, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, May 5, 2010.



* May 4, 2010. Colombia's Minister of Interior and Justice, Fabio Valencia Cossio, stated that the DAS (Colombian FBI) was connected with political violence throughout its existence. He favors the abolition of the agency. He admitted that the DAS was connected with the assassinations of Luis Carlos Galan, Bernardo Jaramillo and Alvaro Gomez Hurtado. He claimed that the government knew that the DAS had been infiltrated by drug traffickers, by guerrillas, and by paramilitaries. He said that the DAS had been conducting illegal wiretaps for 25 years and that even he had been wiretapped.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, May 4, 2010.

* May 4, 2010. A Colombian police recruit is free conditionally after furnishing information about the other seven recruits who are charged with sexually assaulting a young girl who was staying with other displaced families in a park in Bogotá in 2009.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga and *El Pais*, Cali, May 4, 2010.

* May 4, 2010. Alias "Don Mario", a demobilized paramilitary commander, making his confession under the Justice and Peace Law, testified that every month he paid 100 million pesos (about \$50,000) to a paramilitary, alias "Chararro", who was assigned to coordinate "false positives" with the Army battalions in Meta Province. "Chararro" testified that the people whose bodies were presented as paramilitaries or guerrillas killed in combat were actually picked up in early morning hours at bars and brothels and transported to nearby towns where they were killed. He recalled 53 "false positive" murders in Meta Province.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, May 4, 2010.

* May 3, 2010. Colombia's Judicial Police captured 12 people who were digging holes at a ranch in early hours of the morning. Without any authority, they were searching for money and valuables that a drug trafficker might have hidden on the ranch before he was killed. The group included a Major in the Colombian Marines, an Army Sergeant, a Police Captain, a Police Patrolman, and another former prosecutor. They had taken the cell phones of the couple that were taking care of the ranch, tied them up, gagged them, and lacked them in a bathroom. They tried to dig up the floor of the main room of the ranch house. When the police arrived, they presented fake Attorney General's Office identification. The group was armed with four revolvers, four pistols, and an Uzi. Some of the weapons were service weapons assigned to active officers. Members of the group will be charged with kidnapping, illegal use of weapons, forgery, and impersonation of a public official.

Source: Attorney General's web site, *El Tiempo*, and *El Espectador*, May 3, 2010.

* April 29, 2010. Extradited paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso confirmed that two DAS (Colombian FBI) officials orchestrated a plan to muddy the reputation of Supreme Court Justice Ivan Velasquez.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Pais*, Cali, April 29, 2010.



* April 29, 2010. The former Assistant Director of Intelligence of the DAS (Colombian FBI), Carlos Arzayus, has been indicted for his responsibility for the illegal spying and wiretapping of judges, opposition leaders, journalists and human rights defenders. He is charged with criminal conspiracy, illegal wiretapping, and abuse of authority.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá and *El Pais*, Cali, April 29, 2010.

* April 25, 2010. Colombia's Attorney General has charged more paramilitaries with taking part in the 1997 massacre at Mapiripan (Meta Province). Other paramilitaries who have been found guilty and sentenced have implicated Hector Jose Buitrago and his son. Forty-nine people were murdered at Mapiripan and the number of those who "disappeared" is unknown. Around 400 paramilitaries took part in the massacre, but few have been arrested and charged. The Inter-American Court for Human Rights found the Colombian government guilty of human rights violations because the government failed to interfere with the killers.

Retired General Jaime Humberto Uscategui Ramirez was sentenced to 40 years in prison and retired Colonel Lino Sanchez, two sergeants and a corporal were also found guilty and sentenced.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, April 25, 2010.

* April 25, 2010. The weekly news magazine *Semana* reveals that the Secretary General of Colombia's presidential office ordered the national airline *Satena* to reveal the names of Supreme Court Justices who had traveled to a meeting. The information, along with other information, was given to the DAS (Colombian FBI) and used for illegal spying and wiretapping of the justices.

Source: <http://www.semana.com/wf/ImprimirArticulo.spx?idArt=138035>, April 25, 2010.

* April 25, 2010. While other DAS officials have been arrested and charged in the DAS (Colombian FBI) illegal spying and wiretapping scandal, and some are on trial, Maria del Pilar Hurtado, DAS director at the time the illegal actions were undertaken, has yet to be charged. *El Tiempo* speculates that she may be considering a plea bargain, and that she has valuable information: Who ordered the DAS to carry out the spying and wiretapping?

Source: *El Tiempo*, April 25, 2010.

* April 24, 2010. The Colombian government announced that 194 members of the Colombian military have been found guilty of extrajudicial killings of civilians and 52 have been sentenced. According to the government, 708 members of the military have been charged in 123 cases.



At the same time, the Center for Investigation and Public Education (Cinep is the Spanish acronym.) announced that extrajudicial killings of civilians have not ended. According to their report, there were two cases and four victims between January and June of last year and in the second half of the year there were five cases and 12 victims.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *Caracol Radio*, and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Mundo*, Medellín, and *El Pais*, Cali, April 24, 2010.

* April 24, 2010. The Peace Community of San Jose de Apartado has once again complained of persecution by paramilitaries. Witness stated that men dressed in camouflage and carrying rifles and claiming to be paramilitaries had made searches and threatened people, claiming to have a list of 60 residents to be killed. The citizens also complain that the Army has increased pressure and threats against the Peace Community.

Source: *El Espectador* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, April 24, 2010.

* April 24, 2020. An off-duty patrolman in the Colombian National Police became intoxicated and began acting aggressively. Bystanders called Police, but he argued with them and then climbed onto a bridge where he slipped and was hanging onto a railing. He was rescued and taken to a hospital. He will face a disciplinary proceeding.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, April 24, 2010.

* April 24, 2010. Colombia's Attorney General is investigating the involvement of two retired Colombian Army generals in the assassination 20 years ago of a presidential candidate, Carlos Pizarro Leongomez. A witness has tied retired General Ivan Ramirez to the Castano brothers who headed the nation's largest paramilitary organization. The Castano brothers were found guilty in 2002 of planning the assassination. Extradited paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso has testified that General Ramirez was close to the Castanos. Two other generals are also being investigated. In 2002, a judge theorized that the Castanos and other paramilitaries had infiltrated the DAS (Colombian FBI), the agency assigned to protect the candidates. Allegedly, the paramilitaries were informed of the candidate's movements and infiltrators even served as bodyguards for the candidates.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, April 24, 2010.

* April 22, 2010. Extradited paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso testified by video conference in the trial of Jorge Noguera, a DAS (Colombian FBI) official on trial for supporting the paramilitaries while a DAS official. Mancuso testified that the DAS, the Army, and even the Attorney General cooperated with the paramilitaries. Specifically, he identified Vice President Francisco Santos, Minister of Defense Juan Manuel Santos (now

a candidate for President) , retired General Ivan Ramirez (now Colombia's ambassador to the Dominican Republic), General Antonio Gomez Mendez, Lieutenant Colonel Marco Antonio Pedreros, and retired General Mario Montoya as officials who aided the paramilitaries.



Source: http://www.semana.com/wf_imprimirArticulo.aspx?idArt=137877, *El Espectador*, Bogota, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, and *El Pais*, Cali, April 22, 2010.

* April 22, 2010. A non-governmental organization sponsored by the Jesuits, the Center for Investigation and Public Education (Cinep is the Spanish acronym.) estimates that there have been 150,000 extrajudicial executions in Colombia. The agency has received 300,000 complaints of extrajudicial executions. The agency noted that the Attorney General's Office has recently received a complaint that the Army has secretly and illegally buried more than 2,000 bodies in a cemetery in La Macarena (Meta Province).

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, April 22, 2010.

* April 22, 2010. A Colombian National Police lieutenant, Jose Perez Parrado and two patrolmen have been charged with the forced disappearance of three young women students whom they stopped at a checkpoint. A National Police Major has already been convicted of the crime after entering into a plea bargain.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, April 22, 2010.

* April 22, 2010. Two Colombian Army soldiers have been charged with the murder of five civilians, including two teen-age girls on March 9, 2002. According to the criminal complaint, soldiers attached to the 4th Brigade reported the death of five guerrillas in a firefight. Investigators revealed that the two teen-age girls had boarded a small bus to go to a party. The other three victims were also on the bus. There had been no firefight.

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

* April 22, 2010. A Colombian National Police sergeant and another officer have been arrested while driving a private vehicle loaded with ammunition not belonging to the Police. Police officials are investigating.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, April 22, 2010.

* April 21, 2010. Four members of Colombia's judicial police were arrested and charged with aggravated bribery. Prosecutors allege that the four demanded 150 million pesos (about \$75,000) from a family in Mosquera (Cundinamarca Province) in return for not instituting criminal charges.

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



* April 21, 2010. Three Colombian Army soldiers were charged with the murder of Wilson Posada Quintero on November 20, 2004 in Penoles (Antioquia Province). According to the investigation, Posada was ordered to accompany the soldiers to a certain location and the next day they presented his body as a guerrilla killed in combat. The accused are a major, a noncommissioned officer, and a soldier. Three soldiers have already been sentenced to two years in prison for covering up the murder.

Source: Attorney General's web site:

<http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* April 21, 2010. Colombia's Inspector General has asked a court to review its finding that 2d Lt. Jose Vicente Castro was not guilty of murder in the 1996 massacre at Ituango. The Inspector General's Office has found that the police knew that the paramilitaries planned a massacre, because community leaders had reported it to them. In the same case, the Inter-American Court for Human Rights has found the government of Colombia responsible for the massacre because of the failure of the police to protect the civilians who were killed. The Attorney General's Office has concluded that soldiers actually gave the paramilitaries lists of people they thought should be killed.

Source: *Semana*, Bogota. <http://www.verdadabierta.com/nunca-mas/40-masacres/2398-mministerio...de-la-policia-por-masare-de-Ituango?tmpl=component&print=1&page=>

* April 21, 2010. In the trial of retired Colombian Army General Jesus Armando Arias Cabrales for murders in connection with a guerrilla attack on the Palace of Justice in 1985, the Attorney General's office charges that the Army knew in advance that the guerrillas planned an attack, and used the event to murder Supreme Court justices they believed to be "communistic". The prosecutor produced evidence showing that the Army had wiretapped the justices' conferences, just as the DAS (Colombian FBI) did recently. General Cabrales is charged with ordering the arrest, torture and killing of civilians who worked in the Justice building. The Attorney General has asked for a sentence of 35-45 years in prison.

The prosecutor has also asked for an investigation of General Ignacio Posada Duarte and others for perjury and abuse of process in connection with the trial.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, and *El Espectador*, Bogota, April 21, 2010.

* April 21, 2010. Three members of a Colombian Army special squad in Cordoba Province, a noncommissioned officer and three soldiers, were arrested and charged with the murder of two civilians on March 11, 2007. They are charged with killing Fabio Enrique Taboada Avila and an unidentified person and presenting their bodies as guerrillas killed in combat.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, April 21, 2010.

* April 21, 2010. Extradited paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso renewed his confession under the Justice and Peace law by satellite from his prison in the United States. He testified that paramilitaries used information furnished them by the DAS (Colombian FBI) to carry out murders. He stated that Jorge Norguera, former DAS director now on trial in Colombia was a friend of another extradited paramilitary commander, “Jorge 40” and that he attended a meeting with the two. He also said that the former deputy director of the DAS, Jose Miguel Narvaez, suggested murdering some NGO leaders and leftist leaders. He said that Narvaez traveled to paramilitary camps to give motivational speeches against communism, and that the paramilitaries worked with the DAS. He also testified that former Colombian Army Commanding General Mario Montoya asked him not to demobilized because the Army did not yet have full control of the northern part of Colombia.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, April 21, 2010.

* April 20, 2010. Former DAS (Colombian FBI) official Gustavo Sierra, arrested and charged in connection with the agency’s illegal wiretapping scandal, will be detained at a DAS facility and not in jail. Prosecutors charge him with setting up files of personal information obtained by stalking, wiretapping, and searching confidential and personal files without court permission. This includes listening in on the conferences of Supreme Court justices as they decided cases. The Attorney General’s office has also obtained internal messages demonstrating that DAS officials planned to connect Senator Piedad Cordoba with the guerrillas.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, April 20, 2010.

* April 20, 2010. Prosecutors have asked that the provisional liberty granted to a defendant, former Colombian Army Major Oscar William Vasquez be revoked, because a witness has good reason to fear that Vasquez plans to kill him. Vasquez is being tried for his role in the torture and murder of civilians during and after the Army’s retaking of the Palace of Justice in 1985.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, April 20, 2010.

* April 19, 2010. *Caracol Radio* examined the Colombian Attorney General’s investigative file on the illegal wiretapping by the DAS (Colombian FBI) of Colombian Supreme Court justices. The DAS focused on the Chief Justice, Yesid Ramirez Bastidas, whom they considered a “hard liner” on the cases where politicians supported by the paramilitaries were being prosecuted. Accordingly a DAS official, now charged criminally, sent a memo suggesting various personal matters where the Chief Justice should be “checked out”, such as trips he took, who his college friends were, his other friends and associates, and all the places he had ever resided. *Caracol Radio* saw the detectives’ report, which included three pages containing 185 telephone numbers for which conversations had been wiretapped illegally. According to the report, most of the calls involved other justices.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, April 19, 2010.

* April 19, 2010. A former aide-de-camp to Colombian President Alvaro Uribe, Col. Alvaro Diego Tamayo Hoyos, another soldier, Alexander Carretero Diaz, along with two civilian “recruiters” have been charged formally with the disappearance and murder of a young man whose body was later presented as a criminal killed in combat. The victim was Camilo Andres Valencia, murdered December 7, 2007 on the road that leads from Ocana to Abrego (Norte de Santander Province). The defendants are also charged with the disappearance and murder of Daniel Suarez Martinez on December 6, 2007. He had just arrived from Venezuela and was staying in a city park in Ocana when he was recruited, killed, and reported as being killed in combat.



Source: *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, Attorney General’s web site, *El Mundo*, Medellin, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramana, *El Pais*, Cali, April 20, 2010.

* April 19, 2010. Gustavo Sierra Prieto, a former DAS (Colombian FBI) official wanted in connection with the DAS illegal wiretapping scandal, surrendered yesterday. He is charged with ordering the transcription of the illegal wiretaps of discussions among Supreme Court justices. A DAS detective has stated that the then-director of the DAS ordered the wiretapping to provide information to the President’s office.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, Attorney General’s web site, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *El Pais*, Cali, April 19, 2010.

* April 17, 2010. Daniel Coronell, an opinion writer for news magazine *Semana*, reveals that DAS (Colombian FBI) officials created documents on official letterhead labeled “Political War”. Its goals were to “defend democracy and our nation” and “raise consciousness about the consequences of a communist system”. The documents indicated that the DAS would use three types of action: slander, sabotage, and pressure. They planned to distribute pamphlets and flyers and to set up false web pages, file false complaints, to threaten and to blackmail. A June 2005 document identifies the objective of “promoting actions that will benefit the government for the 2006 elections”. Those to be discredited include Senators Carlo Gaviria, Piedad Cordoba, and Gustavo Petro, as well as politicians Horacio Serpa, Antonio Navarro, Wilson Borja and Samuel Moreno, as well as Constitutional Court Justices Jaime Cordoba, Humberto Sierra, Jaime Araujo, Clara Ines Varas and Alfredo Beltran. All of the targets are to be identified as sympathetic to guerrillas and drug traffickers.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota, April 17, 2010.

* April 19, 2010. Colombian Army General Miguel Maza Marquez was released on bail after being arrested and charged for his part in the assassination twenty years ago of Luis Carlos Galan, a journalist and liberal politician who was running for President. At the time of Galan’s assassination, Maza was the chief of the DAS (Colombian FBI) Former paramilitaries and captured drug traffickers have testified that Gen. Maza was involved with a paramilitary commander, Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha, alias “El Mexicano”, who ordered the assassination of Galan. General Maza is also accused of interfering with the investigation that followed Galan’s killing.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *Caracol Radio*, *El Espectador* and Attorney General's web site, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *El Pais*, Cali, April 19, 2010.



* April 19, 2010. Eight Colombian Army Fourth Brigade soldiers have been arrested and charged with homicide in the death of a civilian, Sadro Alberto Montoya Mejia, on March 13, 2005 in the municipality of Guarne (Antioquia Province). They had claimed that Montoya was killed in combat. The defendants are being held without bail.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, and *El Pais*, Cali, April 19, 2010.

* April 19, 2010. A Colombian judge has postponed the trial of 19 Colombian soldiers accused of murdering a mentally disabled young man, Julian Oviedo Monroy, who disappeared from Soacha (Cundinamarca Province) on March 2, 2008. His body was presented as a gang member killed in combat in Ocana (North Santander Province). The trial was postponed because of a defense lawyer's conflict of interest. The defendants include a colonel and a lieutenant and 17 other soldiers.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, April 19, 2010.

* April 18, 2010. *El Tiempo* reveals that Colombia's prison system, which holds nearly 106,000 prisoners, does not know the correct identity of 28,000 of them. Some have no identity documents, many have more than one, and others use the documents of people who have died.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, April 18, 2010.

* April 17, 2010. A major drug trafficker, Nestor Raul Caro Chaparro, for whose capture the United States had offered a reward of \$5 million, was caught at Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro. Caro is a retired lieutenant in the Colombian Army and is alleged to have been involved in drug trafficking since the 1980's. He was able to influence DAS (Colombian FBI) officials to delete his criminal record. Colombian authorities issued a warrant for his arrest in 2005, but four Colombian Army colonels attended his wedding reception months after the warrant was issued. All were discharged.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, and *El Pais*, Cali, April 17, 2010.

* April 17, 2010. An opinion column in *El Tiempo* claims that the DAS (Colombian FBI) has created a police state. DAS files revealed by the Attorney General's office show that agents were attempting to create links of political opponents to guerrilla groups and drug traffickers, and used illegal wiretapping and stalking to search personal lives of Supreme Court justices. The writer calls these efforts "Stalinist".

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, April 17, 2010.

* April 16, 2010. U.S. Ambassador William Brownfield and Mauricio Garcia, Director of Cinep () reported a slight increase in extrajudicial killings by Army soldiers in the second quarter of 2009.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, April 16, 2010.



* April 16, 2010. Col. Hernan Mejia Gutierrez and Lt. Col. Jose Pastor Ruiz Mahecha of the Colombian Army are on trial for a series of civilian deaths and false reports beginning in 2001. They and other soldiers were arrested in 2008 and charged with criminal conspiracy, aiding paramilitaries, and murder. The investigation revealed a series of false reports, beginning in June 2002 when soldiers reported the death of two unarmed “guerrillas” who they claimed had attacked the heavily guarded headquarters. One of the victims had 23 grenade fragments in his body, but there had been no explosion. Investigators concluded that he had been killed at another location.

In October 2002, Mejia’s battalion claimed to have killed 18 “guerrillas”, but only two of them had been shot standing up. The other 16 had been killed while they were lying down. Nine of them showed their only bullet wounds in the back of the head. Investigators also concluded that two of them had been unarmed, since only 16 weapons were found at the site. Three of the victims were not dressed in camouflage; in fact, they were in their underwear. One of the victims wore insignia both of guerrilla and paramilitary organizations. Another wore a guerrilla bracelet but carried documents showing him to be a paramilitary. Investigators noted that around 25,000 cartridges had been fired, but only 98 hit 17 of the bodies. They also found that one body bore 11 bullet wounds in the head.

Witnesses have testified that the 18 dead were actually killed in an internal purge in a paramilitary group, headed by a childhood friend of Col. Mejia. The paramilitary leader then turned the bodies over to Col. Mejia to present as guerrillas killed in combat. Another witness confessed that Col. Mejia met with all the paramilitary leaders in the area, and that Mejia agreed with paramilitary commander “Jorge 40” that Mejia would be paid 30 million pesos (about \$15,000) monthly so that the Army would not interfere with the paramilitaries.

Source: *Semana*, Bogota, <http://www.verdadabierta.com/component/content/article/196-parapoli...as-balas-perdidas-del-batallon-la-popa?tmpl=component&print=print=1&page=>

* April 15, 2010. Colombia is listed by the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights as one of the countries that must improve its defense of human rights, along with Venezuela, Haiti, Cuba, and Honduras. The Commission identifies the extrajudicial killings of civilians by Army soldiers in order to obtain rewards or inflate body counts as well as cooperation by the Armed Forces with illegal armed groups as cause for alarm.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, April 15, 2010.

* April 15, 2010. Ten Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide in connection with the death of a civilian laborer on December 4, 2005 near Santa Rita (Antioquia Province). The soldiers were fighting guerrillas and claimed that the victim, Francisco Luis Lopera, had fired at them with a 38-caliber revolver. Prosecutors charge that Lopera was a farmer on his way to Santa Rita to do his weekly shopping.



Source: Attorney General's web site, April 15, 2010: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* April 14, 2010. Colombia's Inspector General's Office concludes that there has been an ongoing collaboration between paramilitaries and the Colombian Army and Police in the Uraba area (Antioquia Province). Former paramilitaries and former soldiers have provided information on the cooperation, including the massacre at San Jose de Apartado in February 2005 where eight people were killed, including four children. Witnesses identified specific individuals who were responsible for joint planning of operations by paramilitaries and Colombian Army soldiers.

* April 14, 2010. A former DAS (Colombian FBI) official, Juan Carlos Rojas Gomez, has been indicted for the crime of criminal conspiracy. He is accused of using the DAS to aid paramilitary activities.

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

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, April 14, 2010.

* April 13, 2010. Colombian Senator Piedad Cordoba claims that she has been informed by the United Nations that the UN has been documenting "false positives" since 2003. "False positives" is a term used in Colombia to describe cases where Colombian Army soldiers kill civilians, usually farmers, and report them as guerrillas killed in combat. Army officers provided rewards, such as time off or credit for promotions, to soldiers who killed a guerrilla. Senator Cordoba expressed surprise that the UN had not made that announcement earlier.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, April 13, 2010.

* April 13, 2010. Eight Colombian Army soldiers are charged with murder in the killing of Juan Carlos Galvis Solano and Tania Solano Tristancho, a couple who were travelling by motorcycle on the road between Los Encantos and Media Luna (Cesar Province) on August 17, 2003. The two were reported as killed in combat with Army troops.

Source: *El Tiempo* and Attorney General's web site, Bogota, April 13, 2010.

* April 13, 2010. A witness in the murder trial of Jorge Noguera, former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) has refused to testify, claiming both that he had signed a confidentiality pledge and that he has been threatened and harassed. The presiding judge cleared the courtroom and in a closed session, told him that the confidentiality document was invalid and that he would have to testify. Noguera is charged as a party to the murder of four people, *page 160*

three trade unionists and a politician.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, and *El Pais*, Cali, April 13, 2010.

* April 13, 2010. Some DAS (Colombian FBI) detectives have found evidence that some DAS officials were serving as front men, straw owners, of some 80 properties that actually belonged to Jorge Noguera, then the DAS director. Detective Carlos Sanchez told prosecutors that his superiors had warned him not to mention what he had learned.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, April 13, 2010, and *El Espectador*, Bogota, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, April 14, 2010.

* April 13, 2010. The Chief Justice of Colombia's Supreme Court, Jaime Arrubia Paucar, charged that the President's Office was behind DAS (Colombian FBI) spying on judges, journalists, and human rights supporters. Five more DAS officials have been arrested and charged in connection with the spying. The Chief Justice characterized the charges as "chilling", and expressed doubt that the five had acted on their own.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, April 13, 2010.

* April 13, 2010. Both the prosecution and the Inspector General's Office are urging a criminal court to find ten Colombian Army soldiers guilty of murder in connection with the February 21, 2005 massacre at San Jose de Apartado (Antioquia Province). The soldiers are charged with participating with paramilitaries in the killing of eight people, including four children. Retired Captain Guillermo Gordillo has already been sentenced to 20 years in prison for his part in the massacre.

Source: *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, April 13, 2010.

* April 13, 2010. Retired Colombian Army General Rito Alejo del Rio, about to be tried for his responsibility in the death of Marino Lopez Mena in February 2007, filed a motion for recusal of the judge assigned to his case. He alleged extreme prejudice, claiming that he had not been addressed as "General" during the court proceedings. The motion was denied, but the trial was delayed while the denial is appealed.

Source: *Caracol Radio* and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, April 13, 2010.

* April 12, 2010. Two Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with murder in the death of a farmer, Orlando de Jesus Idarraga Tobon. The victim was presented as a guerrilla killed in combat in Santa Ana (Antioquia Province) on September 9, 2002. The lieutenant in command of the Army patrol has already been sentenced to 30 years in prison for his part in the murder.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, April 12, 2010.





* April 12, 2010. Colombia's Attorney General released evidence used as the basis for the arrest and charging of five former DAS (Colombian FBI) officials. The evidence includes documents showing that they infiltrated at least seven Supreme Court justices, including tape recording their discussions of cases they were deciding. The documents also show that they photographed the father and the son of Senator Gustavo Petro and illegally tapped the telephone of Senator Piedad Cordoba.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, April 12, 2010.

* April 11, 2010. Five former DAS (Colombian FBI) officials were arrested and charged with criminal conspiracy, abuse of authority, and illegal stalking and spying. They have denied the charges but are being held without bail. They are alleged to have created files with job histories, photographs, bank records, etc. of Supreme Court justices. Documents they allegedly maintained on Senator Gustavo Petro included the names and photographs of his bodyguards, an hour-to hour report on his activities, data on his family, including photos.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, *Radio Caracol*, and the Attorney General's web site, Bogota, *El Colombiano* and *El Mundo*, Medellin, and *El Pais*, Cali, April 11, 2010.

* April 9, 2010. Five Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with homicide in the killings of two civilians, Fabio Enrique Taboada Avila and an unidentified person. The murders took place on March 12, 2007 in San Pelayo (Cordoba Province). Their captain was previously arrested and charged in the murders. The victims were presented as criminals killed in combat, but prosecutors claim that there was no combat at that time and place.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, April 9, 2010 and Attorney General's web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* April 9, 2010. Two retired Colombian Army generals, General Carlos Alberto Fracica Naranjo and Jesus Armando Arias Cabrales, are being investigated for their part in the death of a Colombian Supreme Court Justice, Carlos Horacio Uran, when the Palace of Justice in Bogota was attacked by guerrillas in November, 1985, and then retaken by the Colombian Army. A video shows Justice Uran leaving the building alive in military custody. He was never seen alive again and the Attorney General is investigating his disappearance as a crime against humanity. His body was found buried in a Bogota cemetery and exhumed. It showed several fractures that were not evident in the video and there is some evidence that he may have been mistaken for a guerrilla and tortured, then killed.

Several other Colombian Army personnel have already been charged in connection with other civilians killed in this incident.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, April 9, 2010.

* April 8, 2010. The Attorney General of Colombia has charged Mario Aranguren Rincon, the Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) Financial Information and Analysis Unit with criminal conspiracy, making false statements and abuse of authority, alleging that he revealed confidential banking and financial transactions of several justices of Colombia's Supreme Court. Colombia's Inspector General preferred similar charges last February. The Assistant Director of the unit and a former DAS administrator are also charged.



Source: *El Espectador*, *El Tiempo*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, and *El Pais*, Cali, April 8, 2010.

* April 7, 2010. Two more DAS (Colombian FBI) officials have been captured at the request of the Attorney General. They are charged with aggravated criminal conspiracy, illegal use of communications equipment, and abuse of authority in connection with the illegal wiretapping of politicians, journalists, judges, and NGO officials by the DAS.

Source: Attorney General's web site, *El Espectador*, Bogota, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, April 7, 2010.

* April 7, 2010. Five Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with murder and illegal use of weapons in connection with the death of a civilian, Pablo Emilio Vasquez Perez on August 24, 2006. According to the investigation, the victim was lured to the town of Quebradaseca with the false promise of a job. On the same day, his body was presented as having been killed in combat with a criminal gang. A revolver, a rifle case, and a communications radio were placed beside the body in order to make it look as if combat had taken place. Also, detectives noted serious inconsistencies in the testimony of the soldiers who took part in the killing. They are being held without bail.

Source: Attorney General's web site, *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, April 7, 2010.

* April 6, 2010. Two Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with the murder of a civilian, Manuel Santiago Angarita Sanchez on January 25, 2006 in the town of Chucuni (Tolima Province). According to the investigation, the soldiers lured the victim to Chucuni, killed him, and then reported him as an unidentified guerrilla killed in combat.

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

* April 5, 2010. The Human Rights Unit of the Attorney General's Office reports that it is investigation 2,321 homicides apparently committed by members of the Colombian Armed Forces. The report includes murders going back as far as 25 years and focuses on the "modus operandi" of the "false positives". According to the report, 2,077 men, 119 women, and 125 minors have been murdered by members of the Armed Forces. Up to now, 40 members of the Armed Forces have been found guilty, 12 have pleaded guilty and ten have been found not guilty.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogota, April 5, 2010.

* April 4, 2010. Colombia's Inspector General announced the assignment of a team to determine whether he should open an investigation into a report by the German magazine *Der Spiegel* that certain Colombian Navy officials had received bribes to induce them to purchase a coast guard vessel from the German multinational Ferrostal. The Defense Ministry and the Anti-Corruption Czar, based in the President's Office, will also investigate.



Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogota, and *El Pais*, Cali, April 4, 2010.

* April 3, 2010. Twenty years after the assassinations of two Colombian presidential candidates, the killings are being reinvestigated. A witness, Otty Patino, tell *El Tiempo* that the two were not murdered by drug traffickers, but by an extreme right group connected to the DAS (Colombian FBI). One of the victims, Carlos Pizarro, was shot in an airplane in flight. The witness claims that after the murder, he interviewed an eyewitness, a police officer who worked as a bodyguard. The officer stated that the DAS officials were the last to enter the plane and that one of them had stashed a gun in the plane's restroom. He testified that the killer, after firing the shot, dropped the gun and surrendered, but as he lay on the floor, a DAS official shot him to death. The police officer who gave the interview was shot to death a few days later.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogota, April 3, 2010.

* April 2, 2010. The Colombian Ministry of Defense issued a detailed response denying a charge by the German magazine *Der Spiegel* that German company Ferrostaal had bribed officials in several countries to obtain contracts, including Colombia's purchase of a coast guard vessel.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, *Caracol Radio*, Bogota; *El Pais*, Cali; and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, April 2, 2010.

* March 30, 2010. A Colombian National Police lieutenant, Jose Adrian Rincon Rojas, along with a police patrolman and two civilians have been arrested and charged with the murder of another patrolman. They are also charged with attempted murder, aggravated theft, illegal fabrication and use of weapons and illegal use of uniforms and insignias. They are alleged to have been part of a criminal gang that stole from residences in various areas of Cali. They were involved in a shootout with police officers.

Source: *El Espectador*, *El Tiempo*, and Attorney General's web site, Bogotá, March 30, 2010.

* March 30, 2010. A Colombian Army sergeant, Orlando E. Castillo, has been arrested and charged with the murder of a woman, Tatiana Patricia Arrieta, on March 26, 2006. According to the charges, the victim was reported as a guerrilla killed in combat in Los Barriales (Guajira Province), but in fact was returning from a child's birthday party. The Attorney General's investigation indicated that she was not a guerrilla and there had not been any combat.

Source: Attorney General's web site, *El Tiempo*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, March 30, 2010,

and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, April 4, 2010.



* March 29, 2010. A Colombian Army soldier, Anderson Guzman Roldan, has been arrested and charged with murder in the extrajudicial killing of two men, one of whom was a minor. According to the investigation, on July 2, 2004, in the town of Corrientes (Antioquia Province), some soldiers dressed as paramilitaries captured the younger boy and demanded he take them to his brother's house. After they got there, they identified themselves as Colombian Army soldiers, carrying out some sort of investigation. The next day the bodies of the two brothers were presented as guerrillas killed in combat. Guzman has been charged with homicide. Two other soldiers have also been arrested and charged with covering up the crime.

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

* March 29, 2010. A former Colombian Police Officer, Noe Diaz, has been arrested and charged with criminal conspiracy for his association with paramilitaries in Cesar Province.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 29, 2010.

* March 28, 2010. A Colombian Army captain was arrested after he refused to stop at a military checkpoint and tried to drive his car into the soldiers operating the checkpoint. After he fled to Duitama (Boyaca Province), he was captured after he attacked arresting officers and tried to take their guns.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, March 28, 2010.

* March 27, 2010. The Public Defender for the Colombian Province of Caquetá, during a presentation on the rights of displaced persons, stated that the Colombian Armed Forces, charged with the duty to protect the life, honor, and property of Colombian citizens, often uses mechanisms that are illegal.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 27, 2010.

* March 25, 2010. Colombia's President Alvaro Uribe stated that he believed that the Colombian Army Brigades most closely connected with the "false positives" scandal had been infiltrated by drug traffickers who killed innocent people in order to make it look as if they were pursuing drug traffickers. The prosecutors in the Attorney General's office have indicated that the extrajudicial killings were carried out by soldiers who wanted to earn days off and show "good results".

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, March 25, 2010.

* March 25, 2010. Colombia's Inspector General has asked to see the evidence referred to by President Uribe when he stated that drug traffickers had infiltrated the Army.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 25, 2010.

* March 25, 2010. The promotional examination taken by some 5,000 Colombian National Police officers will have to be repeated because officers complained that copies of the test had been sold.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 25, 2010.



* March 25, 2010. In a contested hearing open to the public, a Colombian judge denied the motions for release from pretrial detention of a detective from the Attorney General's Office and two members of the judicial police. The three are accused of stalking and illegally wiretapping a Colombian Supreme Court justice. They are charged with abuse of process, falsifying a public document, illegal wiretapping and criminal conspiracy. They were arrested and charged on November 27, 2009.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 25, 2010.

* March 25, 2010. A prosecutor attached to the Colombian Attorney General's Office has closed an investigation of three Army officers suspected of being involved in the murder of three trade unionists because of a lack of evidence that they ordered the murder. The Attorney General's Office continues to investigate their involvement in a cover-up. On August 5, 2004, in Cano Seco (Arauca Province), Colombian Army soldiers dragged the three trade unionists, Jorge Eduardo Prieto Chamucero, Leonel Goyeneche Goyeneche, and Hector Alirio Martinez out of a house and killed them. The soldiers have been convicted of murder and each has been sentenced to 40 years in prison.

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

* March 24, 2010. The United Nations has issued a statement urging the government of Colombia to control its intelligence agencies to avoid illegal wiretapping and stalking of judges, journalists, defenders of human rights, and opposition political leaders. The report states that some members of the Armed Forces continue to use intelligence agencies to carry out illegal and clandestine operations against politicians who criticize the government.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 24, 2010.

* March 22, 2010. Colombian newsweekly *Semana* reports that 16 Colombian Army soldiers have been freed from pretrial detention because of the lapse of 30 days since their arrest. They have been charged with homicide in the death of Julian Oviedo, who disappeared from Soacha, a suburb of Bogotá, in March 2008. His body was later presented as a guerrilla killed in combat in Ocana (Norte de Santander Province). The charges have not been dropped, and the Army has promised to confine the defendants, and other soldiers who have been released from pretrial detention, to Army facilities until their cases are completed.

According to the Attorney General's Office, 218 Colombian Army soldiers have been convicted in extrajudicial murders, including five lieutenant colonels, six majors, 9 captains,

and 14 lieutenants. As of February 15, 2010, The Attorney General was pursuing 1,244 open cases of extrajudicial murders, involving 218 soldiers and at least 2,318 murder victims.

Source: <http://www.semana.com/wf/ImprimirArticulo.aspx?IdArt=136552>



* March 19, 2010. Colombia's Attorney General has brought formal charges of aggravated forced disappearance, aggravated criminal conspiracy, and aggravated homicide against Cristobal Junior Mestra Tamara. According to the criminal complaint, on February 10, 2004, Mestra promised jobs to four young men and took them to Antioquia Province. Two days later the Colombian Army's 17th Brigade reported a battle with guerrillas in the town Arizal (Choco Province) and reported the four victims as unidentified guerrillas killed in combat. Subsequently the victims' families recognized them from photos taken by detectives attached to the Attorney General's Office.

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

* March 18, 2010. Retired Colombian Army Captain Guillermo Armando Gordillo Sanchez was sentenced to 20 years in prison for his part in the February 21, 2005 massacre at San Jose de Apartado. His sentence was reduced because he turned state's evidence and pleaded guilty to murder, acts of barbarism, and criminal conspiracy. Paramilitaries serving as guides for the Army were also involved in the massacre, in which eight people, including three children, were murdered.

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

* March 17, 2010. Colombia's former Minister of Defense Juan Manuel Santos, now a leading candidate for President, gave an interview to Joaquim Ibarz of *El Espectador.com*. The interview covered a range of subjects, but the article written by Ibarz was headlined "The 'false positives' began in 1984". Ibarz asked Santos about the more than 2,000 people murdered by the Army and later presented as guerrillas killed in combat. Santos replied that the false positives began in 1984 and that, when he realized the extent of the problem, he had decided to put a stop to it.

Source: <http://www.elespectador.com/impreso/politica/articuloimpreso193623-falsos-positivos-vienen-1964>

* March 16, 2010. The former Chief Justice of Colombia's Supreme Court, now a member of the civil law section of the court, Justice Desar Julio Valencia Copete, has been a victim of the illegal wiretapping and stalking by the DAS (Colombian FBI). He complains that the stalking has not ended and that he continues to be followed.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, and *El Pais*, Cali, March 16, 2010.

* March 16, 2010. Detectives from the Attorney General's office arrested an officer of the Colombian Navy for corruption after he was accused of stealing more than 8 million pesos (about \$4,000) from navy payrolls.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, March 16, 2010.



* March 16, 2010. The trial of Jorge Noguera, former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) continues after a 2-week recess. Noguera is charged with leaking intelligence information to paramilitaries and aiding them in other ways. The Supreme Court has asked the Attorney General to provide protection for two witnesses who have complained that they and their families are being followed and threatened because of their testimony. In Monday's session, the court heard a witness testify that Noguera appointed a section chief who supposedly had been recommended by the paramilitaries and who was thought to have been behind the murder of trade unionists.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 16, 2010.

* March 15, 2010. Retired Colombian Army General Rito Alejo del Rio, charged with homicide in the death of a young farmer, asked that his case be heard by Colombia's Supreme Court, but that Court ruled that it lacked jurisdiction. The case was returned to a criminal court in Bogotá.

Source: *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 15, 2010, and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 16, 2010.

* March 15, 2010. Seven Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged in the deaths of three young men, reported on April 26, 2006, in La Antigua (Antioquia Province). The soldiers, including a lieutenant, reported the corpses as those of "extortionists killed in combat". The report said they had a homemade rifle, a pistol, and three fragmentation grenades. Detectives from the Attorney General's office found that at least two of the dead men were not extortionists, but street vendors who had disappeared the day before their deaths.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and Attorney General's web site, Bogotá, March 15, 2010, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, and *El Pais*, Cali, March 16, 2010.

* March 15, 2010. A Colombian Police major, Giovanni Enrique Pinzon Vargas, attached to the to an anti-narcotics unit, has been arrested and charged with drug trafficking. When arrested, he was in possession of 50 kilos of cocaine. He has pleaded not guilty, but another officer arrested with him has confessed his guilt.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site, March 15, 2010, and *El Pais*, Cali, March 16, 2010.

* March 11, 2010. Seven members of the Colombian National Police were captured in Medellin after being charged with aggravated homicide in the death of a civilian, Juan Camilo Bedoya Castano. The young man was killed by rifle shots in the back on November 27, 2004 as he rode his motorcycle. The defendants reported that he had been killed as he tried to rob a vehicle. The investigation showed that one of the defendants was intoxicated at the time of the event.



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

* March 11, 2010. Colombia's Inspector General has asked the Attorney General to include two retired Police officials and two former DAS (Colombian FBI) officials in his investigation of the assassination of presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galan Sarmiento in 1989.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, March 11, 2010.

* March 11, 2010. Nine Colombian soldiers have been charged by the Inspector General with a "false positive" killing in La Paz (Cesar Province). In their report, they stated that the victim had fired on them and belonged to a criminal gang that they were fighting. The Inspector General charges that the victim was a farmer who had no connection with any criminal gang, and that he had not fired on the soldiers.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 11, 2010.

* March 11, 2010. A Colombian Army 2d lieutenant and 14 soldiers have been charged with homicide, forced disappearance, criminal conspiracy and falsifying public documents in a "false positives" incident in Ocana (Norte de Santander Province). They had presented the bodies of three innocent civilians as members of a criminal gang, drug traffickers, who had been killed in combat.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 11, 2010.

* March 11, 2010. The two active-duty Colombian Army colonels who attended a drug lord's wedding in 2004 have left the Army. The one who was serving as military attaché to the Colombian Embassy in Brasilia requested retirement and the other one was discharged.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 11, 2010.

* March 10, 2010. The criminal law section of Colombia's Supreme Court has affirmed the sentence of 27 years in prison handed down by a Medellin appeals court for five police officers who murdered three teenagers on June 4, 1990 in Las Banderas Park, Medellin. The five officers were on motorcycles and stopped the teenagers for no apparent reason. They held them for 11 hours and then shot them to death. They had appealed their prison sentences,

but their appeal was denied.

Source: *El Tiempo*, and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 10, 2010.

* March 10, 2010. An appellate court affirmed the sentence of 28 years in prison for Colombian Police Major Luis Augusto Manrique Montilla, for the murder of four people in May 2009. The sentence was part of a plea bargain. Plea bargains calling for sentences of 14 years for two other police officers who took part in the crime were disapproved. Those two and another officer remain charged with aggravated forced disappearance and aggravated criminal conspiracy. The police officers killed the four and turned their bodies over to a rival gang with which they were cooperating. They have not revealed the location of the bodies



Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and *El Mundo*, Medellín, March 10, 2010.

* March 10, 2010. In the above case, the Attorney General has asked the Supreme Court to investigate the possible connection of Colombian National Police General Dagoberto Garcia to the deaths of the four victims. Recorded telephone conversations involving Major Manrique and referring to General Garcia will be investigated.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 10, 2010.

* March 10, 2010. The Colombian government has announced that four Colombian Army colonels who attended a drug lord's wedding reception ought to resign. The Minister of Defense, Gabriel Silva Lujan, said that two of the colonels remain on active duty. He gave them until Thursday, March 10 to retire, or else be discharged.

Source: *Radio Caracol* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, March 10, 2010.

* March 10, 2010. Six Colombian Marines have been arrested and charged after they lost 1,999 grams of cocaine and 900,000 pesos (about \$450) in cash captured by the Marines on January 28 of this year in Playa Linda (Bolívar Province).

* Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, March 10, 2010.

* March 9, 2010. The Colombian Army announced that active duty colonels who attended the wedding reception of drug lord Nestor Ramon Caro Chaparro are relieved of duty and will be interviewed. Depending on the facts, criminal prosecution may be sought. Colonel Juan Carlos Castaneda, military attaché at the Colombian Embassy in Brasilia, was ordered to return immediately. At the time of the wedding, Caro was already under an extradition order. He is now one of those most wanted by the United States. Police officials who viewed the two-hour video taken at the wedding identified a police official, Major Luis Francisco Marino Flores, who was second in command of the judicial police in Medellín at the time of the wedding.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá and *El Colombiano*, Medellín, March 9, 2010.



* March 9, 2010. Former paramilitary commander Mario Jaime Mejia, alias “El Panadero” (The Baker), making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, testified that paramilitaries met with Colombian Armed Forces before the May 1998 massacre at Barrancabermeja. He said that representatives of the Army, the DAS (Colombian FBI), and the Police not only supported the paramilitary incursion that led to 7 deaths and 25 disappearances, but they removed several checkpoints in order to permit the free movement of the paramilitaries.

Mejia recounted that when he asked Colombian Army Colonel Joaquin Correa to remove the checkpoints and to let the paramilitaries know where the victims would be, Colonel Correa told him not to leave any bodies and to take away anybody that they were able to capture. He said that they killed seven people and took their bodies away in a truck. Another paramilitary, “William Tatareto” saw to it that 25 people were taken to another location. They discovered that some of them were “innocent” but they decided to kill all of them.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, March 9, 2010, and *Semana*, Bogotá, March 10, 2010.

* March 7, 2010. A video made at the 2004 wedding of a well-known drug trafficker, Nestor Caro Chaparro, whose extradition had previously been requested by the United States, shows that four Colombian Army colonels attended the wedding. The video was found a few months ago at one of Caro Chaparro’s properties. He was a retired Colombian Army lieutenant. At the time of the wedding, November 19, 2004, the United States had already offered a \$5 million reward for his capture, and Colombia’s Attorney General had already issued a warrant for his arrest. According to *El Tiempo*, Caro Chaparro received so much cooperation from the DAS (Colombian FBI) that he was known as “Lieutenant Nestor”.

One of the Colombian Army colonels in attendance was Colonel Juan Carlos Castaneda Villamizar, who is now Colombia’s military attaché in Brazil. The other three are Colonel Carlos Betancourt Patino, Colonel David Betancourt Patino, and Colonel Rodrigo Martinez Silva.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 7, 2010.

* March 6, 2010. A Colombian marine, John Sierra Cerpa, has been charged with covering up a forced disappearance. According to the charges, two civilians, Miguel Martinez Yepes and Felix Rico Martinez were “disappeared” on March 9, 2005 in Las Palmas (Bolívar Province). Their bodies were later presented as having been killed in combat.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, and Attorney General’s web site.

* March 6, 2010. Detectives are investigating the possible participation of members of Colombia’s Armed Forces in the prison escape of two high-level paramilitary commanders (Dumar de Jesus Guerrero Castillo and “Tribilin”). They escaped on March 3 and the Corrections Director, Teresa Moya, was forced to resign. Sources have told *El Tiempo* that active duty Colombian military may have contacted imprisoned soldiers to make the escape

possible. Intelligence sources have asserted that a paramilitary commander who is the brother of one of the escapees offered 3 billion pesos (about \$1.5 million) for his brother's escape.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 6, 2010.



* March 3, 2010. Colombia's Supreme Court has ordered that military court decisions where soldiers were charged with human rights violations must be reviewed by Colombia's ordinary civil justice system. According to the Supreme Court's decision, military courts' jurisdiction is limited and international agreements ratified by Colombia require civilian court jurisdiction over charges of human rights violations by soldiers.

The Court ordered the re-opening of an investigation in which National Police officers in which a military court dismissed charges in the murder of two civilians in September, 1985.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 3, 2010.

* March 3, 2010. A former DAS (Colombian FBI) official has asked for protection for herself and her family after she was followed and threatened because of her testimony in the criminal trial of a former DAS administrator, Jorge Noguera. She complains of being followed on May 7, 2009 by a DAS vehicle. DAS officials admitted that the license plate she described belonged to a DAS vehicle, but denied any connection with the threats and intimidation she complains of. Members of her family have also received threats.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 3, 2010.

* March 3, 2010. The criminal case section of Colombia's Supreme Court has asked for an investigation into the connection between retired General Mario Montoya and two other Colombian Army officers and paramilitary organizations. Montoya is now Colombia's ambassador to the Dominican Republic. A former paramilitary commander and alleged drug trafficker, Daniel Rendon Herrera, alias "Don Mario" recently testified that paramilitaries under his command gave General Montoya some 1,500 million pesos (about \$750,000) so that the Army would help defeat a rival paramilitary group. The rivalry was allegedly related to drug trafficking.

Lawyers for the survivors of the massacre at San Jose de Apartado on February 21, 2005, have asked the Court to order an investigation into General Montoya's role in planning the massacre.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 3, 2010.

* March 2, 2010. Martha Leal, the former DAS official who has asked for protection from threats related to her testimony, testified that her office was required to check on various Colombian government agencies. She said that she was expected to have her agents infiltrate any kind of protest march.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 2, 2010.

* March 1, 2010. Another former DAS official, Jackeline Sandoval, testified that she was ordered to support the DAS unit that was carrying out illegal wiretapping and stalking of journalists, judges, politicians, and NGO officials. She said that she attended a meeting in which she was ordered to support the wiretapping and other surveillance activities. Superiors told her that there were some NGO's that needed to be watched because the guerrillas were using them.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 1, 2010.

* February 27, 2010. Colombian National Police Colonel Omar Efrain Pardo Pardo, Commander of Citizen Security in Sucre Province, has been suspended because of alleged irregularities in his office. He has been suspended once before, in 2002, because of an illegal search conducted in Barranquilla.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, February 27, 2010.

* February 27, 2010. Colombia's Inspector General has asked the former commander of the Medellin police force to turn over the files of four former police officers connected with a criminal gang. The files contain evidence that a Colombian Police major, a 2d lieutenant and two patrol officers were working with the gang. They are alleged to have taken part in the forced disappearance of three young women and a young man, and it is further alleged that the gang paid the major two million pesos (about \$1,000) for those acts. *El Tiempo* believes that the requested files will reveal the cooperation of higher police authorities with the criminal gang.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 27, 2010.

* February 27, 2010. A street dancer in Barranquilla claimed that eight police officers grabbed her and dragged her away from the corner where she was performing, allegedly because she was in the way of the President's motorcade. She claimed that they hit her and tore her dress, and detained her for four hours.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, February 27, 2010.

* February 26, 2010. Four Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged in three separate incidents of extrajudicial killing in the province of Narino. In the first case, soldiers attacked and killed two civilians on August 10, 2006 in the town of Chambo. The victims' bodies were later left lying near the town. The defendant in this case is Eduardo Jose Portilla.

On November 7, 2006, in the town of El Barro, two civilians were killed and their bodies were then presented as having been killed in combat. Two sergeants, Wilson Arroyave Tapias and Mario Fernando Betancourt Lobaton, are the defendants.

On November 22, 2006, in the town of San Pablo, a couple and their child were murdered

in their home. The accused is Diego Alejandro Marin, and Eduardo Jose Portilla may also have been involved. All of the defendants are charged with Homicide, criminal conspiracy, manufacture, trafficking and illegal use of military weapons.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 26, 2010.

* February 26, 2010. In an unusual sentence, the Council of State, Colombia's highest administrative court, has found that a military unit, the La Popa Battalion, and three National Police commandos erect signs on which they admit that they failed to carry out their duty to protect civilians from the paramilitaries.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 16, 2010.

* February 26, 2010. Two Colombian Army soldiers have been charged with the murder of a farmer, Jose Abelardo Davila Betancur on March 10, 1999 in La Quebra (Antioquia Province) and reporting him as a guerrilla killed in combat. One of the members of the patrol that killed the farmer testified that his superior ordered him to produce his own camouflage uniform to put on the victim so he would look like a guerrilla.

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

* February 26, 2010. Ten Colombian Army soldiers and a civilian have been arrested and charged murdering four civilians on August 10, 2006 in El Plan (Guajira Province) and reporting them as guerrillas killed in combat. The investigation revealed that there had been no combat and the four victims had no connection with the guerrillas.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, February 27, 2010, and Attorney General's Web Site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>.

* February 25, 2010. Three Colombian soldiers have been sentenced to 20 months in prison for covering up the murder of a farmer in Argelia (Antioquia Province). On November 21, 2004, they reported Wilson Posada Quintero as a guerrilla killed in combat. An investigation showed that they had set off explosives and fired their service weapons in the air in order to simulate combat, and that the victim was a farmer and not a guerrilla. The three defendants received a reduction in their sentences because they pleaded guilty. A major, a corporal, and another soldier are also facing charges in this incident.

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

* February 25, 2010. Nine Colombian Army soldiers were each sentenced to 24 years in prison for killing a young man on June 4, 2005 in Medellin and reported that he had detonated an explosive. The investigation showed that their report was false. The defendants are being held without bail.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, *El Espectador*, and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 25, 2010, and Attorney General's Web site.



* February 24, 2010. The Council of State, Colombia's highest administrative court, ordered the Colombian Government to pay damages to 280 farm families who were forced from their land on February 14, 1996 by paramilitaries using violence. The farmers had filed complaints with the National Police in three municipalities, but the local authorities refused to take any action to protect the farmers. When three farmers returned, two were murdered and one had to flee the country. The Council expressed the view that the armed forces ought to have done whatever was necessary to prevent the violence. There were two military bases and sufficient manpower to protect the people.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 24, 2010.

* February 23, 2010. Colombia's Inspector General has ordered the discharge of Colombian Army Lieutenant Javier Alfonso Quiroga Villalobos and Jorge Hernando Perez Campos, a Colombian soldier because on March 2, 2004, they broke into a residence in the town of Maracaibo and killed a civilian who was trying to flee. They will not be allowed to hold any public position for at least 20 years.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 23, 2010.

* February 23, 2010. Several former paramilitaries who are making their confession under the Justice and Peace Law have asked the Colombian government to protect their families. They have been testifying about their cooperation with the Colombian Army in extrajudicial killings of civilians who are later presented as guerrillas killed in combat. One of them is the paramilitary commander Daniel Rendon, alias "Don Mario". They state that their relatives have been threatened because of their testimony. Rendon stated that two of his daughters were assaulted and a cousin was attacked.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 23, 2010.

* February 23, 2010. Lawyers for the families of the victims of the February 21, 2005 massacre at San Jose de Apartado have asked the Attorney General to issue formal charges against retired General Mario Montoya, now Colombia's ambassador to the Dominican Republic. Witnesses at the trial of soldiers involved in the massacre have testified that General Montoya was the one who ordered that soldiers carrying out "Operation Phoenix" against the guerrillas use paramilitaries as guides. One of the witnesses, Captain Gordillo, who has already pleaded guilty and is serving a sentence for his part in the massacre, also testified that then-Colonel Hector Jaime Fandino met with paramilitaries to plan the operation that culminated in the massacre. Lawyers for the families have also asked that now-General Fandino be charged.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 23, 2010.



* February 23, 2010. A Colombian Army sergeant, Juan Carlos Oviedo Reinoso, and a soldier, Diego Alejandro Echeverri Quiroz, have been sentenced to 14 years and six months in prison for the murder of a civilian and attempted murder of another in Santa Barbara (Antioquia Province) on May 29, 2006. According to the testimony of the survivor, a soldier dressed in civilian clothes drugged the two men and Army troops then fired on them. The defendants received a reduction in their sentence because they pleaded guilty to the charges.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site, February 23, 2010.

* February 23, 2010. The criminal panel of Colombia's Supreme Court of Justice has asked the Attorney General to consider charging a former commander of Colombia's First Marine Brigade, Colonel Hernando Alfonso Jama Arjona in an investigation of the massacre at Macayepo (Bolívar Province), where 15 peasant farmers were killed by paramilitaries. The Court reviewed evidence showing that Colonel Jama had been informed by credible witnesses that the paramilitaries planned to kill the farmers; yet his troops were all assigned to areas distant from the planned attack.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 23, 2010.

* February 22, 2010. A Colombian Army noncommissioned officer and three soldiers will go to trial on charges of homicide. Their motion to dismiss the charges was denied. They are accused of murdering Alberto Arrieta Osorio and Carlos Villarreal Echeverria in Aracataca (Magdalena Province) on July 28, 2001, and reporting them as guerrillas who attacked a Drummond Company railroad. Investigators found that the victims were not guerrillas, but jewelry salesmen working in the area.

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

* February 22, 2010. A Colombian Army 2d lieutenant, a corporal, and three soldiers have been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide, criminal conspiracy, aggravated forced disappearance and illegal use of weapons in the murder of a civilian on June 7, 2007 in El Carmen (Norte de Santander Province). According to the investigation, Quintero Jaimes spent the early morning hours at a wake, then left and went to a liquor store, where the soldiers seized him. His body was later reported as a guerrilla killed in combat and a pistol was placed beside his body. The 2d lieutenant, in charge of the patrol, was also charged with falsifying public documents. The five are being held without bail.

Source: *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, February 22, 2010, and Attorney General's web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* February 19, 2010. Five years to the day after the massacre at the Peace Community of San Jose de Apartado, only one defendant has been sentenced. Demobilized paramilitaries in custody have testified that soldiers from the Colombian Army's 17th Brigade were involved, including General Hector Jaime Fandino who commanded the 17th Brigade at that time. General Fandino has not been charged, but four other officers have been charged and are in

custody. One paramilitary, Henry de Jesus Palomino Alvarez, alias Chamaco, has described the death of 11-year-old Deyner Andres Guerra Tuberquia. According to Palomino Alvarez, Deyner saw them cut the throats of his father, Luis Eduardo Guerra, and his girlfriend, Beyanira Areiza, the boy started running, and put his hands on his throat, so they would not kill him, but they cut his throat also. The same witness has testified that soldiers of the 17th Brigade went along with the paramilitaries, and gave the order to kill the two very young children who were killed in La Resbalosa.



A retired Colombian Army colonel, Jose Orlando Acosta, has testified that retired General Mario Montoya, now Colombia's ambassador to the Dominican Republic, was also involved, as well as retired Colonel Nestor Ivan Duque.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 19, 2010.

* February 19, 2010. A Colombian criminal court judge has denied a motion to release three noncommissioned Army officers from jail while they await trial on charges of manufacturing weapons, weapons trafficking and illegal use of weapons. They were arrested on November 13, 2009 while carrying 3,970 cartridges of different calibers in a private vehicle in Bogotá.

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

* February 19, 2010. DNA evidence established the identity of another of the young men from the Bogotá area who were enticed to Ocana (Norte de Santander Province) and then murdered by soldiers. The body of Yonny Duvian Soto Munoz, age 21, was found in a common grave and listed by the Army as an unidentified guerrilla killed in combat. He had just completed his compulsory military service and was in the process of re-enlisting.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 19, 2010.

* February 19, 2010.

* February 19, 2010. Three bodyguards employed by the Attorney General's Office have pleaded guilty to kidnapping and aggravated falsification of public documents after they were caught in a private vehicle with their kidnapping victim in Vichada Province.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 19, 2010.

* February 18, 2010. A criminal court judge denied the motion of Colombian Army Major Manuel Arturo Pabon Jaimes for provisional release from jail. He is awaiting trial on charges of murdering a civilian in 2006 in Golondrinas, near Cali. Six other soldiers have been charged in this murder.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, February 18, 2010.

* February 18, 2010. A corporal and a sergeant in the Colombian Navy have been arrested and charged with being part of a drug trafficking ring in Turbo (Antioquia Province). Seven members of the ring have been arrested. They are alleged to have trafficked nine tons of cocaine every year. They are charged with sending small amounts of cocaine via maritime routes and using a private transportation company.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, February 18, 2010.

* February 18, 2010. Four Colombian Army soldiers have been captured and charged with homicide, forced disappearance and abuse of process in two separate incidents of extrajudicial killing (“false positives”). In the first incident, in Aguazul (Casanare Province), three men who worked in a brickyard were forced into a truck on July 27, 2007. Their bodies later appeared at a site two hours away presented as members of an illegal armed group and killed in combat. In the second incident, on March 28, 2005, six soldiers murdered a 17-year-old high school student and presented his body as a member of a criminal gang in Bello (Antioquia Province).

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, February 18, 2010.

* February 18, 2010. A 26-year-old beauty queen, Malka Devenish, complained that, as she was leaving a Carnival event, a Colombian Police Officer grabbed her arms and held them while a woman dressed in civilian clothes pushed and shoved her. She has filed a civil suit against the Police.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, February 18, 2010.

* February 18, 2010. Seven Colombian soldiers, attached to the 16th Brigade, have been arrested and charged in the murder of three civilians on July 27, 2007 in Aguazul (Casanare Province). According to the investigation, three farmers, Henry Melo Gutierrez, Jhon Fabio Daza Dominguez and Jose Hernel Garzon Sanchez were forced into a truck and hours later they were reported killed in combat in Los Mangos en Monterrey (Casanare Province).

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 18, 2010.

* February 18, 2010. *El Espectador* was able to learn from an official source that a demobilized paramilitary, testifying in a closed session of the trial of Jorge Noguera, former head of the DAS (Colombian FBI) that paramilitaries dictated the assignment of a DAS official to head the DAS office in Yopal (Casanare Province). Noguera is charged with collaborating with the paramilitaries. The witness testified that the paramilitaries paid 100 million pesos (about \$50,000) for the appointment in order to facilitate their operations, which consisted in threatening and killing community leaders, academics, and trade unionists.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 18, 2010.



* February 18, 2010. Former paramilitary commander and accused drug trafficker Daniel Rendon Herrera, alias “Don Mario”, continued his confession by accusing Army officers of using paramilitaries to present more than 100 “false positives”. He claimed that when paramilitaries under his command were killed in combat with guerrillas, he gave their bodies to Colombian Army Colonel Hector Cabuya to present as guerrillas killed by his troops. He also testified that Colonel Cabuya threatened him with arrest if he did not provide more bodies.

Faced with the threat, “Don Mario”, testified that he gave Colonel Cabuya three young men to be killed and presented as guerrillas killed in combat, and three rifles to place beside their bodies. On another occasion, he said, he gave Colonel Cabuya 100 million pesos (about \$50,000) plus five more young men for the same purpose. Sometimes he furnished men from among his own troops.

“Don Mario” also testified that in 2004 his group of paramilitaries gave 1,500 million pesos (about \$750,000) to General Mario Montoya so that he would fight a rival group of paramilitaries. General Montoya, now Colombia’s ambassador to the Dominican Republic, has denied the allegation.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, and *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 18, 2010.

* February 17, 2010. “Don Mario’s” testimony included an account of how paramilitaries seized two young men from the town of Costa Rica, dressed them in uniforms and turned them over to a Colombian Army lieutenant they knew as “Chucho”. They were murdered and passed off as guerrillas killed in combat. In another case in July 2003, there were six victims, two of whom were paramilitaries. The other four were captured and turned over to Colonel Cabuya and he reported them as guerrillas killed in combat.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 17, 2010.

* February 17, 2010. A demobilized paramilitary testified in the trial of Jorge Noguera, former Deputy Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) that in 2004 a paramilitary commander known as “Don Pacho” paid 100 million pesos (about \$50,000) to the DAS so that the DAS would assign a DAS official to leak investigative information to his paramilitary unit.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 17, 2010.

* February 17, 2010. A criminal court judge refused Colombian Army Major Manuel Arturo Pabon Jaimes’ motion for provisional liberty. Major Pabon is charged, along with six soldiers, with the murder of a civilian on March 11, 2006. Sergeant Luis Eduardo Mahecha is now on trial for murder in the same incident.

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

* February 16, 2010. An armored truck assigned by the DAS (Colombian FBI) for use by the President of Colombia may have been used by a paramilitary commander, according to testimony by the former Secretary General of the agency. He testified that when he found about the loan of the vehicle to Rodrigo Tovar Pupo, alias “Jorge 40”, extradited to the United States on drug trafficking charges, he initiated an investigation.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 16, 2010.

* February 16, 2010. Jorge Lagos, former Director of Counter-Intelligence for the DAS (Colombian FBI), testified in the trial of former DAS Director Jorge Noguera Cortes, charged with aiding paramilitaries. Lagos testified that, under orders from Noguera, he planned methods of intimidating journalists and trade unionists.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, February 16, 2010, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, February 15, 2010.

* February 16, 2010. According to Ignacio Gomez, president of the Free Press Foundation (FLIP is the Spanish acronym.) Colombia’s Inspector General plans to investigate officials at the Presidential Palace for their connections to illegal wiretapping and stalking of judges, opposition politicians, and journalist. He named the Secretary General, the Press Secretary, and a communications assistant who is now the Vice Minister of Defense.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, February 16, 2010.

* February 16, 2010. The mother of a dead Colombian soldier claims he was murdered by a noncommissioned officer. She claims that her son called her, very frightened, and told her that his sergeant had threatened to kill him. The sergeant had attacked him for falling asleep on guard duty. His body had a bullet wound in the head.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, February 16, 2010.

* February 15, 2010. Three Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with aggravated forced disappearance and aggravated homicide in connection with the extrajudicial killing of Daniel Suarez Martinez on December 6, 2007 and Camilo Andres Valencia on December 7, 2007. The soldiers reported killing Suarez in combat with guerrillas and Andres in combat with a criminal gang on the next day. Investigators concluded that there had not been any combat on either day.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 15, 2010.

* February 15, 2010. The trial of Colombian Army Major Alirio Uruena and two soldiers for their part in the massacre at Trujillo has been postponed to April 12 and 13 because the judge has requested the prosecution to present additional evidence. The two soldiers Jose Berrio and Alirio Uruena are being tried *in absentia*.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 15, 2010.



* February 13, 2010. Miguel Emilio La Rota, an investigator for the Center for the Study of Law, Justice and Society, writes in *Semana* that soldiers charged with extrajudicial killings in the “false positives” scandal have been freed from jail by the expiration of a statute of limitations, but are still charged with crimes and will still go to trial. Still, he points out, almost all of the defendants are soldiers or low-level noncommissioned officers (around 1,000). Fewer than ten colonels and no generals are under formal investigation. He reminds that this scandal does not result from the actions of a few “rotten apples”. Rather, there are more than 2,600 cases, spread all over the country, and over a long period of time. The writer is concerned that each case is being investigated individually and that there is no over-all investigation of the networks and the planners.

Source: <http://www.semana.com/wf/ImprimirArticulo.aspx?IdArt=134881>

* February 12, 2010. The Attorney General’s investigation of illegal wiretapping by the DAS (Colombian FBI) reveals that DAS officials kept close track of all the individuals involved in one of the oldest and most respected projects of the Catholic Church in Colombia—The Week of Peace. Every sectional director of the DAS had to deliver a detailed report containing the names of all the participants in The Week Of Peace, a list of every event, an analysis of the risk inherent in the activity, and specific information about people who attended the events. The reports listed the bishops and priests responsible for leading the activities.

From the beginning, according to the files seized by the Attorney General, DAS officials planned to spread a message anonymously to the effect that “irregular organizations influenced and participated “ in The Week of Peace activities. One report, marked “Secret”, detailed the activities of social organizations and even quoted what a child had said during a meeting titled “Say No To War”. There were photographs of participants taken by DAS agents.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, February 12, 2010, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, February 13, 2010.

* February 11, 2010. A Colombian Army sergeant, Jorge Marin Giraldo, has been arrested and charged with aggravated kidnapping and aggravated homicide in the death of a woman in a rural area of Los Molinos (Guajira Province).

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, February 11, 2010.

* February 11, 2010. A DAS (Colombian FBI) contract bodyguard has been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide and illegal use of weapons after a gunfight in Fusagasuga (Cundinamarca Province).

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 11, 2010.

* February 11, 2010. Colombia's Inspector General has asked prosecutors to investigate the participation of the former DAS (Colombian FBI) chief of intelligence Alberto Romero in the assassination of presidential candidate Bernardo Jaramillo.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, February 11, 2010, and *El Mundo*, Medellín, February 12, 2010.



* February 11, 2010. Two DAS (Colombian FBI) detectives were arrested just as they were receiving an extortion payment. They had gone to a shopping center to pick up a payment of 30 million pesos (about \$, 15,000) that they had demanded in return for aiding a merchant who had been jailed for drug trafficking.

Source: http://www.semana.com/wf_imprimirArticulo.aspx?IdArt=134803, and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 12, 2010.

* February 11, 2010. Colombia's Minister of Defense, in Washington, D.C. to discuss Colombia's human rights situation with members of Congress, maintained that extrajudicial killings by Colombian soldiers or "false positives" are a "thing of the past."

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 11, 2010, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, February 12, 2010.

* February 11, 2010. A demobilized paramilitary commander, Libardo Duarte, alias "Bam-Bam", making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, insists that Colombian General Mario Montoya, a Colonel Quintero and a General Pedraza all cooperated with paramilitaries.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 11, 2010, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, February 12, 2010.

* February 10, 2010. A Colombian Army lieutenant was sentenced to 25 years and ten months in prison for his responsibility in the crime of aggravated homicide and a soldier who took part in the homicide was sentenced to 12 years. Two civilians on their way home from work on April 14, 2005 when they were shot by troops commanded by the two defendants. One of the civilians was killed, but the other, although wounded, was able to escape. The next day the survivor asked Army soldiers for protection, but they killed him. Three other soldiers have already been convicted for these murders.

Source: Attorney General's web site, *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 10, 2010.

* February 9, 2010. The Freedom of the Press Foundation (FLIP is the Spanish acronym.) states that the illegal stalking and wiretapping of journalists by the DAS (Colombian FBI) is without doubt the most serious threat to press freedom. According to the Attorney General's report, there were 16 cases where journalists were wiretapped illegally, but FLIP believes that the report is not yet complete and that there were more than 16 such instances.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 9, 2010

* February 8, 2010. A Colombian Criminal Appeals Court has denied a motion by retired General Miguel Alfredo Maza Marquez, the former DAS (Colombian FBI) Director, to dismiss a charge of aggravated homicide, based on his alleged participation in the murder of Luis Carlos Galan Sarmiento, a presidential candidate, on August 15, 1989.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 8, 2010.

* February 8, 2010. According to a report issued by the Attorney General's Office, there are 1,238 open investigations of homicides allegedly committed by members of the Colombian Armed Forces. Most of them are related to "false positives". 187 members of the Armed Forces have already been convicted for such crimes as aggravated homicide, homicide, and forced disappearance. The same report states that 358 members of the Armed Forces are now defendants in criminal proceedings related to "false positives". 578 members of the Armed Forces have been charged, and there have been 153 plea agreements.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, February 8, 2010.

* February 7, 2010. The surviving family of Johan Calcedo Avila received his remains from the Attorney General's office. Family members said that the 19-year-old and two neighbors left on May 13, 2007 for Cesar Province where a man had offered them jobs picking cotton. They expected to be back in a few days. Detectives established that he and the neighbors were "false positives" victims.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, February 7, 2010.

* February 6, 2010. According to the Attorney General's investigation of illegal wiretapping and espionage by the DAS (Colombian FBI), the then-Deputy Director, Jose Miguel Narvaez, ordered "monitoring" of Jose Miguel Vivanco of Human Rights Watch and planning for "offensive intelligence", related to Vivanco.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 6, 2010.

* February 5, 2010. Ten Colombian soldiers from the 17th Brigade are on trial in Medellin criminal court for their part in the massacre at San Jose de Apartado on February 21, 2005. Yesterday a witness, Captain Guillermo Armando Gordillo Sanchez, testified that four platoons from the 17th Brigade patrolled together with paramilitaries on the day of the massacre, and that the operation was planned at 17th Brigade headquarters, with the participation of General Mario Montoya, who commanded the Division at that time. Captain Gordillo also testified that when demobilized paramilitaries revealed the participation of the Army, commanders of the 17th Brigade paid two witnesses to testify that guerrillas were responsible for the massacre.

Two demobilized paramilitaries also testified at the trial. They both admitted that they had guided the soldiers and had been dressed in Army uniforms and carried Army weapons. One

of them also testified that he saw a paramilitary kill one of the adults and cut the throats of the two small children.

Source: *El Colombiano* and *El Mundo*, Medellin, *El Herald*, Barranquilla, and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 5 and February 7, 2010.



* February 5, 2010. A Colombian Army Major, Gustavo Enrique Soto Bustamante and Lieutenant, Fabio Arturo Puentes Porras have been bound over for trial in the murder of three young men in Aguazul on March 30, 2007. The victims were later presented as guerrillas killed in combat. Prosecutors allege that in a supposed armed confrontation, soldiers fired more than 250 shots and exploded four fragmentation grenades, but the victims' bodies had no fragmentation wounds and showed bullet wounds from short range fire. The two officers are charged with aggravated kidnapping, illegal use of military weapons, falsifying public documents, and abuse of process.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site, February 5, 2010.

* February 4, 2010. *Human Rights Watch* issued a report that was two years in the making, warning of revitalized paramilitary and criminal groups in Colombia after the paramilitary demobilization in 2006. The groups are connected to drug trafficking. The report alleges that public security forces tolerate the criminal armies.

Source: *The New York Times*, February 4, 2010.

* February 4, 2010. In response to concerns about police cooperation with illegal armed groups, as charged in a recent report by Human Rights Watch, the commander of the Colombian National Police announced that police in areas where such groups are active will be subjected to lie detector tests. In the last three years, the National Police have investigated 369 officers for alleged cooperation with such groups. In 2008, there were 19 arrests for such cooperation and in 2009 there were 31. The Minister of Defense disagrees with the Human Rights Watch report.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 4, 2010.

* February 4, 2010. A witness has testified that Captain Julio Cesar Devia Torrijos, the former commander of the Mobile Anti-Disturbance Squadron (Esmad is the Spanish acronym.) not only ordered the assembly of illegal weapons, he gave instructions to use them against student protesters. Captain Devia was discharged by the Inspector General for his responsibility for the death of a 15-year-old in a May 1, 2005 demonstration. The witness testified that the use of "home-made" weapons was common, including what they called "potato bombs" or exploding devices filled with marbles, and fine glass "seeds", all of which violate international treaties. The witness identified a colonel, two majors, a lieutenant and a 2d lieutenant who directed their subordinates to shoot directly at the students.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 4, 2010.

* February 4, 2010. An appellate judge upheld the conditional release of Colombian Army Mayor Henry Blanco, accused in one of the Soacha “false positive” murder cases. The statute of limitations for preventive detention had expired.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, February 4, 2010.



* February 4, 2010. Seven Colombian soldiers accused of murdering Jose Giraldo will not be released after a court denied their motion to dismiss the charges. Giraldo was a farmer allegedly killed by the soldiers on March 11, 2006 in Golondrinas, near Cali. Detectives attached to the Attorney’s General’s Office determined that the body had been moved and that the victim’s wounds were not consistent with combat.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, and *El Pais*, Cali, February 4, 2010, and Attorney General’s web site, February 3, 2010.

* February 4, 2010. An appellate court upheld the release of Major Henry Blanco, charged with taking part in the “false positives” murders. He was granted conditional release because of the expiration of the statute of limitations.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, February 4, 2010.

* February 4, 2010. Andres Penate, former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) testifying in the trial of Jorge Noguera, also a former DAS director, stated that the DAS used “front” or fake businesses to channel confidential information, much of it obtained illegally. Penate complained that he and his family had also been subjected to the illegal wiretapping and espionage.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 4, 2010.

* February 3, 2010. One of the witnesses in the trial of Colombian soldiers for taking part in the February 21, 2005 massacre at San Jose de Apartado testified that an Army captain gave the order to kill the two small children. A former paramilitary, Henry De Jesus Palomino, testified that the three adults were tortured and then killed with machetes. He told the court that after the murders, the two small children, about 3 and 4 years old, were crying. The paramilitaries took them to the soldiers. A commander, whose name he couldn’t remember, told the paramilitaries to kill them.

Another witness, Francisco Javier Galindo Martinez, also a former paramilitary, testified that it was Captain Gordillo who gave the order to cut the throats of the children. He said they would cause problems later if they weren’t killed. (Captain Gordillo entered into a plea bargain last year and is serving his sentence. He is also a witness in the trial.)

A third former paramilitary, Rober Dario Munoz, stated that he had offered to take charge of the children or turn them over to a family or to the government, but that the captain said no, that the little girl was old enough to know what was going on and might later be a

witness.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, February 3, 2010.

* February 3, 2010. Five Colombian National Police officers, a lieutenant colonel, a major, a captain, and two patrolmen are being investigated for trying to kill an informant who was demanding reward money as promised.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 3, 2010, and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 2, 2010.

* February 3, 2010. Colombian news media note that the *Human Rights Watch* report on emerging paramilitary and criminal gangs is critical of Colombian armed forces for their connections with the groups. It complains that the gangs repeatedly are warned of raids and escape capture.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Pais*, Cali, *El Herald*, Barranquilla, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, February 3, 2010.

* February 3, 2010. A spokesman for *Human Rights Watch* in Washington, D.C. predicts that Congress will not approve the trade agreement with Colombia until the Colombian government makes a serious effort to stop violence. He notes that the murder rate in Medellin has doubled over the last year, while some security forces permit and even work with the new generation gangs.

Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., February 3, 2010.

* February 3, 2010. The Council of State, Colombia's highest administrative court, approved a previous order that the Colombian government to pay 250 million pesos (about \$250,000) to the families of six farmers murdered by soldiers in 1986. The Court also urged the Ministry of Defense to establish procedures under which the guilty individuals, in this case an Army captain and two sergeants, could be required to pay the damages out of their personal funds. The three are serving prison sentences for the 1986 murder of six civilians, including children, by cutting their throats.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, February 3, 2010.

* February 3, 2010. A demobilized paramilitary, Edgar Fierro, testifying in the trial of Jorge Noguera, a former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI), revealed that he purchased lists of the names of trade unionists from the DAS for use by paramilitaries. He said that the paramilitaries used such intelligence information to attack and kill trade unionists. The defendant, Noguera, admitted that the DAS stalked trade unionists and infiltrated demonstrations and that the information was furnished to the Office of the President "to preserve public order."

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, February 3, 2010.



* February 3, 2010. Surviving relatives of the 16 young men from Soacha who were killed by Colombian Army soldiers and presented as guerrillas killed in combat have written a letter to the International Criminal Court, asking for the Court's attention. The relatives complain that, while the accused soldiers, confined to their barracks, were treated to an all-day party with a good meal, raffles and clowns to entertain their children, the relatives are continually subjected to death threats.

Source: Cambio.com.co/paiscambio/865/ARTICULO-PRINTER_FRIENDLY-PRINTER-FRIENDLY_cambio-7222830.html

* February 2, 2010. Two Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with homicide and abuse of process. Prosecutors allege that they took part in the disappearance and murder of several young men whose bodies were later presented as criminals killed in combat in Cordoba Province.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, February 2, 2010.

* February 2, 2010. Former DAS (Colombian FBI) director Jorge Noguera, on trial for collaboration with the paramilitaries, admitted that he had had nine meetings with the cousin of extradited paramilitary commander Rodrigo Tovar Pupo (alias Jorge 40), but insisted he did not know of the relationship. He also maintained that he delivered a government-owned armored truck to Jorge 40 to do inspections in Barranquilla because he had been ordered to do so. He denied "leaking" information to the paramilitaries.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, February 2, 2010.

* February 2, 2010. While former DAS (Colombian FBI) director Jorge Noguera, is being tried at this time for collaboration with the paramilitaries and not for illegal wiretapping, witnesses have stated that he knew about the illegal wiretapping. He denied the testimony of another former DAS official, Rafael Garcia, to the effect that Noguera had a list of trade unionists and other persons who were later murdered by the paramilitaries.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Pais*, Cali, February 2, 2010.

* February 2, 2010. The Attorney General's office is investigating the connection of retired Colombian Army General Miguel Maza Marquez, a former director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) with the assassination of Luis Carlos Galan. Gen. Maza is in custody during the investigation but his defense counsel have asked that the investigation be delayed because of Maza's poor health.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 2, 2010.

* February 2, 2010. A Colombian Army soldier has been arrested and charged with the

murder of Rafael Arcangel Cabarcas Morron on March 8, 2007 in Los Pondones San Juan (Cesar Province). Detectives determined that there was no combat and that the victim had nothing to do with the guerrillas.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, February 2, 2010.



* February 1, 2010. In a 99-page document, the Attorney General outlines the case against seven DAS (Colombian FBI) officials charged with illegal wiretapping and espionage. Prosecutors claim that there was a criminal organization within the DAS and that one of its goals was to know in advance what non-governmental organizations were planning. The organization chose as targets individuals and groups believed to be in opposition to the government. Against those targets, according to the Attorney General, the organization carried out numerous criminal acts, including illegal stalking, illegal wiretapping of telephones and e-mails, in order to intimidate and weaken individuals and groups with different ideologies. They wiretapped a lawyers group because it “asked Colombian and international courts to condemn the government for supposed violations of human rights.” They did the same for other human rights groups, journalists, politicians, and trade unionists.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, February 1, 2010

* February 1, 2010. Colombian Army Captain Antonio Rozo Valbuena has been arrested and charged with the murder of Fabio Enrique Taborda Avila and another man on March 12, 2007 on a ranch called San Antonio (Cordoba Province). The victims were later presented as members of a criminal gang. Detectives established that there was no combat, and also that one of the weapons supposedly used by the supposed criminals was not in operating condition. Captain Rozo is being investigated in connection with seven other similar incidents.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, February 1, 2010.

* February 1, 2010. Nine Bogotá police apprentices, performing their mandatory military service in the Bogotá Police Department, are on trial for the sexual assault of a 14-year-old girl in a Bogotá park on June 14, 2009. Some members of the group made a video of the crime. If they are found guilty as charged, they face at least ten years in prison.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, *El Tiempo*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, February 1, 2010.

* February 1, 2010. On March 14, 2008, the Council of State, Colombia’s highest administrative court, found the Ministry of Defense, the National Police and the Municipality of Tuluá responsible for the murders of Omar Carmona Castaneda, Henry Carmona Castaneda, two of their friends, Horacio Londono Zapata and Victor Hurtado, plus two other relatives, known as Herney and Rodrigo. The Council of State ordered the Colombian government to accept responsibility, but that order has never been carried out.

On January 27, 1995, after a confrontation of some kind, the six men were arrested and taken to police headquarters. Six men who claimed that they were judicial police took the six away.

Their bodies were found in the Cauca River, decapitated, mutilated, and showing signs of torture.

* Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, February 1, 2010.

* January 31, 2010. Several members of an indigenous family were injured when Colombian military bombed a residence where it was thought that guerrillas were hiding.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Pais*, Cali, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, January 31, 2010.

* January 31, 2010. The Attorney General will charge a Colombian Police Major with murder in the death of a university student while a protest demonstration was taking place. The charge does not assert that the Major fired the shot or shots, but that he failed to obtain authorization for his troops to enter the university with weapons and failed to supervise their use of weapons.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, January 31, 2010.

* January 30, 2010. After seven DAS (Colombian FBI) officials were arrested last Tuesday, and charged with illegal wiretapping, *El Tiempo* has examined the voluminous file put together by the Attorney General. The DAS spied on 275 people in 2004-2005, in order to “defend democracy and the nation” and to “create awareness of the consequences of a communist system”. Targets of the illegal spying included human rights activists, judges, journalists and politicians considered to be opposed to the government. The strategy included threats, low-power explosives, robberies, and even spreading gossip related to “infidelity”. They obtained reports from financial institutions without court orders and traveled to Europe to follow members of two NGO’s that support human rights. They stole documents and tried to prevent the publication of a book criticizing the actions of the government.

Source: *El Tiempo*, January 30, 2010.

* January 30, 2010. A secret agent employed by the DAS (Colombian FBI), on vacation, was found to have 29 hand grenades, 20 MGL grenades, six rifle attachments, and 28 communications radios. The detective was captured at an Army checkpoint in Yarumal (Antioquia Province).

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, January 30, 2010.

* January 29, 2010. A retired noncommissioned Army officer and four active soldiers have been arrested and charged with the murder of a demobilized paramilitary on November 3, 2007. The prosecutor alleges that they contacted the victim in Sincelejo (Sucre Province), offering him work on a ranch. After he arrived at the ranch, he disappeared and the Army presented his body as killed in combat. The five are charged with homicide and forced disappearance.



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



* January 28, 2010. The Director of the La Picota penitentiary in Bogotá has been discharged after a prisoner was allowed to enlarge and remodel his cell. Ex-Senator Juan Carlos Martínez, sentenced for supporting the paramilitaries, an illegal armed group, was allowed to move to from his cell and to make “repairs” to his new cell. He had walls taken out, increasing his space from 12 square meters to around 30 square meters. He was only to be allowed to do some painting, with the help of two other prisoners. In fact, he had installed wooden lamps and painted his walls blue and white. It appears that other ex-politicians have also been allowed to enlarge their cells.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellín, and *El País*, Cali, January 28, 2010.

* January 28, 2010. An appellate judge refused to dismiss, the criminal complaint against ex-colonel Joaquín Aldana, finding that there was sufficient evidence to try him for the murder and dismemberment of his wife.

Source: *El País*, Cali, January 28, 2010.

* January 28, 2010. An alleged “recruiter”, José Armando Salamanca Gutiérrez, has been charged with kidnapping and aggravated homicide in the deaths of Carlos Augusto González Cortés and Giovanni José Cortés Vega. According to the criminal complaint, Salamanca offered the two victims good jobs, luring them to a place where they were killed by Army soldiers in a supposed combat. An investigation by the Attorney General's Office showed that there was no combat and the two were not guerrillas.

Source: *El País*, Cali, and Attorney General's web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* January 29, 2010. Miami's *El Nuevo Herald* and the Spanish newspaper *Publico* report the discovery of a cemetery in La Macarena (Meta Province) that holds some 2000 bodies. *El Publico* reports that the Colombian Army has been depositing bodies there since 2005, ordering that all of them be labeled “unidentified”. Residents told an *El Nuevo Herald* reporter that they suspect that not all of the bodies are guerrillas killed in combat and that they may include relatives who disappeared during the last four years. The Colombian Attorney General's forensic staff will begin examining the bodies in mid-March.

Source: *El Nuevo Herald*, <http://www.elnuevoherald.com/noticias/america-latina/colombia/story/640282.html>



* January 28, 2010. The former deputy director of the DAS (Colombian FBI), one of the seven officials charged with illegal wiretapping, criminal conspiracy, and abuse of authority, claims that a former paramilitary commander, Carlos Mario Jimenez, alias “Macaco”, had his own intelligence center within the DAS. Jose Miguel Narvaez claims that “Macaco” paid five billion pesos (about \$2.5 million) to equip the center. Narvaez also claims that the center used DAS files illegally and sold them to drug traffickers for 150 million pesos each (about \$75,000).

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, January 28, 2010.

* January 27, 2010. *Caracol Radio* has gained access to the charging document issued by the Attorney General against the ex-director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) and six other DAS officials, in connection with the illegal wiretapping and stalking of “persons opposed to the national government”. According to the document, DAS officials who carried out the illegal wiretapping reported the information to high government officials, especially in the Ministry of Defense. The officials receiving the illegally obtained information are not named in the document, but the Attorney General’s Office promised a separate investigation to establish who received the reports and who knew that the illegal wiretapping was being carried out. Targets of the illegal activity included Jose Miguel Vivanco, the director of Human Rights Watch, Fr. Javier Giraldo, and Nobel Prize winner Shirin Ebadi, among many others.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, January 27, 2010.

* January 27, 2010. Retired Colombian National Police Col. Joaquin Enrique Aldana Ortiz faces a court hearing today on murder charges pending against him for allegedly killing and dismembering his wife. He is appealing the denial of his request to be released from custody while the case proceeds.

* Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 27, 2010.

* January 27, 2010. Seven officials and ex-officials of the DAS (Colombian FBI) have been formally charged with illegal wiretapping and stalking “organizations defending human rights, their members, politicians, journalists and individuals characterized by their tendency to oppose the national government”. The Attorney General’s Office has not yet instituted formal charges against the officials who wiretapping and stalked Supreme Court justices and an OAS official.

Source: *El Espectador* and Attorney General’s web site, January 26, 2010, and *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, *El Herald*, Barranquilla, and *El Pais*, Cali, January 27, 2010.

* January 27, 2010. A representative of Colombia's Ministry of Foreign Relations, on behalf of the government of Colombia, accepted responsibility for the murder of Manuel Cepeda Vargas in 1994. The admission was made in a proceeding before the Inter-American Court for Human Rights, an OAS agency, in San Jose, Costa Rica. In the statement made to the Court, Colombia admits that government agents assassinated Cepeda.



Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, January 27, 2010, *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., and *The New York Times*, New York, N.Y., January 28, 2010.

* January 26, 2010. The Commander of the Colombian Armed Forces, General Fredy Padilla de Leon, announced a ten-day leave for all of the soldiers charged with killing civilians and presenting their bodies as guerrillas killed in combat ("false positives"). During a "rest and recovery" event for the defendants and their families, he announced that he realized that they were having a difficult time and he hoped that their problems would be solved. In most of the cases, the defendants will not be able to use the leave immediately, because they will be required to attend court hearings this week.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, January 26, 2010.

* January 26, 2010. Just in the last few hours, there have been new threats against the mothers in Soacha (Cundinamarca Province) who have complained about Army soldiers murdering their sons and presenting their bodies as guerrillas killed in combat. The City Clerk of Soacha, Fernando Escobar, reported a threatening pamphlet that was brought to him by one of the mothers. It calls the mothers "old crybabies" and threatens them, as well as the City Clerk and a nongovernmental organization that has supported the mothers. He insists that the most troubling fact is that, while the Government is aware of the risks to the mothers, it has not provided any protection for them. They are in fear for their lives.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, January 26, 2010.

* January 26, 2010. A Colombian court has held the Colombian Government responsible for the killing of a civilian in the municipality of Anserma (Caldas Province). The body of Horacio de Jesus Ortiz Duran was presented as a guerrilla killed in combat on June 29, 2004. He was dressed in camouflage and had 17 bullet wounds. He was holding a weapon in his hand. His family was able to prove that he was not a guerrilla and, in fact, was a leader well known in the community. The Ministry of Defense was ordered to pay damages to his family amounting to 170,000,000 pesos (about \$85,000). The family complained that there has not yet been any criminal or disciplinary action against the soldiers who killed Ortiz.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, January 26, 2010.

* January 26, 2010. The Colombian soldiers accused of murdering young men and

presenting their bodies as guerrillas killed in combat (“false positives”) and were released from jail because of the expiration of a statute of limitations are being confined to military headquarters in Bogotá. They and their families were treated to an event put on by the Human Rights Department of the Armed Forces. Some family members were brought to Bogotá from different parts of the country.



The event began with a mass where two generals attended, and next came a presentation by several psychologists. Around mid-morning the soldiers and their families were separated and the soldiers were taken to a clubhouse decorated with candles and aromatics, for relaxation therapy and meditation. At the same time, the wives and sisters received spa treatments in another clubhouse, with facials, massages and hair coloring treatments. The children were entertained by a group of clowns.

Each accused soldier received a gift box containing various goods, as well as return tickets for family members. A military spokesman told *El Tiempo* that the purpose was to reassure the families that the accused soldiers were healthy and well.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 26, 2010.

* January 25, 2010. Seven Colombian soldiers will be tried for the aggravated homicide in the death of an indigenous man, Jose Edwin Legarda Vasquez on December 16, 2008. The victim’s wife is a leader of the indigenous community. He was riding in a vehicle on the road to Popayan (Cauca Province) when Army troops fired on the vehicle, killing him.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 25, 2010.

* January 23, 2010. Families from the town of Penas Coloradas (Caqueta Province) complain that the Colombian Army chased them off their land five years ago. They allege that a joint operation between the National Police and the Army, carried out on April 25, 2004 established a military camp that is still occupied by soldiers. More than 2000 people had to flee their homes and they complain that their houses have been plundered and are no longer livable. They have petitioned various government officials at the provincial and national level, but there has been no response.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 23, 2010.

* January 22, 2010. A Colombian Police official, Major Gabriel Bonilla Gonzalez, has been charged with killed an El Valle University student, Jhonny Silva Aranguren in a protest five years ago. Another student was injured. Major Bonilla is charged with negligent homicide, negligent injury, and malfeasance.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and *El Pais*, Cali, January 22, 2010.

* January 22, 2010. Lawyers representing victims of massacres and of “false positives” have formally requested Colombia’s Supreme Council on the Judiciary to investigate the legal representation of military defendants by a private organization made up of active duty military officers who also have investigation responsibilities as part of their military duties. A spokesman for the organization, Integrated Military Defense Function (Demil), stated that he saw no problem with active duty military officers with investigative duties also being part of the Demil Board of Directors.



* Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 11, 2001.

* January 21, 2010. Lawyers for victims of the massacre at San Jose de Apartado in 2005 warn that the soldiers arrested and charged in the killings may go free without bail because of the expiration of a statute of limitations. They ask that the legal proceedings be carried out promptly and that the defense not be allowed to use delaying tactics. The defendants include a Colombian Army colonel, a major, a captain, a lieutenant, five sergeants and a corporal. They have been charged with being parties to homicide, barbarous acts, and criminal conspiracy for their part in the massacre in which eight civilians, including three minor children, were murdered.

The victims’ families and lawyers are also concerned about the disappearance of several files containing evidence in the case, about the fact that defense counsel in the case are known for delaying tactics in “false positive” cases, and that they are part of a group of retired Army officers.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 21, 2010, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, January 22, 2010.

* January 20, 2010. At a hearing before the Inter-American Court for Human Rights, scheduled for next week in San Jose, Costa Rica, Ivan Cepeda, the son of Colombian senator Manuel Cepeda, will argue that the Colombian Armed Forces took part in his father’s assassination in 1994. He is asking the Court to hold the Colombian government responsible and to provide full information about the circumstances of the assassination,

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 20, 2010.

* January 20, 2010. *El Tiempo* headlines “There are police and soldiers connected to criminal gangs in at least ten regions.” A Colombian NGO, Foundation for Peace, lists the provinces of Cordoba, Sucre, Antioquia, Choco, Cesar, Bolivar, Caqueta, Meta, Vichada and Guaviare as demonstrating that connection. It quotes the Vice Minister of Defense, Sergio Jaramillo who noted that the “false Positives” scandal demonstrated an agreement between Army personnel and criminal gangs to produce dead bodies as guerrillas killed in combat. The NGO urges authorities to recognize and correct this situation. The report identifies the Bahia Solano (Choco Province) where 25 police officers had to be removed, an Army major in Monteria (Cordoba Province) who was extradited because of his connections to a gang, a Police Lieutenant and ten officers who were part of a gang in Envigado (Antioquia Province), and a number of police, soldiers, and even the regional head of the DAS (Colombian FBI) connected to gangs in Tumaco (Narino Province).



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 20, 2010.

* January 19, 2010. Because of the expiration of the applicable statute of limitations, seven of the eight soldiers who are charged with the murder of civilians are to be freed without bail. One of the soldiers was not freed because the judge thought his lawyer used impermissible delaying tactics. Five of them remain in custody because they are charged or are witnesses in other “false positive” cases.

Source: *El Espectador* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellín, and *El Pais*, Cali, January 19, 2010, and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 20, 2010.

* January 19, 2010. Three noncommissioned officers in the Colombian Army have been arrested and charged with weapons trafficking and illegal use of military weapons for a private purpose. They are alleged to have sold the weapons on the black market.

Source: Attorney General’s web site and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, Medellín, January 19, 2010.

* January 19, 2010. *El Tiempo* columnist Leon Valencia comments on the legal technicality that has allowed Colombian Army soldiers arrested for murders of civilians to go free while awaiting trial. He relates a brief history of what is now known about the Soacha murders: Twelve young men from Soacha disappeared. In September 2008, their bodies are found in the morgue in the municipality of Ocaña, presented as guerrillas killed in combat. Their mothers attempted to convince government officials that their sons were not guerrillas. Two officials notified the media.

Valencia points out that the soldiers do not deny that they killed the young men. Were they really guerrillas? At hearings, soldiers confessed that they were pressured by their superiors to produce more dead guerrillas. Sgt. John Jairo Munoz Rodriguez confessed that he was “chewed out” for failing to produce bodies. He asked advice from an intelligence officer. The officer told him that bodies could be obtained and presented as guerrillas killed in combat. He testified that he checked with Col. Gabriel Rincon Amado, the chief of operations for Mobile Brigade 15 and Rincon approved the idea. The intelligence officer told them that they would have to pay “recruiters” a million pesos and also pay for transportation. At the hearing, the “recruiters” were identified, as well as the locations where they found young men, promised them jobs, and convinced them to travel to Santander where they were murdered.

Valencia cites an Attorney General’s report stating that, between 1985 and May, 2009, there were 1,708 such murders. Among those, 1,545 were men, 110 were women, and 53 were minors. As of May, 2009, 2,250 armed forces personnel were connected to the murders. Valencia urges the Colombian Army and the President to admit responsibility and not hide behind procedural technicalities.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 19, 2010.

* January 19, 2010. A Colombian Army sergeant, Yesid Castro Parada, turned himself in in Ibagué (Tolima Province) to face charges of killing a civilian on November 20, 2006. His troops engaged a group thought to be guerrillas and a farmer was killed. He was reported as a guerrilla killed in combat, but an investigation showed that he was a local farmer not connected with the guerrillas.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 19, 2010.

* January 19, 2010. Jaime Alexander Romero Vargas, the regional Chief of Intelligence for the DAS (Colombian FBI) in Yopal (Casanare Province) and two former soldiers were arrested and charged with murder, kidnapping, home invasion, fraud, falsification of public documents, and illegal use of military weapons. They are accused of dragging a victim from his home in the town of El Retiro, killing him, and presenting his body as a guerrilla killed in combat.

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

* January 18, 2010. A Colombian criminal court has sentenced Andres Rafael Corrales Narvaez to 38 months in prison for criminal conspiracy. Corrales was convicted of serving as a “recruiter” for the Colombian Army’s “false positives”. He sought out young men with false promises of jobs on ranches in Cordoba and Sucre provinces. Instead, the victims were killed by soldiers and presented as guerrillas killed in combat.

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

* January 18, 2010. An organization made up of retired Colombian Army generals has filed suit, alleging that the Attorney General lacks authority to prosecute soldiers for crimes until after the military justice system has investigated and acted on the allegations. An agreement between the Attorney General's Office and the Ministry of Defense, dated June 14, 2006, calls for the Attorney General to take charge of such cases, but the generals claim that the agreement is invalid.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 18, 2010.

* January 18, 2010. A Colombian Army soldier, Edwin Alexander Martinez Berrio, attached to the 4th Brigade has been charged with homicide in the death of a homeless man on February 16, 2008 in the town of San Jose de Cocorna (Antioquia Province). The Army reported the victim as a “John Doe”, part of an illegal group and killed in combat. His family identified him and investigators established that he was a “street person” and not a member of any armed group.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, January 18, 2010 and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 15, 2010.

* January 18, 2010. Exactly 21 years have passed since the massacre at La Rochela, in which

paramilitaries, drug traffickers and some Colombian Army soldiers killed 12 investigators who were inquiring into a previous massacre. Only one individual has been tried and found guilty in the La Rochela massacre, and three of the widows of the victims complain that even now they continue to be stalked and to receive death threats.



As of June 8, 2009, retired Colombian Army generals Farouk Yanine Diaz, Juan Salcedo Lora and Alfonso Vacca Perilla, among others, are under formal investigation. Gen. Yanine died after the beginning of the investigation and Generals Salcedo and Vacca have not yet testified. The three widows complain that death threats became more frequent and more violent after the announcement of the formal inquiry, and that the Colombian Government has done nothing to protect them, even though the Inter-American Court for Human Rights has ordered such protection.

Source: *Caracol Radio* and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 18, 2010.

* January 17, 2010. *Semana.com* opinion columnist Maria Jimena Duzan tells the story of 20-year-old Villamil Rodriguez Figueroa who escaped being a “false positive” on October 6, 2007, because the soldiers who shot him thought he was dead. Badly injured, he managed to get to the Public Defender’s office in El Tarra, near Ocana (Santander Province), where several other young men had been murdered and presented as guerrillas killed in combat.

Two days after his brush with death, the soldiers filed a formal criminal complaint, accusing Rodriguez of being a guerrilla. Two “witnesses” testified against him. He was jailed for a year before investigators concluded that one of the “witnesses” was paid by the Army and that the soldiers had falsified their report. The soldiers responsible include Col. Santiago Herrera, who is one of the 27 officers discharged by the Minister of Defense after the scandal was publicized. His criminal prosecution has been delayed repeatedly.

Source: *Semana.com.co*, January 17, 2010.

* January 17, 2010. Two noncommissioned officers and two soldiers in the Colombian Army have been arrested and charged with the aggravated kidnapping and homicide in the death of Rafael Arcangel Cabarcas in the municipality of San Juan del Cesar (Guajira Province) on March 8, 2007. They claimed he was a guerrilla killed in combat. Investigators discovered there had not been any combat.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, January 17, 2010.

* January 17, 2010. The Colombian National Police Commander in the municipality of Concepcion (Antioquia Province) has turned himself in to authorities after killing his wife in an argument. His daughter was also injured. *El Espectador* comments that this is the second time in two months that a National Police Commander has been charged with killing his wife.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 17, 2010, and *El Pais*, Cali, January 19, 2010.

* January 16, 2010. An extradited paramilitary commander, alias “Rasguno” (The Scratcher) has told prosecutors that the assassination of Alvaro Gomez Hurtado on November 2, 1995 was planned by a group of drug traffickers, paramilitaries, politicians and members of the Armed Forces.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 16, 2010.

* January 16, 2010. *El Tiempo* opinion columnist Daniel Samper Pisano expresses deep concern about the release of soldiers charged with murder of civilians because of the expiration of a statute of limitations. He likens Colombia’s atrocities to a Museum of Horrors and argues that the murders of 1,800 young people who were duped into traveling into a death trap, dressed as guerrillas and killed by soldiers in order to get a reward and artificially increase their “body counts” deserve a special place in that Museum. Samper also has strong criticism for another columnist who claimed that there were no “false positives” and that the young people who were murdered were criminals who were looking to join drug traffickers when they were killed. He compares this writer to people who deny the Holocaust.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 16, 2010.

* January 15, 2010. Colombia’s Inspector General has ordered the discharge of 13 members of the Armed Forces, and has ordered that they hold no public position for 20 years after finding them responsible for the murder of a civilian and falsely reporting him as a guerrilla killed in combat. On January 31, 2004, they seized a farmer, Diosedes Caicedo Palomar, who had been traveling in a bus in the municipality of Iquira (Huila Province). They killed him and reported him as killed in a combat with an illegal armed group that had attacked them. Witnesses pointed out that the victim was a farmer who had no connection with the guerrillas. The Inspector General’s Office pointed out errors and inconsistencies in the military report. It made no reference to other persons involved in the combat, nor the time, nor other circumstances, and it was not dated. The evidence showed that the victim had sustained nine bullet wounds, at least four of them at point-blank range.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *El Herald*, Barranquilla.

* January 15, 2010. Four Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with killing a civilian, Rafael Arcangel Cabarcas, on March 8, 2007 in the town of Los Pondones (La Guajira Province) and presenting him as a guerrilla killed in combat. The attorney General’s investigation established that the victim had no connection with any illegal armed group.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, January 15, 2010.

* January 14, 2010. Retired Colombian National Police Col. Joaquin Enrique Aldana has

been formally charged with killing and dismembering his wife at his residence in Ibague (Tolima Province). Detectives from the Attorney General's Office were able to identify the body parts through DNA evidence.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 14, 2010.



* January 14, 2010. Seven Colombian Army soldiers, two 2nd lieutenants, a noncommissioned officer, and four soldiers entered into plea agreements, admitting that they used “recruiters” to lure four young men from Barranquilla to Valledupar, where they were killed and presented as guerrillas killed in combat on April 2, 2006. Only two of the victims have been identified. Because of the plea agreements, the defendants' sentences were reduced from 40 years to 24 years in prison.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, January 14, 2010.

* January 11, 2010. Colombia's President Alvaro Uribe expressed disagreement with a judge who ordered 17 soldiers charged with murder of civilians to be released because of the expiration of a statute of limitations. On Sunday, (January 10) the Minister of Defense ordered the 17 to be confined to military barracks until the situation is clarified. Relatives of the victims have urged the International Criminal Court to assume jurisdiction, alleging that the decision means that Colombia is unable to bring the defendants to justice. A presidential candidate claims that the defendants ought to have been charged with crimes against humanity, where the statute of limitations would not apply. The Colombian Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has also expressed concern about the decision.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin and *El Tiempo*, Bogota, January 11, 2010.

* January 9, 2010. *El Espectador* reporter interviews one of the Soacha mothers who lost her son in the “false positive” scandal. She is worried about the court decision releasing some of the defendant soldiers accused of murdering the young men and reporting them as guerrillas killed in combat. She also believes that the Army is supporting the defendants and intimidating the victims' families. They have asked for a meeting with the President, but there has been no meeting. She would like to have the President admit that her son was not a guerrilla, and that he was wrong in implying that the Soacha victims were criminals.

She and her older son and some of the other families have received death threats for speaking out about the killings. Her son was accosted by two men who threatened to kill him if he didn't keep quiet. He filed a complaint, but the police never interviewed him. She and her dead son's girlfriend went door-to-door in the neighborhood to collect enough money to travel to Ocana to collect his body and bring it back. A neighbor and her older son made the trip. When her son arrived, no officials would help him. They just told him where the grave was. He bought a shovel and dug all afternoon and the next morning. There were three decomposed bodies, but none was the brother he was looking for.

He felt he was being watched and followed, so they reburied the bodies and left the area.

The next day they again dug out the three bodies and then dug deeper. There he found his brother. The grave was so deep they had to use ropes to remove the body. Again they reburied the other three bodies and then he returned to Bogotá with his brother's body.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 9, 2010.

* January 7, 2010. Colombia's Inspector General has asked the Attorney General to investigate the participation of two DAS (Colombian FBI) officials in the assassination of presidential candidate Carlos Pizarro Leongomez on April 26, 1990 in a commercial flight traveling from Bogotá to Barranquilla. The hit man used a submachine gun that had been hidden in the bathroom. He was killed by a bodyguard, who was also a DAS detective. The Inspector General suspects that he was killed to keep DAS involvement from coming to light.

The Inspector General's review of the file reveals that the ex-chief of intelligence of the DAS, Alberto Romero, had direct contact with paramilitary chieftain Carlos Castano, who, in his book "Mi Confesion", admitted that he ordered the crime.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Semana.com.co*, Bogotá, and *El Pais*, Cali, January 7, 2010.

* January 7, 2010. Barranquilla's Chief of Metropolitan Police has requested that five individuals imprisoned in the Barranquilla Model Prison be transferred to other prison facilities because they are continuing to carry out criminal activities while confined to the prison.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, January 7, 2010.

* January 6, 2010. Colombia's Inspector General has ordered the discharge of three directors and the paymaster of the prison in Pasto (Narino Province). The Inspector General found that they had manipulated the prison's bonus system, requiring inmates to pay them in order to receive amounts that they were required by law to furnish.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 6, 2010.

* January 6, 2010. Three persons, a former guerrilla, a former paramilitary, and a retired Colombian Army soldier were found guilty of attempted aggravated homicide, terrorism and weapons trafficking after they set off a fragmentation grenade on June 28, 2009, in front of a Bogotá store whose owner refused to make extortion payments.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, January 6, 2010.

* January 5, 2010. A Colombian Army soldier, Jose Magdaleno Vallecilla Hurtado, has been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide in the death of a farm worker, Miguel Angel Ruiz Ruano, on April 23, 2006. According to the charges, an Army patrol in the municipality of Ipiales (Narino Province) was searching for guerrillas when they shot a man riding a motorcycle. His body was later presented as a guerrilla killed in combat.



Source: *Caracol Radio*, January 5, 2010.

* January 4, 2010. Colombia's Inspector General has ordered the discharge of fourteen soldiers who, on May 35, 2005, illegally captured for men and a woman in the town of Guayabetal (Casanare Province) and killed them the next day. The Inspector General has proved that the murders were intentional and that there had not been any combat as the soldiers had claimed.



Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, *El Mundo*, Medellín, January 4, 2010.

* January 2, 2010. Detectives attached to the Attorney General's Office have arrested a Colombian soldier who has been charged with homicide in the death of 19-year-old Jose Jhodier Castano Escalante. Castano was reported as killed in combat in Cocorna (Antioquia Province), but detectives found that he was a homeless person who had been reported missing by his family.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, January 2, 2010.

* January 1, 2010. By order of the President of Colombia, the Ministry of Defense will furnish legal defense for soldiers and police who have been charged with murder and other crimes related to the presentation of "false positives". The Ministry of Defense will work with the Public Defender's Office to provide the defense counsel

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, January 1, 2010.

* December 31, 2009. The Justice and Peace Unit of the Colombian Attorney General's Office has studied the confessions of demobilized paramilitary commanders and concludes that paramilitaries relied heavily on the Colombian Armed Forces for training services, but that they also relied on guerrillas for training. Now-extradited paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso Gomez, testifying on January 15, 2007, stated that the Colombian military trained paramilitaries in physical exercise and basic combat tactics, use of weapons, and intelligence. From the guerrillas they learned how to infiltrate government agencies and local governments, as well as businesses. In Cordoba Province, military officers trained paramilitaries in strategy and tactics and counter-insurgency.

According to the confessions, "students" with failing grades would be executed by the most outstanding "students", so that these could learn to stab and cut throats. The "schools" then also became cemeteries for "students" who failed.

Source: Web site of weekly news magazine *Semana*, Bogotá, <http://www.Semana.com.co>, December 31, 2009.



* December 31, 2009. A Colombian prison guard, Pablo Zambrano Meneses, has been arrested and charged with trying to bring marijuana into the prison.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, December 31, 2009.

* December 30, 2009. The FARC guerrillas who kidnapped and murdered Caqueta Governor Luis Francisco Cuellar appear to have been wearing Colombian Army uniforms. The uniforms were found in or near the SUV they used to flee and in which his body was found. They bore apparently authentic insignia of a Counter-Guerrilla Battalion attached to the 9th Brigade, along with the unit's serial numbers. The Army has opened an internal investigation.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *El Pais*, Cali, December 30, 2009.

* December 29, 2009. Colombian Army Major Ambrosio Casas and Corporal Andres Porras Rodriguez have been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide, forced disappearance, and illegal use of firearms for their part in the murder of a young farmer in December 2005. Major Casas will also be charged with fraud and falsifying a public document. According to the criminal complaint, the victim was delivering snacks to schoolchildren in the town of Las Garzas (Casanare Province) when soldiers attached to the 16th Brigade seized him. He died after they beat him up. They then reported him as a guerrilla killed in combat and denied that they had detained him.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, December 29, 2009.

* December 28, 2009. A former Colombian National Police patrolman was arrested and charged with bribery, criminal conspiracy, fraud and falsification of public documents for participating in the illegal wiretapping of Supreme Court Justice Ivan Velasquez and of the Chief of the Inspector General's Special Investigations Unit, Alexandra Valencia. He allegedly turned the information over to another Police officer who "hired" him to do the wiretapping.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and *El Pais*, Cali, December 28, 2009.

* December 28, 2009. Colombia's Inspector General is investigation medical examiners in Norte de Santander Province after they certified bodies as "killed in combat", when clearly contrary evidence existed. Five recently exhumed bodies showed no signs of combat and clear evidence of execution. Yet the medical examiners' reports made no mention of such evidence. For example, one of the bodies had a chest bruise from a blow sustained before death, probably from a rifle butt. Another body had several bullet wounds, but no holes in the uniform. According to the Inspector General, this should have been noted by the medical examiner.

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



* December 25, 2009. An Administrative Court in Cundinamarca Province has ordered the Colombian government to pay 223 million pesos (about \$111,500) to Nelson Vargas. Vargas was falsely accused of being a guerrilla leader and was extradited to the United States. The United States returned him to Colombia because there was no evidence to support a prosecution. While confined to prison in Bogotá before the mistaken extradition, Vargas was shot in the leg. He lay in a corridor for three hours until guards could be found to accompany him to a hospital for emergency treatment. His leg was later amputated.

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

* December 23, 2009. Five officers of the DAS (Colombian FBI), a noncommissioned Army officer, and four National Police officers have been arrested and charged with drug trafficking. The investigation, initiated in 2006, established that the group was sending drugs from Cartagena to Barranquilla.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, December 23, 2009.

* December 23, 2009. A Bogotá Superior Court has upheld the arrest of retired Colombian National Police General Miguel Maza Marquez. He has been charged in connection with the assassination of presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galan Sarmiento in 1989.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and *El Pais*, Cali, December 23, 2009.

* December 23, 2009. A Colombian Marine, Misael Bermudez Sarria, has been captured and charged with murdering a fellow marine, Larry Jose Torres Pena, on Christmas Day, 2006 in Majagual (Sucre Province). Torres was later presented as a guerrilla killed in combat.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, and *El Pais*, Cali, December 23, 2009.

* December 22, 2009. Colombian prison guards, including Lt. Luis Enrique Murallas, Armando Lozano Diaz, Jhon Jairo Aristizabal, and Francisco Pena Marin have been arrested and charged with demanding money from prisoners in return for assignment to work that would enable the prisoner to reduce his sentence. The four are detained in their homes with electronic bracelets

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, December 22, 2009.

* December 22, 2009. *El Pais*, Cali, reports that 1,361 members of the Colombian Armed Forces are under arrest and charged with crimes. According to the Army, 494 members have been charged and 184 convicted. The Navy reports 18 members under investigation. The National Police report 600 officers charged, 298 under investigation and 362 convicted.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, December 22, 2009.



* December 21, 2009. Colombian President Alvaro Uribe expects to sign an agreement between the Ministry of Defense and the Public Defender's Office calling for lawyers attached to the Public Defender's Office will defend members of the Colombian Armed Forces who are accused of committing "false positives" and other human rights violations.

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

* December 21, 2009. Demobilized paramilitary Martha Ludic Cogollo, alias "La Falcona" (the falcon) or "La Flaca" (the skinny one), making her confession under the Justice and Peace Law, testified that Colombian National Police Sgt. Francisco Rivas helped paramilitaries organize freely in Cabuyaro (Meta Province). In testimony given last week, Ludic confessed to taking part in eight crimes, plus two murders.

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

* December 21, 2009. Former Colombian National Police Col. Joaquin Aldana has appealed the order for his arrest and denial of bail in the murder and dismemberment of his wife. The appeal will be heard in mid-January.

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

* December 19, 2009. Former drug trafficker and paramilitary commander, Henry Loaiza Ceballos, alias "El Alacran" (The Scorpion), has been sentenced to 30 years in prison for the murder of a witness to his actions in the Trujillo (Valle Province) massacre. The massacre took place in 1990 and some 350 persons were killed. The prosecution proved that the victims were captured and taken to a Police station and then to a ranch owned by Loaiza. They were murdered at the ranch. In his decision, the sentencing judge urged further investigation into the actions of members of the National Police and the Army, among them Major Alirio Uruena, who was in charge of the area.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, *Caracol Radio*, and *Semana* news magazine, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellín, and *El Pais*, Cali, December 19, 2009.

* December 19, 2009. The Colombian Attorney General's Office reports that it is investigating 1,998 active cases of murders of civilians committed by members of the Colombian Armed Forces. The report states that there are 1,944 victims, including 116 children and 112 women. So far, 177 members of the military have been convicted, 58 more are in the trial process and 12 have admitted the charges.

* Source: *El Pais*, Barranquilla and *Caracol Radio*, December 19, 2009.

* December 18, 2009. A spokesman for the Peace Community of San Jose de Apartado denied the accusations of a demobilized guerrilla that the Peace Community is a guerrilla enclave. He pointed out that the ex-guerrilla is living at the headquarters of the Colombian Army's 17th Brigade and that some members of the 17th Brigade are now on trial for the 2005 Peace Community massacre in which five adults and three children were murdered. The Attorney General has closed his preliminary investigation of the accusation for lack of

evidence.

* Source *El Espectador*, Bogotá, December 18, 2009.

* December 18, 2009. A member of Colombia's Judicial Police has been arrested and charged with illegally wiretapping the communications of Supreme Court Justice Ivan Velasquez. He is accused of accepting 400,000 pesos (about \$200) in return for inserting the Justice's telephone number into the wiretapping system being conducted by the DAS (Colombian FBI).



Source: *El Pais*, Cali, December 18, 2009.

* December 17, 2009. A Superior Court in Villavencio (Meta Province) has upheld the arrest and detention of Colombian Army Major Gustavo Enrique Soto Bracamonte, Captain Jaime Alberto Rivera Mahecha, five soldiers and one civilian. They are being held on charges of aggravated homicide, criminal conspiracy and forced disappearance in connection with the murder of two farmers in a supposed combat on August 26, 2007, in the town of Matepalma (Casanare Province). They are being held in a military prison.

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

* December 17, 2009. A criminal court in Cundinamarca Province will hold a preliminary hearing on charges against 17 members of the Colombian Army in connection with their part in the death and disappearance of three young men from Soacha (Cundinamarca Province). Two days after the three disappeared from Soacha, they were found dead in Ocana (Norte de Santander Province) and reported as having been killed in combat. Six of the military are charged with forced disappearance, aggravated criminal conspiracy, and aggravated homicide. The other 11 are being charged as parties to the crimes.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, December 18, 2009 and Attorney General's web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* December 17, 2009. Ten members of the Colombian Army, an officer, three noncommissioned officers, and six soldiers have been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide in the death of a woman who was presented as a guerrilla killed in combat. She was killed on May 29, 2007 in the town of Marquetalia (Magdalena Province). Investigators established that there had been no combat in the area and that the victim had no connection with the guerrillas.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, December 17, 2009.

* December 16, 2009. The Colombian Attorney General's Office announced the capture of nine members of the Armed Forces, along with six civilians. They are charged with controlling drug trafficking routes between Cucuta (Norte de Santander Province) and Europe and the United States. The Attorney General's Office expects the capture of the remaining members of the gang.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, December 16, 2009.

* December 16, 2009. At a hearing that lasted until 2 A.M., a criminal court judge in Ibagué (Tolima Province) approved the arrest of former Colombian National Police Colonel Jose Joaquin Aldana, charged with the murder and dismemberment of his wife.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, December 16, 2009.

* December 15, 2009. Colombia's Inspector General has commenced an investigation into allegations that former Colombian National Police Col. Jose Joaquin Aldana killed and dismembered his wife. Col. Aldana has been charged by the Attorney General's Office with the murder.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, December 15, 2009.

* December 15, 2009. Dozens of files containing witness testimony related to the 2005 massacre of eight people, including three children, in the Peace Community of San Jose de Apartado have been lost, according to the Attorney General's office. According to the prosecutor who is handling the case, the lost files include testimony related to participation by the Army in the massacre. Ten members of the military are on trial for their part in the massacre.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, December 15, 2009.

* December 12, 2009. In an opinion column by journalist Alfredo Molano, *El Espectador*, Bogotá, reviews Colombian Jesuit Fr. Javier Giraldo's fight for justice and against impunity. Fr. Giraldo has documented horrendous crimes committed by the Colombian military, especially citing retired General Rito Alejo del Rio and deceased General Janine Diaz.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, December 12, 2009.

* December 9, 2009. Gabriel Bustamante Pena, writing in *El Espectador*, Bogotá, notes that Thursday, December 10 is International Human Rights Day. In a review of Colombia's progress on human rights, he notes that the Attorney General's office has received 210,000 complaints of forced disappearance, and that between July 2003 and June 2008 there were 899 victims of torture, with the Colombian Armed Forces responsible for 92.6% of the cases.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, December 9, 2009.

* December 9, 2009. *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, also notes International Human Rights Day, noting a report by the Center for Investigation and Public Education (CINEP, is the Spanish acronym.) which states that human rights violations have risen by 29 % over the past year. According to the report, the threats, the extrajudicial executions and arbitrary detentions have been carried out primarily by the Colombian military. At the same time, hundreds of activists continue to be the target of threats and murders by all parties to the conflict, the military, the

paramilitaries, and the guerrillas.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, December 9, 2009.

* December 9, 2009. Julio Enrique Chavez Corrales has been arrested and charged with homicide, aggravated forced displacement and aggravated criminal conspiracy. He is accused of recruiting young men and turning them over to the Colombian Army where they were murdered and presented as having been killed in combat. According to the investigation, he offered two young men work on a ranch. They were killed on November 1, 2007 in the municipality of Galeras (Sucre Province). The Attorney General is investigating 29 homicides that took place in similar circumstances in Sucre.



Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site, December 9, 2009. <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* December 9, 2009. Colombia's Supreme Court has upheld the sentence of three years in prison for a Bogotá police officer who accepted a bribe from a traffic offender and then forged the driver's signature on three official summonses.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, December 9, 2009.

* December 8, 2009. Colombia's Attorney General is investigating 156,000 murders that have been committed by guerrillas and paramilitaries over the last 20 years. The information has been obtained from nearly 4,000 individuals demobilized under the Justice and Peace law. The majority of the murders being investigated were committed by the paramilitaries. The report also includes 860 massacres committed by the paramilitaries. Based on the confessions of demobilized individuals, the Attorney General is investigating whether 95 Colombian Army officers and 28 noncommissioned officers and 46 officers and 47 noncommissioned officers in the Colombian National Police were connected with the illegal armed groups.

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

* December 7, 2009. A Superior Court in Manizales (Caldas Province) has overturned the convictions of five Colombian National Police officers. The five were sentenced to 40 years in prison for the "forced disappearance" of two fishermen in the municipality of Victoria (Caldas Province) on October 5, 1998. The two were returning home from fishing, but the National Police patrol stopped them. A witness testified that the two were loaded into an official vehicle. They have never been seen again. The appellate court ordered their release because, at the time of the incident, "forced disappearance" had not yet been made a crime. It was added to the penal code in 2000.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, December 7, 2009.

* December 7, 2009. A Colombian National Police officer has been arrested and charged

with attempted aggravated homicide and illegal use of weapons after an investigation revealed that he, apparently intoxicated, shot and injured his wife, also a police officer.

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



* December 6, 2009. Colombian Army Corporal Carlos Osorio and eight soldiers have been arrested and charged with shooting to death a civilian, Francisco Lopera, in Ituango (Antioquia Province) and reporting him as a guerrilla killed in combat.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, December 6, 2009.

* December 4, 2009. A non-commissioned officer and eight soldiers in the Colombian Army have been arrested and charged in the death of a laborer in Ituango (Antioquia Province). On December 4, 2005 in the town of Quebradona, Army troops killed Francisco Luis Lopera Arboleda and later presented him as a member of Front 18 of the FARC (guerrillas). At the time he was killed, Lopera was headed to Santa Rita to go to the market. His only weapon was a machete in his belt. Nevertheless, the Army report stated that he had shot at them with a revolver and was killed by return fire. His body was also wearing new camouflage pants without any bullet holes, although his body had a bullet wound in the left leg.

The soldiers are being held without bail. Capt. Duberney Vargas Parra, who commanded the Army patrol at the time, has already been arrested and charged.

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

* December 4, 2009. General Orlando Paez Baron, Civil Security Director of the Colombian National Police announced that the capture of a fugitive, former Tolima Police Commander, Jose Joaquin Aldana, accused of killing and dismembering his wife, is a high priority objective for the National Police. Last Friday Aldana fled when he found out that there was a warrant for his arrest and arresting officers approached his residence.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, December 4, 2009.

* December 3, 2009. The Attorney General of Colombia has issued a warrant for the arrest of Col. Jose Joaquin Aldana, the former commander of the National Police in Tolima Province in connection with the murder of his wife. He is a fugitive after fleeing arresting officers a week ago. His wife's body was dismembered and her fingers mutilated to avoid identification. A witness found her head and arms in a garbage bag on a ranch near Ibague (Tolima Province). A few days later, her legs, toes, and trunk were found along the road from Ibague to Alvarado. Forensic investigators found her blood at their residence. A reward of 100 million pesos (about \$50,000) has been offered for information on the whereabouts of Col. Aldana.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, December 3, 2009. *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, and *El Pais*, Cali, December 4, 2009.



* December 2, 2009. A former high Colombian National Police official is being investigated for his role in the murder of Vicente Castano, one of the founders of Colombia's paramilitary organizations. According to information given the DEA by a demobilized paramilitary, Byron Jimenez, alias "el Gordo Pepe" ("Fat Pepe"), other paramilitary commanders ordered the murder of Castano, although his body has never been found. According to the witness, who has sought protection for his family, the National Police official, Carlos Alberto Zapata Herrera, was also involved with drug kingpins. He and other National Police officials allegedly received monthly payments to provide protection for Castano.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, December 2, 2009.

* December 2, 2009. Jorge Molano, a Colombian civil rights lawyer who represents victims in actions against members of the Armed Forces, has complained of repeated threats on his life and on his family. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights has ordered the government of Colombia to protect him, and the government has provided him with bodyguards. Molano's phone calls have also been wiretapped illegally by the DAS (Colombian FBI) since 2004. He has been followed in the street and he has been threatened in various web pages, including threats signed by persons who claimed to be members of the Armed Forces. Families of the eight people murdered by paramilitaries and Colombian Army soldiers in the February 21, 2005 massacre of San Jose de Apartado are among Molano's clients.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, December 2, 2009 and news magazine *Semana*, Bogotá, December 5, 2009.

* December 2, 2009. A retired Colombian National Police officer has been sentenced to 26 years in prison for kidnapping two people on October 21, 1996. Four armed men stopped two people who were traveling in a taxi. They forced them to sign over the deed to a ranch valued at 100 million pesos (about \$50,000), an automobile, and other property. One of the assailants was the retired officer, Martin Hernan Agudelo. He was arrested a few days later.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, December 2, 2009.

* December 2, 2009. A Colombian judge has ordered an investigation into the responsibility of retired Army General Lelio Fadul Suarez Tocarruncho, formerly the commander of the Army's Sixth Brigade, along with Col. Jose Fernando Mejia Araujo. The Attorney offered evidence to show that a number of the "positives" (dead guerrillas) reported by the company in November 2003 were actually civilians who had been murdered by paramilitaries after being kidnapped and tortured to obtain "confessions". Several members of the Armed Forces have already been found guilty of criminal conspiracy, aggravated homicide, torture, forced disappearance and kidnapping. The investigation also revealed that the soldiers stole 28 head of cattle from their victims. The cattle were taken to a ranch belonging to a relative of one of the officers.

The Inspector General has determined that the soldiers were acting under an order purporting to make it legal for them to work with the paramilitaries, and to torture their victims and later present them to their superiors as killed in combat.



Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, December 2, 2009.

* December 1, 2009. A Colombian Marine, Hernan Armando Osorio Orrego, has been arrested and charged with falsifying a public document, aggravated forced disappearance, and aggravated homicide in connection with events on March 10, 2009, in the town of Las Palmas (Bolívar Province). His battalion was in combat with guerrillas when two civilians were killed. The Attorney General charges that the two deaths did not take place in combat and the victims were not guerrillas. Two other Marines have also been charged in connection with the two deaths.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, December 4, 2009, and Attorney General's web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* December 1, 2009. Two Colombian National Police officers have been taking part in a criminal gang. One accompanied accused drug trafficker Hernan Dario Giraldo Gaviria at the time of his arrest, apparently serving as a bodyguard. The other accused officer, Edison Garcia Higueta is a high official in the Medellín Police and has held confidential positions. The arrested drug trafficker has confessed to murdering a prominent businessman in Medellín.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, December 1, 2009.

* November 30, 2009. Gonzalo Guillen, the Colombia correspondent for the U.S. newspaper *El Nuevo Herald* has been informed that a DAS (Colombian FBI) detective illegally listened in on his private conversations. Guillen stated that he was told of the spying by representatives of Colombia's Attorney General's office. Both the Attorney General and the Inspector General have been investigating illegal wiretapping by the DAS since last year when news magazine *Semana* reported that DAS detectives were following, wiretapping, and obtaining e-mail correspondence of judges, members of opposition political parties and members of NGO's, even including an employee of the U.S. Department of Justice working in Bogotá.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, November 30, 2009.

* November 30, 2009. Colombian Army Lt. Diego Beltran and Sgt. Oscar Orlando Camargo have been sentenced to 38 years in prison for the murder of two young men they killed and reported as members of an illegal armed group killed in combat. The investigation revealed that on February 16, 2006, two young men were taken from their homes in Caucasia (Antioquia Province) with false promises of work on ranches near Monteria (Córdoba Province). The next day they were reported as unidentified criminals killed in combat.



Source: Attorney General's web site, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, November 30, 2009. *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, December 1, 2009, and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, December 2, 2009.

* November 30, 2009. A demobilized paramilitary and a Colombian National Police Patrolman have admitted their part in the August 14 murder of a prominent Medellín businessman, Argemiro Salazar Salazar. The admissions came at a hearing yesterday in Medellín.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellín, November 30, 2009.

* November 29, 2009. After a well-known merchant was murdered, about a thousand angry citizens of Simijaca (Cundinamarca Province) threatened to lynch the Mayor and the Police because they were doing nothing to protect the public. There has also been a series of robberies and muggings and citizens complained that the police never answer emergency calls and refuse to arrest dangerous criminals. The District Commander of the National Police promised to transfer all the police stationed in the town.

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

* November 28, 2009. Jose Joaquin Aldana, a former Colombian National Police commander, suspected of killing and dismembering his wife, is a fugitive after escaping a squadron of 20 agents who surrounded his house to make the arrest. Authorities suspect that another police agent helped him to escape.

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

* November 27, 2009. A warrant was issued for the arrest of former Colombian Police Commander Jose Joaquin Aldana, after bloodstains matching his dead wife's DNA were found in the sewer pipes in his residence. Parts of her dismembered body were found in various locations north of Ibagué (Tolima Province). She was last seen on September 8, but he did not report her as missing.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, November 27, 2009.

* November 27, 2009. Colombian Army Major Juan Carlos Rodriguez, Corporal Wilson Casallas, and a soldier, Albeiro Perez have been sentenced to 40 years in prison after a court found that they pretended to be paramilitaries and took part in the Cajamarca massacre in the town of Potosi in November 2003. Four people were killed and two of the victims were dismembered.

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

* November 27, 2009. Three Colombian Police are in custody and one is being sought, after

they renewed the illegal wiretapping of two Colombian judges. It appears that they received money from someone for providing the illegal wiretap information. They will be charged with abuse of process, falsifying a public document, criminal conspiracy, illegal wiretapping, and bribery.



Source: Attorney General's web site, *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, November 27, 2009.

* November 26, 2009. Retired Colombian Army General Jaime Humberto Uscategui Ramirez was sentenced to 40 years in prison for his connection to the massacre at Mapiripan (Meta Province), where 49 people were killed in July 1997. A lower court had found him not guilty, but the appeals court agreed with the Attorney General's appeal. He was found guilty of aggravated homicide, aggravated kidnapping, and falsifying a public document. He continues to maintain his innocence.

The investigation showed that the paramilitaries arrived in two flights at an airport controlled by the Army under General Uscategui's command. They stayed in Mapiripan at least a week, killing anyone they suspected of aiding the guerrillas. There was testimony that lower officials and a municipal judge begged him to send troops to halt the massacre, but he refused. A military court sentenced him to 40 months in jail, which he has served. His sentence is the longest sentence imposed so far on a Colombian Army officer.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, November 26, 2009.

* November 25, 2009. A Spanish NGO, Justice for Colombia, has asked the Spanish government to condition its assistance to Colombia on Colombia's respect for human rights. In particular, the NGO asked that Spanish funds not be used for "rewards" to Colombian soldiers.

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

* November 24, 2009. Colombian Army Captain Elkin Ricardo Prieto Sanchez and a soldier, Marino Aragon Renteria, have been arrested and charged with murder and attempted murder in connection with death of a civilian, Diego Silver Garcia Suaza and the capture of Alvaro de Jesus Rios Zapata on May 30, 2006 near Santa Barbara (Antioquia Province). Zapata told prosecutors that a soldier lied to him and his companions to get them to go to with him. When they arrived at the destination, waiting soldiers shot them. The soldiers reported a battle and that they had captured two firearms. The other soldiers, including an Army major, have already been arrested and charged.

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

* November 23, 2009. A DAS (Colombian FBI) agent, Hernando Caballero Vargas, was arrested and charged with homicide and attempted homicide. According to the investigation, he killed two people and injured four others at a private party on October 31 in Chia (Cundinamarca Province).



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

* November 23, 2009. A retired Colombian Army soldier, Jesus Alexander Silva Lezcano was captured in Remedios (Antioquia Province) and accused of murder and kidnapping. On March 21, 2005, in Urrao (Antioquia Province) along with other soldiers, he murdered two civilians, Mrs. Fanny Ramirez and her son Victor Raul Florez and presented them as members of an illegal armed group killed in combat.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, November 23, 2009.

* November 22, 2009. An intelligence report revealed to *El Tiempo* describes the participation of a former officer in the Colombian National Police, Carlos Alberto Zapata Herrera, and two patrolmen in the murder of paramilitary commander Vicente Castano in 2007. Castano's body has never been found. Police are also investigating Zapata's reported connections with drug traffickers. An officer named Londono who complained about his ties with the underworld was murdered. The supervisor that he complained to, Luis Augusto Manrique Montilla, was captured just three months ago in connection with the disappearance of three women and a gang member. Their bodies were dismembered and thrown into the Cauca River. Manrique has admitted those murders.

According to the report, Manrique helped Zapata transfer to his command police who would work with the gangs, in return for money or favors. As Chief of Personnel, Manrique could do favors and he allegedly charged between one and two million pesos (about \$500-\$1,000) for such favors.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 22, 2009.

* November 21, 2009. A retired Colombian Army soldier exploded a grenade in a public gathering place in Barrancabermeja (Santander Province). Seven people were injured, some seriously. Police believe his motive was jealousy.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, November 21, 2009.

* November 20, 2009. Quintro Coronel, a demobilized paramilitary, making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, testified that military intelligence officers stationed in Ocana (Norte de Santander Province) worked with the paramilitaries. He admitted taking part in at least 20 murders.

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

[controlador/controlador](#)



* November 20, 2009. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States has ordered the government of Colombia to provide protection for Justice Cesar Julio Valencia Copete, the President of Colombia's Supreme Court. Justice Valencia sought the order of protection because he has been the victim of DAS (Colombian FBI) espionage.

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

* November 20, 2009.

* November 20, 2009. A DAS (Colombian FBI) agent was captured in Bogotá early yesterday. He is being investigated for murdering two fellow detectives on October 31 at a private Halloween costume party. Four others were injured.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* November 20, 2009. Colombian Army Capt. Duberney Parra Vargas has been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide. On December 4, 2005, in the town of Quebradota (Antioquia Province), his patrol killed a farmer, Francisco Luis Lopera Arboleda and presented him as a guerrilla killed in combat. The investigation showed that Lopera was on his way to market and only carried his machete. Nevertheless, the patrol reported that he threatened them with a revolver. Also, Lopera's body was dressed in new camouflage pants without any bullet holes, although he had a bullet wound in his left leg. Capt. Parra is being held without bail.

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

* November 20, 2009. A demobilized paramilitary commander, Sergio Manuel Cordoba Avila, alias "El Gordo" (The Fat Man), making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, admitted killing five people in a rural area of El Carmen (Bolívar Province) in 2000. He testified that the people were killed with knives and clubs because "The Police were always harping that we weren't supposed to use guns".

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, November 20, 2009,

* November 20, 2009. Colombian police counterintelligence agents will soon be infiltrating the police in Cordoba Province to determine whether there are more police involved with criminal gangs. The police commander announced that any who are will be discharged and possibly prosecuted criminally. He did not reveal how many cases are being investigated. Recently a third police officer was discovered to be connected to a criminal gang in Cordoba.

Source: *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, November 20, 2009.

* November 20, 2009. The United Nations Committee Against Torture, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, today issued its report on Colombia. The report urges that Colombia “. . . take immediate action to discontinue threats and stalking of judges by intelligence agents . . .” The Committee is made up of ten independent experts who examine compliance with the International Convention Against Torture. The report expresses deep concern about threats to judges and “consternation” because judges have been subjected to threats and illegal wiretapping by DAS (Colombian FBI) officials.



The report complains that Colombia does not keep good records of incidents of torture, as evidenced by contradictory figures submitted by different agencies of the government. There is also concern about sexual abuse by the Colombian military, and decries the extended pattern of extrajudicial killings of civilians by the military.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *El Pais*, Cali, and *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, November 20, 2009.

* November 19, 2009. A detective attached to the Colombian Attorney General’s office has been arrested and charged with weapons trafficking and illegal use of military weapons by a private citizen. The detective, Leonardo Enrique Duran Bastidas, was found driving a stolen car containing a revolver, four pistols, a Fal rifle, 45 million pesos (about \$22,500) and two navigation maps.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, and Attorney General’s web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* November 19, 2009. A former officer of the Colombian National Police was arrested, along with a civilian, for aggravated homicide and attempted aggravated homicide, theft, and weapons trafficking and use of military weapons by a private citizen. The complaint alleges that on June 21 they attacked a restaurant and exchanged fire with a police unit. One of the police officers was killed and another was injured.

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

* November 19, 2009. An assistant to a prosecutor from the Colombian Attorney General’s office was arrested and charged with bribery after he allegedly visited the parents of a young man who had been arrested and offered to have him released in exchange for five million pesos (about \$2,500). They paid him half that sum, but later asked that it be returned.

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

* November 19, 2009. A young woman complains that her sister was sexually assaulted in the police station at Soacha (Cundinamarca Province). According to the allegation, the victim was walking home alone when she was seized, drugged, and taken to the police station where her kidnapper turned her over to six police officers who were waiting. She alleges that she was drugged again and woke up naked from the waist up. She was able to telephone for help, but the police threatened her. She was found to have several blows to the head and a cut lip. The police have promised to investigate.



Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, and *El Pais*, Cali, November 19, 2009, and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 20, 2009.

* November 19, 2010. Colombia's Inspector General has ordered the discharge of two Colombian Army soldiers assigned to the 28th Infantry Battalion. He found that on June 10, 2007 in a school in San Vicente del Caguan (Caqueta Province) they killed the school principal, Marleny Berrio Martinez and two civilians, Jamir Giraldo Bonilla and Lucas Manuel Corredor. Later they wanted to change their clothes, so they broke into a home, the residents, Miller Velasquez and Melania Betancourth, tried to stop them, the soldiers killed them also.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogota, November 19, 2010.

* November 17, 2010. Diego Alberto Ruiz Arroyave, alias "El Primo" ("No. 1"), an extradited paramilitary commander, making his confession under the Justice and Peace Law from his cell in the United States, testified that he knew about the cooperation between the paramilitaries and Colombian Armed Forces. He said that he did not attend meetings because his function was administrative, not military, but that he was aware that the relation was close in his area because the Army and the paramilitaries had a "common enemy, the guerrillas".

Source: *Verdadabierta.com*, a site connected to news magazine *semana.com*, Bogota, November 17, 2010.

* November 16, 2010. Six people, including a Colombian Police officer, have been arrested and charged with attempted robbery and illegal use of weapons. The defendants were caught on November 10, 2010 in Pereira (Risaralda Province) fleeing with stolen cash and jewelry, along with ten million pesos (about \$5000) worth of small appliances.

Source: Attorney General's web site, Bogota, November 16, 2010.

* November 15, 2009. The leader of a criminal gang, Jairo Luis Diaz, one of the 20 most wanted criminals in Cordoba Province, was captured in the home of a police officer, where he was apparently renting a room. The officer's wife and her mother were also arrested. This is the second case in the month of November in which police officers in Cordoba Province have been involved with criminal gangs.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 15, 2009.

* November 14, 2009. Two Colombian National Police officers were members of a gang of robbers in Yumbo (Valle del Cauca Province). The gang stole 680 plasma TV's from a store on October 13.



Source: *El Pais*, Cali, November 14, 2009.

* November 13, 2009. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, issued a report at a press conference in Washington, D.C. The report states that the Commission considers the illegal wiretapping of judges, politicians, defenders of human rights and even of a member of the Commission by the DAS (Colombian FBI) to be extremely serious., The Commission expressed hope that Colombia would see to it that this is never repeated and that those responsible are punished.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *El Pais*, Cali, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, November 13, 2009.

* November 13, 2009. The Council of State, Colombia's highest administrative court, affirmed the discharge of General Alvaro Hernan Velandia and three noncommissioned officers. They were charged with the forced disappearance of a woman alleged to part of a guerrilla group. The testimony indicated that on August 30, 1987, she was captured, tortured, and executed.

Source: *El Tiempo*, November 13, 2009.

* November 13, 2009. A high official in Colombia's prison system is charged with selling 36,279 judicial and criminal files, constituting 30 tons of documents and files to recyclers. Guillermo Gonzalez Guzman was the coordinator of files and correspondence for the prison system. He received from 600-700 pesos (30-35 cents) per kilo of paper. Detectives do not yet know whether Gonzalez had any intent to interfere with criminal investigations.

Source: *El Tiempo*, and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, November 13, 2009.

* November 13, 2009. An NGO composed of indigenous women complained that a Colombian Army soldier from the 10th Brigade had sexually abused a 13-year-old girl and threatened her family on the San Juan del Cesar reservation. The group complains that the soldier drugged the girl and threatened her with his service weapon.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, November 13, 2009.

* November 13, 2009. In a plea agreement, a Colombian Army noncommissioned officer and five soldiers were sentenced to 20 years in prison for their part in the murder of John Freddy Lopera. The court found that on March 21, 2005, the victim was enticed to a deserted location and killed. One of the defendants who confessed his guilt testified that there was no combat, the victim was defenseless, and that they had all received ten days' leave for reporting their victim as a guerrilla killed in combat. page 217

Source: Attorney General's web site, *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, *El Pais*, Cali, and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, November 13, 2009.



* November 13, 2009. The mayor of Barranquilla will appoint a committee of lawyers to investigate the activities of police inspectors in connection with land disputes in the area. Investigations by *El Herald*o and *Cambio* magazine revealed that some of the police inspectors were charging citizens up to 80 million pesos (about \$40,000) to resolve their claims. The Mayor has asked for the resignation of General Fernando Fiorillo, who is being investigated by the Attorney General's office. Fiorillo is also accused of charging his subordinates money in order to keep their jobs.

Source: *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, November 13, 2009.

* November 13, 2009. Three Colombian prison guards will be charged with criminal conspiracy, bribery, forgery, and fraud for allegedly charging inmates money in return for privileges such as study space and the opportunity to work in return for reduction of their sentences.

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

* November 12, 2009. Two Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged in connection with the deaths of ten civilians in the municipality of Tolúviejo (Sucre Province). According to the investigation, between July and August 2007, Army troops reported the deaths in combat of ten civilians. Their bodies were presented as members of illegal armed groups. Investigators found that, the day before their deaths, they had been contacted by "recruiters" who offered them farm work, promising wages between 400,000 pesos and 800,000 pesos (from about \$200 to about \$400) monthly. The charges include homicide, aggravated forced disappearance and criminal conspiracy.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, November 13, 2009, and Attorney General's web site, November 12, 2009: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* November 11, 2009. A Colombian Army noncommissioned officer, Jorge Andres Estupinan Chamorro, was sentenced to 30 years in prison for the murder of a civilian on November 13, 2005 in Godo (Antioquia Province). The victim went to his job patching holes in the highway but never returned home. His bicycle and tools were found on the highway. The next day his family identified his body in the morgue at Chigorodo, where it had been presented as a guerrilla killed in combat. 2nd Lieutenant Juan Esteban Munoz Montoya has also been charged with homicide in this case.

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

* November 11, 2009. Nine Colombian soldiers have been arrested and charged with

aggravated homicide in the murders of four civilians. According to the charges, on January 14, 2007, the soldiers fired on the occupants of a taxi, killing all four of them. The soldiers then claimed that the victims were kidnappers intending to kidnap some engineers who were working in the area.



Source: *El Pais*, Cali, and Attorney General's web site, November 11, 2009.

* November 11, 2009. Detectives from the Colombian Attorney General's office and the National Police discovered that an active duty Police official, Fair Cabrera, regularly informed a criminal gang on the movements and operations of the Colombian Armed Forces. Other gang members captured included a former candidate for mayor of a municipality in Cordoba Province and a soldier in the Army who, before entering the Army, was in charge of providing motorcycles used by the gang's "hit men".

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, November 11, 2009.

* November 10, 2009. The Colombian Coalition Against Torture has published a 144-page report detailing the serious level of torture that persists in Colombia. The report will be presented to the United Nations Committee Against Torture in Geneva next week. The report states that 899 people were victims of torture between July 2003 and June 2008. This is less than previous years, but there has been a significant increase in torture committed by the Armed Forces, according to the report. In the period between 1998 and 2003 there were 187 cases of torture directly attributed to the Armed Forces, but between 2003 and 2008, there were 337 such cases.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, November 10, 2009.

* November 10, 2009. A Colombian National Police officer, Jose Guillermo Gomez Serrato, has been sentenced to 18 years in prison for his part in the murder of a street person, Wilson Garcia Vasquez, on October 6, 2007. Another officer, Erwin Stiven Martinez Ruiz, has already been sentenced to 16 years in the same case.

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

* November 10, 2009. Colombia's Environmental Protection Agency announced that discarded computer equipment and furnishings labeled as belonging to the Colombian National Police have been found in the Tunjuelo River. Monitors, keyboards and even office chairs belonging to the Police were included. The environmental agency reported that someone had placed the junk in or near the river and covered it with sand. Officials believe that there is probably more junk that has not yet been found, and they are concerned about contamination by lead and mercury.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, November 10, 2009.

* November 8, 2009. A military vehicle, driven by a uniformed Colombian soldier, was involved in a crash, and emergency responders found that the vehicle contained acetone and

other materials used in processing cocaine.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellín, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, *El Herald*, Barranquilla, and *El Espectador* and *Caracol Radio*, November 8, 2009.



* November 6, 2009. *El Espectador* reports that there are hard feelings between the Colombian government and the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights. In a hearing before the Commission, a Colombian NGO complained that its members had been followed and illegally wiretapped by the DAS (Colombian FBI). The Colombian government representative walked out, complaining that the government had not been notified. The Commission considers the illegal wiretapping by the DAS to be “very serious”, according to the Secretary-General of the Commission. In an interview with *El Espectador* in Washington, the Commission’s Executive Secretary, Santiago Canton, emphasized that the situation is particularly serious because the DAS has also followed and wiretapped a member of the Commission. On a visit to Colombia, she was followed to see whom she met with and what kind of information she was receiving.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, November 6, 2009.

* November 6, 2009. A Colombian Army major, Diego Hernan Padilla, attached to the Army’s 4th Brigade, has been charged with homicide and attempted homicide. On May 30, 2006, troops under his command killed one civilian and injured another, reporting the dead man as killed in combat. Weapons were found beside his body. Three other soldiers have entered into plea agreements in connection with the murder.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and Attorney General’s web site, November 6, 2009.

* November 6, 2009.

* November 5, 2009. Colombia’s judicial police arrested two of their fellow officers on charges of extortion. The driver of a semi-trailer truck testified that the two had threatened to immobilize the truck and demanded 4 million pesos (about \$2000).

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, November 5, 2009.

* November 4, 2009. The Colombian government and the United Nations have reached an agreement under which the United Nations would assist in purging files illegally created by the DAS (Colombian FBI) through wiretapping and unwarranted searches and surveillance.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 4, 2009.

* November 4, 2009. A Medellín criminal court has set a hearing date for a plea agreement between the Attorney General’s office and two Colombian National Police officers who will plead guilty to the forced disappearance of four civilians in the municipality of La Estrella (Antioquia Province). Major Luis Augusto Manrique Montilla will plead guilty to aggravated forced disappearance, aggravated criminal conspiracy and theft, while the patrolmen will plead guilty to accomplices in the crimes. A lieutenant has not made a plea

agreement and will go to trial.

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



* November 3, 2009. Colombian authorities have arrested a soldier, Holder James Camacho Campo, in connection with the death of a peasant farmer, Atilio Joaquin Buyonez Solis, who was later presented as a guerrilla killed in combat. The murder took place on August 1, 2003, in a rural area of Pueblo Bello (Cesar Province). The Attorney General's investigation determined that there had been no combat and that the victim was murdered by Camacho and five other soldiers. The other five have already been charged.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, November 3, 2009.

* November 3, 2009. A prosecutor is pressing charges against the former commander of the Colombian navy. Admiral Sergio Garcia Torres is accused of certifying the completion of a construction contract, when no construction had actually taken place.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 3, 2009.

* November 2, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier, assigned to the Army's Matamoros Battalion in Riohacha (La Guajira Province) killed two people and wounded five others in an argument that commenced when a woman declined to dance with him at a party. He returned to his quarters to retrieve his service weapon and opened fire.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin and *El Herald*, Barranquilla, November 2, 2009.

* November 2, 2009. A detective attached to the intelligence network of the DAS (Colombia's FBI) shot and killed two of his fellow agents about 4AM at a Halloween costume party. Four other people were injured. Witnesses told investigators that the detective overheard a conversation criticizing him and opened fire.

Source: *El Espectador* and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Pais*, Cali, October 31, 2009, and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 2, 2009.

* October 30, 2009. Colombia's Inspector General has asked the Attorney General to prefer criminal charges against a major in the Colombian National Police after the police fired on student demonstrators on September 22, 2005 and one student was killed.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Pais*, Cali, October 30, 2009.

* October 30, 2009. A group of mothers of young men killed by Colombian Army soldiers as "false positives" complained that since the early part of October a campaign of threats and intimidation against them has intensified. Seven of the mothers of 16 of the victims have been receiving threats.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, October 30, 2009.



* October 30, 2009. Colombia's Supreme Court upheld the sentence of six years and three months in prison for Army lieutenant Mihaly Istvan Jurko Vasquez. A lower court had found him guilty of torturing three young men at Army headquarters in Medellin on June 5, 2000. The three victims were suspected of killing one of the soldiers stationed at the headquarters.

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

* October 30, 2009. A noncommissioned officer and three soldiers in the Colombian Army have pleaded guilty to murdering a merchant, Jhon Fredy Lopera Balbin, on March 21, 2005 and then reporting him as a paramilitary killed in combat. His body was found with a shotgun and a fragmentation grenade. One of the soldiers admitted that there had been no combat and that, after killing the merchant, the soldiers altered the scene by placing the weapons next to his body. That soldier was sentenced to 19 years in prison for homicide. The other soldiers will be sentenced in the next few days.

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

* October 30, 2009. Three officers in the Colombian National Police were arrested and charged with extortion after they demanded three million pesos (about \$1,500) from the mother of a juvenile arrested on a drug charge. In the same case, another officer pleaded guilty in exchange for a suspended sentence of 36 months in prison.

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

* October 30, 2009. A Colombian Army Sergeant pleaded guilty to attempted aggravated homicide, aggravated theft, and unauthorized traffic and use of weapons. He admitted that, dressed in civilian clothes, he entered a bank, threatened the staff with a rifle, seized more than 14 million pesos (about \$7,500) and fled. He was chased by police, exchanged fire with them, and two officers were injured.

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

* October 29, 2009. Norman Leon Arango, the former Colombian National Police commander in the province of Sucre will be investigated in connection with the murder of Eudaldo Diaz, the mayor of El Roble (Sucre Province). The judge who sentenced three others to 28 years in prison for the murder, has ordered the investigation. The mayor, who had denounced the connection between the paramilitaries and government officials in the community, was murdered in April 2003, and one of the witnesses at the trials claimed that the Police Commander was "practically at the service of the paramilitaries".

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

* October 29, 2009. The Deputy Attorney General of Colombia reminds the government that, when the jurisdiction in Colombia of the International Criminal Court commences on November 1, that Court will have the authority to judge all war crimes, including those committed by agents of the Armed Forces.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, October 19, 2009.

* October 29, 2009. Twenty-three Colombian soldiers have been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide in the murder of five civilians on December 20, 2006 in El Tutumo, near Ibague (Tolima Province). The troops reported combat, but an investigation revealed that there had been no combat on that day, and the five victims were murdered. One of them, Ruben Fernando Sanchez, was found with a pistol in his right hand, but he was known to be left-handed. Soldiers testified that there had been an exchange of fire with the victims, who were riding in an automobile, but the automobile showed no evidence of gunfire.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, October 29, 2009, and Attorney General's web site, October 26, 2009.

* October 29, 2009. A Colombian Army sergeant, Javier Chavez Giron, was arrested yesterday for robbing the Agrarian Bank of Alcala (Valle del Cauca Province). According to the investigation, he entered the bank carrying a weapon, took money, and fled in an automobile. He exchanged fire with police officers, two of whom were wounded.

* Source: *El Pais*, Cali, October 29, 2009.

* October 29, 2009. Two former DAS (Colombian FBI) officials are accused with demanding 300 million pesos (about \$150,000) to terminate an investigation involving two brothers who were suspects in the investigation. They are charged with aggravated attempted extortion, and aggravated theft.

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

* October 28, 2009. The father of one of the victims in the "false positives" scandal has been murdered. The body of Rodrigo Aviles Romero was found at the side of the road leading to Santa Catalina (Cordoba Province). Police are investigating the connection, if any, between his murder and the murder of his son, who was one of five young men who were killed by soldiers and presented as guerrillas killed in combat.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, October 28, 2009.

* October 28, 2009. Jose Dionisio Ramos Castillo, convicted of recruiting eleven young

men to be murdered by Colombian soldiers and presented as guerrillas killed in combat, was sentenced to 22 years and three months in prison. Between July and August of 2007, he offered them false promises of ranching jobs paying between 500,000 and 600,000 pesos (about \$250 and \$300) monthly. Ramos was paid from 70,000 to 150,000 pesos (about \$35 to \$75) for each young man that he delivered to the soldiers. He has already been sentenced in two other cases in which he has been convicted in the deaths of three other young men who were killed by another group of soldiers.



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

* October 27, 2009. A demobilized paramilitary commander, Miguel Angel Mejia Munera, alias "el mellizo" (The Twin) extradited to the United States, is making his confession via videoconference. He testified that his branch of the paramilitaries had the full support and cooperation of the Colombian Police and Colombian Army in Arauca Province.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, October 27, 2009 and *El Pais*, Cali, October 28, 2009.

* October 27, 2009. A Colombian National Police officer, Alvaro de Jesus Loaiza Velasquez, has been sentenced to eight years and eight months in prison for the murder of a 19-year-old man on October 12, 2008 in Medellin. He received a reduced sentence in a plea bargain. He was intoxicated while on duty and fired on two young men who were arguing, killing Hervin Stiven Mesa Morales.

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

* October 24, 2009. Amnesty International has asked the Colombian government to furnish records of extrajudicial killings by members of the Armed Forces (false positives) and the purging of intelligence files and illegal wiretapping by the DAS (Colombian FBI).

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, October 24, 2009.

* October 24, 2009. Colombia's Attorney General has charged that the killing by Colombian soldiers of five men who were presented as killed in combat was premeditated murder and that the crime scene had been altered. Furthermore, a witness testified that he saw the five victims on their knees with the soldiers pointing their weapons at them.

Source: *El Espectador*, *El Tiempo*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano* and *El Mundo*, Medellin, and *El Pais*, Cali, October 24, 2009.

* October 23, 2009. A six-month investigation of a criminal gang in Bucaramanga resulted in 13 arrests, including three officers of the Colombian National Police. The gang had carried out 21 holdups and stolen some 483 million pesos (about \$241,500). The gang members will be charged with theft, criminal conspiracy and illegal use of weapons and the three police officers will face additional charges of extortion.



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

* October 23, 2009. Six Colombian soldiers have been arrested and charged with murdering a demobilized paramilitary and his son on September 14, 2006 on a farm in Corea (Magdalena Province). According to the investigation, the two were dragged from their home and murdered, then presented as guerrillas killed in combat. The soldiers are charged with aggravated homicide and are in military custody.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site, October 23, 2009.

* October 23, 2009. One of President Uribe's bodyguards has been captured by police and suspected of taking part in a holdup.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, October 23, 2009, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, October 24, 2009.

* October 23, 2009. Five Colombian Army personnel, including a captain, a sergeant and three soldiers, have been arrested and charged in the disappearance and murder of two young men who were later reported as guerrillas killed in combat. The Attorney General charges that on February 19, 2007, an informant used by the Army contacted two men in a video game establishment and promised them jobs in Villanueva (Casanare Province). They went there the next day and were killed by the soldiers, who were attached to the 16th Brigade, headquartered in Yopal. They are charged with aggravated homicide, forced disappearance, falsifying a public document, fraud, misappropriation, illegal use of weapons and criminal conspiracy.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site, October 23, 2009.

* October 22, 2009. A noncommissioned officer, three active soldiers and two retirees from the Colombian Army entered into a plea bargain and confessed to murdering Douglas Antonio Perez Sibaja on August 6, 2006 in Villa de Leyva (Putumayo Province).

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

* October 21, 2009. Colombia's Supreme Court, after analyzing a "false positives" case that took place in 1995 in Arauca Province, has concluded that the base commanders in the Army ought to be charged when soldiers commit extrajudicial killings.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, October 21, 2009.

* October 21, 2009. *The Washington Post*, reporting on the sentencing of Colombian drug lord, Diego Montoya Sanchez, alias “Don Diego”, in federal court in Miami, notes that Montoya eluded capture for years by paying off military and police leaders.

Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., October 21, 2009.



* October 21, 2009. A Colombian Army major, a corporal, and a soldier have been arrested and charged in the murder of a farmer in Argelia (Antioquia Province) on November 21, 2004. A witness testified that the victim, a 20-year-old laborer, was tied up, beaten, and killed, and then presented as a guerrilla killed in combat. The investigation showed that there had been no combat.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and Attorney General’s web site, October 21, 2009.

* October 20, 2009. Nine Colombian Army soldiers, attached to the 4th Brigade, headquartered in Medellin, have been arrested and charged with murder in the death of a young man. The young man was riding his bicycle on April 11, 2005 when he was stopped at an Army checkpoint for not carrying documents. Three hours later he was reported as killed in combat with guerrillas at the other end of the city. His bicycle has never been found.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, and Attorney General’s web site, October 20, 2009.

* October 20, 2009. Fifteen members of a Colombian Army counter-guerrilla squad have been arrested and charged in the deaths of two young men in Laguna del Miedo (Antioquia Province) in January 2008. The squad is attached to the 14th Brigade, headquartered in Cimitarra (Santander Province). Those arrested include a lieutenant colonel, a major, a captain, a lieutenant, a corporal, and ten soldiers. They are being held without bail. The soldiers testified that the two victims died in combat with re-emerging paramilitaries, but the prosecutor’s witnesses claimed that there had been no combat and that the crime scene had been altered. Prosecutors are investigating whether this squad may be connected with other extrajudicial killings.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and Attorney General’s web site, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *El Pais*, Cali, October 20, 2009 and *El Mundo*, Medellin, October 21, 2009.

* October 20, 2009. A trial judge denied a motion to dismiss charges against Colombian Army soldiers accused of killing eleven young men from Soacha (Cundinamarca Province) and presenting their bodies as guerrillas killed in combat. Fifty-three soldiers have now been accused in connection with the “false positive” killings of young men living in Soacha.

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

* October 19, 2009. *El Tiempo* reports that recently captured drug lord Daniel Rendon Herrera, alias “Don Mario”, was able to infiltrate a number of Colombian government agencies. Just two weeks ago, five police officers, including the chief of the police station in Carepa (Antioquia Province) were arrested and charged with aiding “Don Mario”, and, earlier, a captain and a corporal of the Army’s 17th Brigade, also headquartered in Carepa, have been charged with working with “Don Mario’s” “hit men”. A high level member of

the Attorney General's staff, Guillermo Leon Valencia, has been arrested and charged with working for "Don Mario" and a DAS (Colombian FBI) official has allegedly been bribed by him.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, October 19, 2009.

* October 18, 2009. The City Clerk of Soacha (Cundinamarca Province) has expressed regret that, a year after the discovery of the "false positives" victims from Soacha, none of the soldiers accused of murder have been found guilty. He notes that he is aware of "false positive" killings in 12 provinces. He also expressed concern for the safety of the families of the victims. The families who complain about the murder of their sons and brothers have been threatened and intimidated.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, October 18, 2009.

* October 18, 2009. Two teen-aged boys from Yondo (Antioquia Province) have been shot and killed by a military mistake. They were attending a birthday party where, according to witnesses, two soldiers were arguing over a cigarette. One of the soldiers fired in the air and the two boys, who were riding on a motorcycle, speeded up because they thought they were being attacked by guerrillas or paramilitaries. Soldiers stationed at the other end of town fired on them and both died.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, October 18, 2009, and *El Mundo* and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, October 19, 2009.

* October 18, 2009. A study released by the Colombian Attorney General's office reports that more than 2,000 Colombians have been murdered by Colombian Armed Forces as "false positives". Fifty-nine of the victims were minors and 122 were women. Even a Colombian Army soldier on leave became a victim, reported by his killers, troops from the Santander Battalion, as a guerrilla killed in combat. The Soacha victims are the most recent, and the Inspector General reports that there were 30 victims from Soacha, not 16 as first reported.

While there are only one or two new complaints of "false positives" since the discovery of the Soacha scandal and the replacement of 27 military officers, both the Attorney General and the Inspector General are discovering many more human rights violations that took place in recent years. The Attorney General has had to add staff to investigate and prosecute the 1,273 actions against 2,965 members of the Armed Forces and their accomplices.

The report uncovers numerous evidences of wrongdoing. For example, one victim sought protection in the police station in Argelia (Antioquia Province), but the soldiers claimed he was a deserter and took him from the station. Then they murdered him. The Police Captain, Alexander Amezcuita, has just been charged with covering up the crime. The soldiers involved have already been sentenced to 33 years in prison. The Attorney General's report includes many cases where the soldiers paid recruiters to bring them their victims.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, October 18,

2009.

* October 16, 2009. Colombia's Supreme Judicial Council has ruled that a "false positive" murder charge involving a colonel, a major, a captain and four soldiers must be processed in the ordinary civil justice system and not in the military justice system. The presiding justice ruled that there was no conflict because the military justice system had not requested authority over the case. The request merely came from defense counsel.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, October 16, 2009.

* October 16, 2009. The former Chief of Security of the Attorney General's investigative arm in Cucuta (CTI is the Spanish acronym.) has pleaded guilty to theft, falsifying a public document, and illegal weapons trafficking. In return for his plea, he received a reduced prison sentence and a fine of 11,182,500 pesos (a little over \$5,000). He admitted that he stole 19,000 cartridges of different calibers and 26 weapons. He returned seven of those.

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

* October 16, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier, Jaider Enrique Angarita Torrado, turned himself in after a warrant was issued for his arrest on charges of kidnapping and aggravated homicide. He is alleged to have been involved in the murder of four civilians on August 10, 2008 in La Jagua del Pilar (Guajira Province). The military unit reported the four victims as killed in combat, but the investigation showed that there had been no combat in that area at that time. Five other soldiers and two noncommissioned officers are already in custody in connection with the murders.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, October 16, 2009 and Attorney General's web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* October 15, 2009. The Attorney General is investigating and preparing to charge the former Deputy Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI), Jose Miguel Narvaez, with planning the murder of Ivan Cepeda Vargas in 1994. Cepeda was a member of the Patriotic Union Party and a candidate for President of Colombia. Narvaez is also suspected of planning the murder of journalist and humorist Jaime Garzon.

Source: Attorney General's web site, and *El Pais*, Cali, October 15, 2009.

* October 15, 2009. A noncommissioned officer in the Colombian Army and nine soldiers are arrested and charged with the murder of a rancher, Braulio Jose Parrera Lopez on October 4 of last year in the town of San Pedro de Sabanalarga (Casanare Province). They shot the rancher and his wife, who was injured.

Source: *El Espectador* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, October 16, 2009, and Attorney General's

web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>



* October 14, 2009. A Colombian Army lieutenant has been arrested and charged with homicide in the murder of five members of the AWA indigenous community in the municipality of Ricaurte (Narino Province) on August 9, 2006. He and a sergeant who is also implicated, reported that the victims were killed in combat between the Army and the guerrillas.

Source: *El Espectador* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, *El Pais*, Cali, and the Attorney General's web site.

* October 14, 2009. The Colombian judicial system has not been able to decide whether Lt. Col. Gabriel Rincon Amado, Capt. Manuel Zorrilla and five other soldiers, implicated in ten extrajudicial executions, should be decided in the military or the civilian judicial system. But the defendants must be released by October 21 if action is not taken in the case. There are other such cases, where there is evidence that members of the Colombian military have committed such executions of civilians and time is about to run out on the charges that should be brought. Judicial officials say the situation will be resolved soon.

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

* October 14, 2009. In a plea agreement, Colombian National Police Major Luis Augusto Manrique, will plead guilty to aggravated forced disappearance and aggravated criminal conspiracy with intent to commit murder in the disappearance of four young women last May 29 in La Estrella. He has agreed to a sentence of 28 years in prison. Two patrolmen will plead guilty to being accomplices and have agreed to prison sentences of 14 years. Another officer involved in the crime will go to trial. The families of the victims complain that the plea agreement does not include a requirement that the defendants tell where the victims' bodies are located. There may be an additional charge of aggravated theft and this charge is not included in the plea agreement.

Source: *El Mundo* and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, October 14, 2009.

* October 13, 2009. Carlos Enrique Rojas Castaneda, alias "Palomo" ("The Pigeon") will be tried on charges of kidnapping and murder of a Colombian industrialist, Benjamin Khoudari Ruben on December 30, 1998. Khoudari was kidnapped on October 30, 1998 and, in spite of the fact that his family paid the kidnappers 110 million pesos (about \$55,000), he was murdered. Several years ago, the Attorney General charged others who took part in the kidnapping, including several soldiers from the 13th Brigade of the Colombian Army.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, October 13, 2009.

* October 13, 2009. In Brussels today, more than 220 nongovernmental organizations outlined an international campaign to denounce the threats suffered by defenders of human rights in Colombia. They have asked the European Union to pay more attention to Colombia's human rights violations in its relations with that country. The groups include Amnesty International and the International Federation for Human Rights. They complain that in Colombia, people who publicly defend human rights are threatened not only by illegal

armed groups but also by the Colombian government. They ask the Colombian government to reveal all of the files created by government spying on their organizations, and to reveal full information about extrajudicial killings by the Colombian Army.



Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, October 13, 2009.

* October 13, 2009. The Colombian Government has presented a report to the United Nations in which it emphasizes that the number of complaints of murders committed by members of the Colombian Armed Forces has diminished considerably since last October when the “false positives” scandal in Soacha was uncovered.

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

* October 13, 2009. A citizen submits a video to *CityTV.com*. In the video, three police officers are seen performing tricks with their motorcycles at high speed on a public highway.

Source: *El Tiempo*, October 13, 2009.

* October 12, 2009. *El Tiempo* reports that Colombia will be covered by the International Criminal Court beginning November 1, and that Colombia is one of five countries being studied by Court officials. The others are Georgia, Ivory Coast, Kenya, and Afghanistan. The Court’s Chief Prosecutor, Luis Moreno Ocampo, has visited Colombia, and has sent missions to Colombia to investigate specific cases where the Colombian justice system may not have punished crimes against humanity committed by guerrillas, by paramilitaries, and by the Armed Forces.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, October 12, 2009.

* October 10, 2009. Anticipating coverage by the International Criminal Court beginning November 1, the Colombian Armed Forces and National Police are seeking legislation that would provide criminal defense for soldiers and police whom the Court may accuse of war crimes. The military are also providing training for officers in respecting the rights of civilians.

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

* October 10, 2009. Two police officers are under investigation after one was seen depositing 600 grams of cocaine in the trunk of a woman’s car, while the other arrested her. She hired a lawyer who interviewed bystanders and found that two elderly women and a teenage girl had seen the officer deposit the cocaine. The lawyer and the witnesses complained that they had been threatened repeatedly by the two officers. They telephoned the two elderly women late at night and they detained the teenage girl for six hours at a police station. The two officers may be charged with criminal conspiracy, drug trafficking, abuse of process, defamation, and making false charges.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, October 10, 2009.



* October 9, 2009. The commander of the Carepa (Antioquia Province) police station and three of his officers are accused of collaborating with recently captured drug lord, Daniel Rendon, alias “Don Mario”.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, October 9, 2009.

* October 9, 2009. The father of a Colombian Army soldier may have been the victim of extrajudicial killing by soldiers. The Attorney General is investigating the murder of a peasant farmer in Yondo (Antioquia Province). He was later presented as a member of an illegal armed group in combat with the Army. Four soldiers have been arrested and charged in the murder of Ricardo Antonio Ortiz Tobon on July 8, 2008.

Source: Attorney General’s web site and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, October 9, 2009, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, October 10, 2009.

* October 8, 2009. Three Colombian Army soldiers are arrested and charged with having murdered a civilian, Wilson Posada Quintero, on November 21, 2004 in the rural part of Argelia municipality (Antioquia Province). After killing him, the three presented his body as a guerrilla killed in combat. The Attorney General and the Inspector General are now investigating more than 1,200 similar cases.

Source: *El Espectador* and *El Tiempo*, and Attorney General’s web site, Bogotá, October 8, 2009.

* October 8, 2009. Families of civilians murdered by Colombian soldiers who presented their victims’ bodies as guerrillas killed in combat are protesting the postponement of court proceedings in one of the cases. The mother of one of the victims accused the defense counsel of trying to delay proceedings until time limits are exhausted and the cases must be dropped.

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

* October 8, 2009. Three more demobilized paramilitaries have been arrested and charged in the February 21 massacre at San Jose de Apartado, where eight civilians, including three children, were murdered and dismembered. Army Captain Guillermo Armando Gordillo of the 17th Brigade has entered into a plea bargain and is testifying for the prosecution. Witnesses describe how the soldiers helped plan and took part in the massacre, including the assignment of various tasks. Ten other soldiers have already been charged in the case. The three new defendants are being held without bail.

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

* October 7, 2009. Colombia’s Inspector General ordered the discharge of Lt. Fabian Perez Agustin and Corporal Jhomer Gabriel Leon after his investigation found that on May 22, 2005, in the municipality of Matanza (Santander Province), they detained and tortured two civilians, one of whom died. At first some soldiers reported that the death was part of a combat operation in which weapons were found. The Inspector General’s investigation concluded that there had been no combat and that the civilian was murdered. In addition, it

concluded that the soldiers had altered the crime scene and falsified their report.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, October 7, 2009.



* October 7, 2009. A Colombian Army officer, two noncommissioned officers, and three soldiers have been arrested and charged with aggravated kidnapping and homicide in connection with the deaths of Fanny Ramirez Florez and Victor Raul Florez, mother and son, on March 21, 2005. Soldiers dragged them from their house in the town of La Loma (Antioquia Province). They were later reported as killed in combat. Another officer was charged with lying in connection with the case.

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

* October 6, 2009. Freddy Rendon Herrera, alias "El Aleman" (The German), giving testimony before prosecutors in Medellin, stated that paramilitaries murdered the humorist Jaime Garzon "as a favor" to the Colombian military. In January 2001, hit men who were part of a paramilitary group commanded by extradited paramilitary commander Diego Fernando Murillo, alias "Don Berna", killed Garzon. They stated that a Colombian Army general had visited their commander and asked that Garzon be killed.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Pais*, Cali, October 6, 2009.

* October 6, 2009. A Colombian Administrative Court in Sincelejo (Sucre Province) has ordered the Colombian government to pay 2.5 billion pesos (about \$1,250,000) to the families of the 27 people who were murdered by paramilitaries in the Chengue massacre in January 2001. The court found that the Colombian Army, Police, and Marines did nothing to protect the people, although the people asked for help when the paramilitaries announced their intention to take control of the area. The Colombian Armed Forces aided the paramilitaries in their comings and goings. One hundred paramilitaries entered the town at 4 a.m., rounded up all the citizens in the park, and picked out those who were to be killed, then killed them with mallets. They burned 32 of the 75 houses in the town.

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

* October 5, 2009. A Colombian National Police Captain and eight soldiers from the 4th Brigade of the Colombian Army have been arrested and charged with kidnapping and murder in the death of a civilian. On October 5, 2005, in Argelia (Antioquia Province) the soldiers arrested Gabriel Valencia Ocampo illegally. The next day he was reported as a guerrilla killed in combat. An Army lieutenant, who is a fugitive, and three soldiers, have already been sentenced to 33 years in prison for their part in the killing.

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



* October 4, 2009. Bogotá newsweekly *Semana* carries an account of the bombing of civilians in the town of Santo Domingo (Arauca Province) on December 12, 1998. Two Colombian Air Force officers have recently been convicted of crimes in connection with the bombing. After the cluster bombs were dropped near the occupied houses, the survivors tried to escape, but another helicopter fired on them. Seventeen civilians were killed, six of them children between the ages of 4 and 14. Twenty-one people were seriously injured, and many of them disabled for life.

At first the Colombian Air Force denied that there had been any bombing. The Air Force criminal investigation concluded that the explosion had been caused by a guerrilla car bomb. Investigations by the Attorney General's office, aided by the FBI, showed that a cluster bomb had been dropped near the houses and the Air Force then admitted that. The pilots then claimed that the bomb had not been dropped near the houses. One of the helicopters had a video, but the video disappeared. When it was found, the audio had been edited. When the evidence was finally available, the criminal charges were instituted by the Attorney General.

Source: *Semana*, October 4, 2009.

* October 4, 2009. *Semana* also carries an article about Jose Miguel Narvaez, a former deputy director of the DAS (Colombian FBI). He is suspected of creating the DAS illegal wiretapping system that was discovered recently and is under arrest in connection with that investigation. He may be involved in the murder of the humorist Jaime Garzon. Demobilized paramilitaries have testified that he helped train paramilitaries, telling them that it was legal to combat communists wherever they might be. He taught them that nongovernmental organizations were allied with the guerrillas.

Source: *Semana*, October 4, 2009.

* October 3, 2009. Colombia's military justice system has allowed the statute of limitations to run on 707 cases. Sixteen thousand cases await attention, including 4,345 murders. There are 3,803 murder investigations involving members of the Army, 32 involve members of the Navy, 60 involve members of the Air Force, and 450 involve Police officers. There are 1,200 investigations pending for extrajudicial executions or "false positives".

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, October 3, 2009.

* October 2, 2009. A "recruiter", already sentenced to 17 years in prison for recruiting a young man to be killed by the Colombian Army and presented as a guerrilla killed in combat, has received a new sentence of 20 years for doing the same thing to another young man. Jose Dionisio Ramos Castillo, alias "Joselito Carnaval" confessed that he had recruited Juan Carlos Santos Ortega, who was reported as a guerrilla killed in combat by soldiers in Sucre Province. He admitted that he had turned Santos over to the soldiers for 50 thousand pesos (about \$25). He confessed that on previous occasions he had received between 50 thousand and 120 thousand pesos (about \$60) for each young man he turned over to the soldiers to be killed.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov>.

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* October 2, 2009. Four Colombian Police officers have been arrested and charged with torturing suspects on September 7, 2009 in Yopal (Casanare Province). First they beat them up, then let them go to flee, while firing their weapons in the air. They are being charged with false arrest and aggravated torture.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* October 1, 2009. A Colombian National Police officer has been arrested and charged with false arrest and aggravated torture in the police station in Ataco (Tolima Province) on August 6, 2006. Members of the Colombian Army were allowed to torture a laborer who they thought was a guerrilla. They later took the victim in a helicopter to their headquarters in Chaparral (Tolima Province) and released him. Another police officer, a sergeant, may also be charged, as he was in command of the police station and permitted the torture.

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

* October 1, 2009. Five "recruiters", who allegedly lured young men from Soacha with false job offers so that they could be murdered by soldiers, have been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide, forced disappearance and aggravated criminal conspiracy. Prosecutors charge that the soldiers killed them so that they could present them as guerrillas killed in combat, thus demonstrating "positive results" and being rewarded by superiors.

Source: Attorney General's web site, *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Pais*, Cali, October 1, 2009, and *El Colombiano*, Medellín, October 2, 2009.

* October 1, 2009. Jose Dionisio Ramos Castillo has confessed that he recruited young men for nonexistent jobs and transported them to Army camps, because he knew that some members of the Colombian Army were looking for young men so that they could kill them and present them as guerrillas killed in combat. In return for his confession, he received a reduced sentence of 17 years in prison for the crimes of aggravated homicide and aggravated criminal conspiracy.

Source: Attorney General's web site, *Semana*, *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Herald*, Barranquilla, *El Pais*, Cali, October 1, 2009, and *El Colombiano*, Medellín, October 2, 2009.

* September 30, 2009. The Colombian Attorney General's office announced that members of the Police and Armed Forces, as well as officials of the DAS (Colombian FBI) may have been involved in the murder of journalist and comedian Jaime Garzon in 1999. The investigation is continuing, evidence is being gathered, and witnesses are being interviewed. The murder may have been politically motivated.

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

* September 29, 2009. *El Pais* provides an update on the trial of eight police officers on charges of forced disappearance of two other officers. A witness testified that, after they illegally searched the residence of the officers and found weapons, the defendants called a press conference and claimed that they had seized the weapons from a criminal gang. They are also accused of finding a vehicle that had been reported stolen and using it in their criminal activities. They later abandoned the vehicle, but made no record of finding it.



Source: *El Pais*, Cali, September 29, 2009.

* September 29, 2009. A court in Cauca Province has sentenced a Colombian Army soldier, Rodrigo Antonio Hernandez Sucerquia, to 27 years in prison for aggravated homicide.

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

* September 29, 2009. Col. Sergio Garzon of the Colombian Air Force is being investigated for his part in the killing of 17 civilians in the village of Santo Domingo on December 13, 1998. Two other Air Force officers have already been convicted for dropping cluster bombs on the village. Garzon is accused of firing on survivors of the bombing.

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

* September 29, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier, dressed in civilian clothes, got drunk in a store and used two fragmentation grenades he was carrying to threaten a woman who worked there. Police persuaded him to hand over the grenades and he was arrested.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla.

* September 29, 2009. Colombian Army colonel Luis Medina and two majors are being investigated for planning the murder of three labor leaders in Arauca Province in 2004. The Inspector General has already ordered them discharged from their positions, and they have appealed the discharge. The three defendants will be charged with aggravated homicide. The investigation showed that they ordered the victims' bodies moved in order to cover up the summary execution.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Pais*, Cali, September 29, 2009.

* September 28, 2009. Six Colombian Army soldiers were arrested and held without bail on charges of aggravated kidnapping and aggravated homicide. They are accused of taking a civilian, Daniel Angarita, out of his car, killing him, and presenting his body as a person killed in combat. The alleged acts took place on August 10, 2006 in Las Jaguas del Pilar (Guajira Province).

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, September 30, 2009, *El Espectador*, Bogotá, September 29, 2009 and, September 28, 2009, Attorney General's web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/>



* September 28, 2009. Colombia's Inspector General has brought charges against three soldiers for killing a civilian, Luis Evelio Angarita Angarita, on his way to work on his farm in the town of El Limon (Norte de Santander Province). The victim was later presented as a guerrilla killed in combat. The defendants claimed they had moved the body because of enemy fire. The Inspector General concluded that there had been no combat and that the soldiers were seeking rewards from their superiors.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, September 28, 2009.

* September 26, 2009. A Colombian criminal court is trying a retired Army Lt. Colonel, a lieutenant, and five soldiers for the murder of two civilians whom they presented as gang members killed in combat. The prosecution will call 40 witnesses, including the mayor of Cimitarra (Santander Province) where the bodies were found on March 4, 2008.

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

* September 26, 2009. Two Colombian Air Force officers were sentenced to 31 years in prison for dropping cluster bombs on the village of Santo Domingo (Arauca Province) in December 1998. Seventeen civilians were killed, including six children. A third crew member was sentenced in six years in prison, because he was acting on orders from the two officers. The case has been in litigation for ten years, after various defenses were presented and dismissed by the courts. The court noted that the scene had been modified to interfere with the investigation.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and *El Mundo*, Medellin.

* September 26, 2009. A municipal official in Cundinamarca has complained that two Colombian Army soldiers assaulted her sexually after they got drunk at a party. The Army is investigating and is cooperating with the Attorney General's investigation.

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

* September 26, 2009. Two Colombian Army soldiers are being investigated by the Attorney General's office in connection with the death of three peasant farmers whose bodies were presented as guerrillas killed in combat in Buenavista (La Guajira Province) on July 4, 2006. The investigation concluded that the deaths were not caused by combat.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, September 26, 2009.

* September 25, 2009. Two Colombian Army soldiers, a 2nd lieutenant and a corporal, have been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide. According to the investigation, on July 4, 2006, in La Jagua del Pilar (Guajira Province), they killed three civilians and presented them as killed in combat. Investigators found no evidence of any combat.

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

[controlador/controlador](#)



* September 25, 2009. Detectives from the Attorney General's office have captured Pedro Antonio Gomez Diaz, accused of being a "recruiter" who promised nonexistent jobs to poor young men and took them to Colombian Army troops to be murdered and presented as guerrillas killed in combat. Gomez is charged with aggravated homicide forced disappearance, and criminal conspiracy.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, September 25, 2009, and Attorney General's web site.

* September 25, 2009. The *Washington Post* reports that two mass graves have been found in Colombia, one near La Uribe (Meta Province) and one on a ranch that belonged to a deceased paramilitary leader, Carlos Castano in Antioquia Province. Detectives report that 17 bodies were found at the ranch and that all showed signs of torture. The *Post* reports that "...The militias often colluded with members of Colombia's armed forces ..."

Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., September 25, 2009.

* September 24, 2009. A former Colombian Army soldier has been arrested and charged with the murder of a civilian in Meta Province on April 19, 2004 and with falsifying his report. According to the prosecution, his patrol fired on three civilians driving a pick-up truck. One of the civilians was killed. An Army helicopter overhead photographed the incident, but the defendant insisted that the gunfire that killed the civilian came from the helicopter.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site, September 24, 2009.

* September 24, 2009. Two former Colombian National Police officers were sentenced to 37 and 38 years in prison respectively. They were convicted of aggravated homicide and aggravated torture. The prosecution proved that on February 28, 2008, at police headquarters, they tortured two minors in order to obtain information about a drug distributor. They released one of the victims, but murdered the other one.

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

* September 23, 2009. Ex-Colombian Army Col. Bayron Carvajal Osorio, already serving 54 years in prison for the massacre of ten police officers at Jamundi (Valle del Cauca Province) on May 22, 2006, is charged with drug trafficking, aggravated fabrication and possession of controlled substances, and destruction of evidence. Another Army officer, Luis Eduardo Mahecha Hernandez is charged with taking part in the drug activity, and is being investigated for aggravated homicide in connection with the death of a civilian, a peasant farmer.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, September 23, 2009.

* September 23, 2009. General Oscar Naranjo, Director of Colombia's National Police, has admitted that police illegally monitored the telephone conversations of Supreme Court Justice Ivan Velasquez.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, September 23 and *El Pais*, Cali, September 22, 2009.



* September 22, 2009. Colombia's Inspector General is carrying out a disciplinary proceeding against nine Colombian Police aides accused of sexually assaulting a 14-year-old girl. The young men claim that the girl sought sexual activity, but under a recent decision of the Constitutional Court, a child of 14 is not competent to consent to a sexual act.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, September 22, 2009.

* September 22, 2009. Colombia's Vice President Francisco Santos, speaking on behalf of the Colombian government, has formally asked pardon for the massacre that took place at El Salada (Bolívar Province) February 16-21, 2000. More than 60 civilians were brutally murdered by paramilitaries. The government asks pardon because, even after nine years and seven months, all of the facts have not been made clear and not all of those responsible have been brought to justice.

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

* September 20, 2009. Bogotá newspaper *El Tiempo* warns that Pedro Olivero Guerrero, alias "Cuchillo" ("Knife") has gathered 1,100 paramilitaries in the Llano (Sucre Province). Families are fleeing their lands so that their sons will not be recruited. The paramilitaries control cocaine routes in four Colombian provinces and control a river route to send cocaine to Venezuela and Brazil. According to *El Tiempo*, President Uribe has ordered the Army to capture "Cuchillo", but he is protected by public officials and by members of the Armed Forces.

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

* September 19, 2009. Today was the beginning of the trial of eight former Colombian police officers on charges of forced disappearance and criminal conspiracy. They are also implicated in a bank fraud. According to the complaint, the defendants arrived at another officer's residence and conducted an illegal search. They found a suitcase containing a rifle and four pistols. The officer was taken into custody and was never seen again. The prosecution will also seek to prove that the officers were involved in a number of residential burglaries

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, September 19, 2009 and September 26, 2009.

* September 18, 2009. Colombian Army soldier Jhon Freddy Martinez has been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide and forced disappearance. Investigators charge that the victim was contacted by a "recruiter" on December 6, 2005 in Itagui (Antioquia Province) and offered a job. He was later turned over to the Army and was murdered and presented as a guerrilla killed in combat.

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



* September 18, 2009. Rep. George Miller, Chairman of the U.S. House Labor and Education Committee, has expressed concern about the allegation that the DAS (Colombian FBI) illegally wiretapped and followed Colombian lawyer Alirio Munoz and a Colombian legal NGO, the Jose Alvear Restrepo Legal Collective. Munoz has represented the families of labor leaders who were murdered by paramilitaries, allegedly based on a "black list" given them by the then-Director of the DAS. Rep. Miller complains that the DAS spied on lawyers and labor leaders that it is responsible for protecting.

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

* September 17, 2009. *The New York Times* reports that the DAS (Colombian FBI) has illegally wiretapped a phone conversation between a top official at the U.S. Embassy in Bogotá and a Colombian Supreme Court Justice. It has also monitored NGO's and human rights lawyers, *The Times* describes a file kept by the DAS on one human rights lawyer, Alirio Munoz. It contained photos of his children, transcripts of phone and e-mail conversations, details on his finances and evidence that DAS agents rented an apartment across from his home to monitor him.

Source: *The New York Times*, New York, September 17, 2009.

* September 17, 2009. A Colombia criminal court has found Jairo Charris Castro guilty of the murder of two labor leaders at the Drummond Corporation in 2001. The court has also asked the Attorney General's office to investigate the defendant's allegation that a retired Army colonel was also involved in the killing.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, September 17, 2009.

* September 17, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier has been arrested and charged with the murder of a civilian, Oscar Eduardo Lucumi Dominguez, on August 31, 2008.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, September 17, 2009.

* September 16, 2009. A Colombian Army officer, a noncommissioned officer, and eight soldiers were bound over for trial on charges of murder, forced disappearance, and destruction of military documents. They are accused of murdering a civilian on August 15, 2007 in Aguazul (Casanare Province) and presenting him as having been killed in combat.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, and Attorney General's web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* September 16, 2009. A special committee of the Colombian National Police is investigating the loss of two assault weapons and a machine gun assigned to a police squad in the city of Neiva (Huila Province). A criminal investigation is also under way.

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

* September 16, 2009. Family members of the 11 young men who were recruited for nonexistent jobs and then murdered by Colombian Army soldiers testified in the trial of one of the alleged recruiters, Andres Pacheco. The sister of one of the victims testified that she had joined several meetings with the recruiters and told them that she wanted to go along, but they told her they did not want any women. The 11 young men disappeared on July 22, 2007, and six months later their bodies were found after the soldiers had presented them as killed in combat.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, September 16, 2009.

* September 15, 2009. Seven Colombian Army soldiers and a sergeant are charged with aggravated homicide in the death of a civilian on March 11, 2009, in the municipality of Golondrinas, near Cali (Valle del Cauca Province). Investigators found that the victim's body had been moved and the shots fired at different times, contrary to the soldiers' testimony.

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

* September 14, 2009. A Colombian Army 2d lieutenant was bound over for trial in the death of a civilian on November 13, 2006. Jose Angel Higueta, who lived near Dabeiba (Antioquia Province) left home on his bicycle for a job patching holes in the highway. He never returned and his bicycle and tools were found on the highway. The next day his body was found in the morgue in Chigorodo, supposedly killed in combat. Investigators found that the Army patrol commanded by the defendant had changed his civilian clothes to camouflage and then killed him. They placed a radio and a pistol near his body, to make him look like a guerrilla. Two noncommissioned officers and a soldier, all attached to the 17th Brigade headquartered in Carepa, have already been charged.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site, September 14, 2009.

* September 14, 2009. The Colombian Attorney General's office has concluded that the "false positives" scandal was not limited to the 11 young men from Soacha (Cundinamarca Province) who were offered nonexistent jobs and then murdered and presented as guerrillas killed in combat. *Caracol Radio* had access to statements made by Jose Dionisio Ramos Castillo, alias "Joselito Carnaval" who was alleged to be a "recruiter" of poor young men who murdered by Army soldiers. Carnaval was also connected to the deaths of young men killed by soldiers in Chinu municipality (Cordoba Province) and by soldiers from the 17th Brigade (Antioquia Province).



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

* September 14, 2009. The Colombian National Commission for Reparation and Reconciliation (The Spanish acronym is CNRR) has issued a report on the massacre that took place at El Salado (Bolívar Province) from February 16 to February 21, 2000. In the massacre, according to CNRR, 450 paramilitaries tortured and killed 61 civilians and committed atrocities. The report accuses Colombian Marines of taking part.



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

* September 13, 2009. The Colombian government asked pardon for the El Salada massacre in which 61 civilians were killed in February 2000. A report by the Colombian National Commission for Reparation and Reconciliation concludes that Colombian Marines took part. Another group, the Colombian Jurists Commission, reached the same conclusion.

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

* September 12, 2009. The U.S. State Department has characterized the DAS (Colombian FBI) wiretapping scandal as “alarming and unacceptable” and has asked for a thorough and independent investigation. It also expressed concern that the illegal wiretapping may be continuing. The State Department also issued its annual report on human rights in Colombia, certifying it as eligible to continue receiving aid. The U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations has also expressed concern about a “pattern of extrajudicial murders of civilians” by the Colombian Army.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, September 12, 2009.

* September 11, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier seized a taxi driver as a hostage and threatened to kill himself. He had been drinking and fired his weapon, calling for his mother and his girlfriend. They urged him to lay down the gun and surrender to the Police. After firing into the air and an exchange of gunfire, he surrendered.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, September 11, 2009.

* September 11, 2009. A demobilized paramilitary commander, making his confession under Colombia’s Justice and Peace law, told authorities that the massacre of 17 merchants in October 1987 was to serve as training for a group of paramilitary recruits. They were to be trained in techniques of torture, murder, and dismemberment so that they could serve in death squads. The ex-paramilitary commander, Alonso de Jesús Baquero, alias “Vladimir”, testified that there were probably 180 to 200 “students”.

Vladimir testified that the 17 merchants were identified to be killed by the 5th and 14th Brigades of the Colombian Army, because they were believed to be selling equipment to the guerrillas. He testified that soldiers from the 5th Brigade followed the victims to a location and then radioed the paramilitaries the descriptions and license numbers of their vehicles. They were taken to the paramilitary “school” and shot to death. Later their bodies were dismembered and thrown into the Magdalena River.

Vladimir also testified that Colombian Army General Farouk Yanine Diaz insisted that the 17 be killed in a meeting with another paramilitary commander, now dead. “The General told us that the only way to cut off supplies to the guerrillas would be to kill all of those merchants,” he said. He went on to say that General Diaz was “practically the father” of the paramilitaries in Magdalena Medio. General Diaz, interrogated before his own death, denied any connection with the paramilitaries.



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

* September 11, 2009. Ten retired Colombian Army soldiers have been charged with aggravated homicide in the killing of a civilian who was later presented as having been killed in combat. They killed Ever David Benavides Royet on February 10, 2006 in the municipality of Tiquisio (Bolívar Province). According to the Attorney General’s office, the evidence supported a conclusion of intentional murder and there was no evidence of any combat.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and Attorney General’s web site, September 11, 2009.

* September 10, 2009. Colombia’s Attorney General has ordered the arrest of a retired Colombian Army General, Francisco Rene Pedraza Pelaez, in connection with the Naya massacre the Valle and Cauca Provinces. He is charged with multiple aggravated homicide, aggravated forced displacement, aggravated criminal conspiracy and terrorism. Demobilized paramilitary commanders have testified that soldiers under his command took part in the massacre and that his troops provide the paramilitaries with information and transportation. Colombia’s highest administrative court, the Council of State has already held that the government is responsible for the massacre, if only because the Army took no steps to avoid it.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *Semana*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellín, and *El Pais*, Barranquilla, *Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., and Attorney General’s web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* September 10, 2009. A Colombian Police sergeant has been arrested and charged with torturing a peasant farmer in the Ataco police station (Tolima Province) on August 6, 2006. The farmer was accused of being a guerrilla. After the torture, the farmer was taken by helicopter to Chaparral and released.

Source: *El Tiempo*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and Attorney General’s web site, September 10, 2009.

* September 10, 2009. A trial date has been set for seven former Colombian Police officers, charged in the disappearance of two other officers.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, September 10, 2009.

* September 9, 2009. Colombian authorities have arrested members of a drug trafficking

ring, including three Colombian Police officers and an official of the Civil Aeronautics Agency. They are charged with drug trafficking and criminal conspiracy.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Pais*, Cali, and the Attorney General's web site, September 9, 2009.



* September 9, 2009. Colombian authorities are worried about an increase in the number of airport officials involved in drug trafficking. Along with three police officers and a Civil Aeronautics official, they arrested a retired Army colonel and two former police officers. Just three months ago, two air traffic controllers were arrested for opening the Popayan airport at night so that a small plane loaded with cocaine could land. Finally, a provincial Civil Aeronautics director was charged with furnishing gasoline to drug laboratories.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, September 9, 2009.

* September 9, 2009. The Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) removed a provincial DAS official, Victor Gonzalo Ojeda, after receiving information that he was connected with a criminal gang "Aguilas Negras" ("Black Eagles"). Ojeda was captured along with other gang members and charged with bribery, criminal conspiracy and falsification of documents. He is alleged to have provided gang members with information about military plans and operations.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, September 9, 2009.

* September 8, 2009. Five retired Colombian Army soldiers are facing trial in the murder of two men who were presented as killed in combat. The soldiers are alleged to have entered a ranch in Aracataca (Magdalena Province) and killed the two, who were jewelry merchants, not guerrillas.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, September 8, 2009 and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, September 9, 2009.

September 8, 2009. Rafael Garcia, the former intelligence chief of the DAS (Colombian FBI) is in the United States, seeking admission to the witness protection program. He maintains that in 2002, then-director of the DAS, Jorge Noguera, traveled to Mexico to negotiate agreements with the Mexican drug cartels. He named other DAS officials who used DAS access to airports to facilitate the movement of drugs.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, September 8, 2009.

* September 8, 2009. Colombian police arrested two bodyguards working as contractors for the DAS (Colombian FBI) for illegal transportation of munitions. They were carrying 7,000 bullets for AK-47 assault weapons. Each carried three pistols and two Kevlar vests. They were driving a truck registered to the Ministry of the Interior. They had also falsified their work records.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, September 8, 2009.

* September 7, 2009. A Colombian Police officer was sentenced to 37 years in prison for the murder of a street person in January 2009. Another officer has pleaded guilty to the murder charge.



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

* September 5, 2009. Colombian news magazine *Semana* reports that a retired Army sergeant has been arranging the use of military weapons and equipment, including helicopters by filmmakers preparing movies and television productions. He has even permitted the use of a base used for specialized training by the Colombian Army and US contractors. He has charged the filmmakers for his services and for the use of the equipment.

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

* September 5, 2009. Two DAS (Colombian FBI) officials have been charged with human trafficking, falsifying public documents, and illegal use of classified information, in connection with spiriting out of the country persons who are the subject of Colombian arrest warrants.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, September 5, 2009 and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, September 6, 2009.

* September 4, 2009. The Attorney General has requested a warrant for the arrest of a Colombian Army soldier who shot a fellow soldier when both were stationed in Sinai. Army sources at the time believed that the killing had been an accident, but the Attorney General's investigation concluded that the defendant had fired four shots at the victim and made statements indicating intent to kill. He will be charged with assault and battery and murder.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, September 4, 2009.

* September 4, 2009. William Brownfield, U.S. Ambassador to Colombia, expressed concern that a U.S. Embassy official was one of the persons whose conversations were illegally intercepted by the DAS (Colombian FBI).

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, September 4, 2009.

* September 3, 2009. Colombia's Inspector General filed charges against 2nd Lieutenant Daniel Avila Amezcuita, commander of a counter-guerrilla unit and Corporal Ciro Alfonso Ochoa Carrascal, and two other soldiers, charging that on February 24, 2006 they murdered a peasant farmer in Urrao (Antioquia Province). Although the victim was presented as a guerrilla killed in combat, in fact, there had been no combat. The victim was a peasant farmer who was tending to his land.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, September 3, 2009.

* September 3, 2009. A retired Colombian soldier is charged with two incidents of sexual

assault, committed between December 2008 and January 2009 in La Union (Antioquia Province). He is charged with threatening the victims with a shotgun, assaulting them, and stealing their belongings.



Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, September 3, 2009.

* September 3, 2009. Ten demobilized paramilitaries, making their confessions under the Justice and Peace law, have confessed to 249 crimes with at least 330 victims. They confessed to 18 massacres that had not been complained of or investigated because the victims could not be found. They have implicated members of the Colombian Armed Forces and the DAS (Colombian FBI). They said that the National Police in various municipalities helped them by furnishing gasoline for their vehicles.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, September 3, 2009.

* September 3, 2009. In 1998, 666 kilos of cocaine and 1,300 grams of heroin were found in a Colombian Air Force plane when it landed in Fort Lauderdale from Bogotá. The crew, a colonel, a major, a lieutenant, a sergeant, and a corporal, and a civilian, were sentenced to prison. Two of them created a fake certificate declaring them not guilty, forging a judge's signature. They have been arrested and charged with fraud.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site, September 3, 2009.

* September 3, 2009. Two Colombian soldiers have been arrested and charged with aggravated kidnapping and aggravated homicide in connection with the killing of four people on August 10, 2006, in Las Aguas del Pilar (Guajira Province). The four victims were presented as guerrillas killed in combat, but the investigation found no evidence of any combat. Ten other soldiers are under investigation in connection with the incident.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site: <http://fgn.fiscalia.gov.co:8080/Fiscalia/contenido/controlador/controlador>

* September 2, 2009. Colombian Army soldiers assigned to guard the Presidential Palace were shown in a video to be drinking and hazing, including more senior soldiers hitting the more junior soldiers with pieces of wood.

Source: *Semana*, Bogotá, September 2, 2009.

* September 1, 2009. Three Colombian prison guards have been arrested and charged with demanding money from prisoners in exchange for allowing them to have cell phones and other benefits.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, September 1, 2009.

* September 1, 2009. The justices of the Colombian Supreme Court met with the Director of the National Police to discuss their concerns about personal security after the revelation of the DAS (Colombian FBI) illegal wiretapping scandal. The news magazine *Semana* recently revealed that the illegal wiretapping appears to be continuing and that the illegal interceptions cover very current topics. They insisted that the DAS not take responsibility for their protection and that the Police reinforce security.



Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, September 1, 2009.

* September 1, 2009. A Colombian court has sentenced five Colombian soldiers to prison terms from 35 to 40 years for their part in a massacre of civilians in Cajamarca (Tolima Province). A baby, a child, and three adults were killed. According to the investigation, the soldiers fired their weapons “at the noise” and killed four of the civilians. The fifth was wounded and asked for help, but the noncommissioned officer in charge performed a lottery as to which soldier should kill the survivor because “dead men tell no tales.”

Source: *Semana*, Bogotá, September 1, 2009, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, September 2, 2009.

* August 31, 2009. A Colombian Marine, retired, has been charged with aggravated homicide, forced disappearance, and falsification of a public document. The prosecutor charges that on March 10, 2005 in the town of Las Palmas (Bolívar Province) he killed two civilians and presented them as guerrillas killed in combat.

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

* August 31, 2009. The Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) announces that 65 DAS officials have been discharged for their part in the illegal wiretapping scandal. The Colombian news magazine *Semana* has reported that the illegal wiretaps are continuing, and the DAS Director has asked the Attorney General’s office to determine whether or not private contractors might be involved.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 31, 2009.

* August 31, 2009. A Colombian journalist, Claudia Julieta Duque, has obtained a court order requiring the Colombian National Police to provide protection for her, and also requiring the DAS to provide her with access to the file it kept on her. Duque was one of the journalists whose correspondence and telephone calls were intercepted illegally by the DAS.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, August 31, 2009.

* August 30, 2009. *El País* of Cali reports on the *Semana* revelations about continuing illegal wiretapping by the DAS (Colombian FBI). It also reports a formal complaint to the Attorney General by an NGO representative. Susana Villaran, a representative the International Federation for Human Rights, complains that DAS officials followed her and other representatives on a mission to Valledupar in 2005. She claims that members of the mission were confronted and threatened by DAS officials. They were photographed and their

passports were photocopied.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 30, 2009.

* August 30, 2009. Retired Colombian Army General Farouk Yanine Diaz died of cancer in a Bogotá hospital. He has been investigated for his role in the massacre of 19 merchants on October 6, 1987. In January, 1989, a group of judicial officers were investigating the massacre and 12 of them were killed. General Yanine Diaz was cleared of responsibility at the time, but the Inter-American Court for Human Rights condemned the Colombian government for the massacres on May 11, 2007, and ordered the investigation re-opened. The Attorney General re-opened the investigation this year, and called the general to testify, but he was too ill to attend the hearing.



Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, August 30, 2009.

* August 29, 2009. Eleven Colombian Army noncommissioned officers were sentenced to prison for torturing soldiers under their command. Nine of them were sentenced to terms of 15 years after they were found guilty of aggravated torture and assault and battery. Two others were sentenced to 16 years after being found guilty of assault and battery and aggravated torture. One of them was also found guilty of sexual assault.

Source: *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, August 29, 2009.

* August 29, 2009. Colombia's National Commission for Reconciliation and Reparation presented its report on the massacre at El Salado (Bolívar Province) in 2000. The report finds that 60 people were killed, not 38 as reported by the Colombian military. According to the report, between February 16 and February 21, 2000, some 450 paramilitaries entered several towns, killing and terrorizing the civilian population, while the Army troops stationed nearby did nothing. A pregnant woman was impaled and citizens were forced to take a number and put a numbered paper in a bag, so that numbers of those to be killed could be picked from the bag.

Source: *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, August 29, 2009.

* August 29, 2009. Colombia's news magazine *Semana* reports that the DAS, in spite of the illegal wiretapping scandal, is continuing to follow Supreme Court justices, politicians, NGO activists and members of the political opposition and intercept their communications. According to *Semana*, both active and retired detectives are following judges, especially the judge who is investigating the connections between politicians and the paramilitaries. One of the conversations intercepted involved James Faulkner, a U.S. Department of Justice official attached to the U.S. Embassy in Bogotá. The magazine also claims that some of the equipment used, detectives operating, and files created are not listed as DAS property and have not been made available to the Attorney General's investigators.

Source: *Semana.com*. <http://www.semana.com/wf/ImprimirArticulo.aspx?IdArt=127960>



* August 28, 2009. Retired and imprisoned Colombian Army Colonel Bayron Carvajal is being prosecuted for drug trafficking. He was sentenced to 54 years in prison after he was found guilty of taking part in the massacre of DEA-trained drug crime investigators. He is accused of seizing 13 kilos of cocaine that had been captured in a previous operation. Investigators charge that he kept the cocaine because its owner offered him money to return it.

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

* August 24, 2009. Five Colombian Army soldiers were arrested in Riohacha after they reported three innocent civilians killed in combat. The victims 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*, Medellín, 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 Medellín 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>

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* 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 Herald*, 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 Higuita. On November 13, 2005, Higuita, 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 Herald*, 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 Herald*, 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*, Medellín, 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*, Medellín, *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 Medellín, 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*, Medellín, 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*, Medellín.

* July 30, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier was arrested and charged with stealing munitions and attempting to sell them to criminal gangs in Medellín. 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 Pais*, 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 Pais*, 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 Pais*, 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*, Medellín, 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 Herald*, 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*, Medellín, July 19, and *El Pais*, Cali, July 20.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, *El Mundo*, Medellín, 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 kidnappers. 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 Medellin 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, Medellin, 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 investigation 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 partiers 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 Herald, 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 Pais*, 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*, Medellin, *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 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 her 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 Herald*, 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 Herald*, 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 Herald*, 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*, Medellín, June 24, 2009. Also *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellín, and *El Heraldo*, 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*, Medellín, 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 Manuel Soto Salcedo, Ruben Dario Rendon Blanquizet, 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*, Medellín, 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 guerillas 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 Urao 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 and 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*, Medellín, 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 Ocaña (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 Ocaña, 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, Bogotá, May 28, 2009.

May 28, 2009: Antonio Yesid Galindo Alvarez, an ex policeman was arrested in Bogotá 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*, Bogotá, 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*, Bogotá, 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 Heraldo*, 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, Bogotá*, 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 guerillas 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, Bogotá*, 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 guerilla gear and armed. The officer, for killing a guerilla, 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 hitmen. 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, Bogotá*, 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, Bogotá*, May 15, 2009

May 15, 2009: Colonel 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, Bogotá*, 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*, Bogotá 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 non-commissioned officer, 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*, Medellín, 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*, Medellín, 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*, Bogotá, 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*, Bogotá, 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, Bogotá, 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 defendant’s 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*, Bogotá 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, Bogotá, 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 Heraldo*, Barranquilla, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, April 29, 2009, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, 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 Pais*, 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 Toluviéjo (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 Herald*, 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*, Medellin 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*, Medellin, 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 Herald*, 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 Toluviejo (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 20007 (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*, Medellin, 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*, Medellin, 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*, Medellin, 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*, Medellin, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, April 15, 2009, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, 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 Herald*, 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.

* March 31, 2009. Two detectives working in the Colombian Attorney General’s office were sentenced to 10 years in prison for bribery and destruction of evidence. After authorities found the bodies of four people in a residence in Bogotá, the two were paid a large sum of money to alter the crime scene.

Source: Attorney General’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/secbogota/SbConcuCTIMar31.htm>

* March 30, 2009. Three Colombian Army soldiers have been arrested and charged with homicide in the deaths of three civilians on July 4, 2006 in La Jagua del Pilar (Guajira Province). The three victims were reported as killed in combat.

Source: Attorney General’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/DH/DhFalsoPosiMar30.htm>

* March 26, 2009. Colombia’s Supreme Court has ordered sentences of 28 and 30 years for 14 Colombian soldiers found guilty of murdering civilians and presenting them as guerrillas killed in combat. On September 8, 1996, the 14 soldiers went to the town of Nuevo Carnal (Arauca Province) and dragged two men from their houses. They claimed that they had a court order, but in fact, they did not have one. Later the two victims were found dead, with bullet wounds, and with handguns, dynamite, cartridges, two mines, and various propaganda pamphlets referring to a guerrilla group lying near their bodies. All 14 were convicted of aggravated homicide. The Lieutenant was sentenced to 32 years in prison, the three noncommissioned officers to 30 years, and the 11 soldiers to 28 years.

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

* March 26, 2009. An officer in the Colombian National Police has been arrested and charged with preparation, transportation, and trafficking in illegal drugs. Forty-five kilos of cocaine were found in some sound equipment in the trunk of his car.

Source: Attorney General’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/secantioqia/SaPoliNarcoMar26.htm>

* March 25, 2009. An alleged “recruiter”, Andres Gregorio Pacheco Hernandez, has been formally charged with aggravated criminal conspiracy, forced disappearance and homicide in the case of four young men and a minor. Pacheco is alleged to have promised them farming jobs and instead turned the four over to the Army to be murdered and presented as guerrillas killed in combat. The minor has disappeared. Two other men have pleaded guilty in connection with the killings.



Source: Attorney General’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/DH/DhToluviejoMar25.htm>

* March 20, 2009. A demobilized paramilitary commander, Edwin Manuel Tirado Morales, alias “El Chuzo” (“Whip”) making his confession under the Justice and Peace Law, described the friendly relations between the paramilitaries and Colombian Police and Marines in Bolivar and Sucre provinces. “I walked right into the police station with weapons, and I was never searched”, he asserted. He provided details on meetings between extradited paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso and military commanders. According to his testimony, the officers provided information as to who collaborated with the guerrillas, and the paramilitaries then killed those individuals.

Source: *El Herald*, Barranquilla, March 20, 2009.

* March 19, 2009. A Colombian Defense Ministry official has been charged with selling Defense Ministry data base information. She is also charged with bribing other Ministry officials not to reveal her activities.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin.

* March 19, 2009. A warrant was issued for the arrest of two Colombian soldiers in connection with the death of a teenage girl in September 2003 in the municipality of Granada (Antioquia Province). Soldiers entered a house and detained a 16-year-old girl and took her to the town of La Linda where she was last seen alive. Her body was later registered in a morgue as a guerrilla killed in combat. The soldiers gave conflicting stories to the detectives investigating the case. The investigation concluded that the teenager and her family were coffee-pickers and, furthermore, that there was no complete report of combat.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 19, 2009.

* March 18, 2009. Colombia extradited a former army major to the U.S. on drug trafficking charges. He had been jailed in Bogotá since April 2008. Court-authorized wire taps revealed him discussing drug shipments to the U.S., Central America and Mexico. He is also under investigation in a February 2007 killing of five people.

Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., March 18, 2009.

* March 18, 2009. Three ex-officers of the DAS (Colombian FBI) were sentenced to nine

years in prison and a fine, after the Attorney General established their cooperation with Colombia's paramilitaries. The evidence showed that they received monthly payments from the paramilitaries. They were found guilty of bribery and criminal conspiracy to organize, promote, arm and finance an illegal armed group.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noicias2009/DH/DhCondExDASMar18.htm>

* March 17, 2009. Colombia's Inspector General has ordered the Ministry of Family Welfare to investigate complaints of child prostitution by the Armed Forces. Members of several communities have complained that soldiers are approaching minor girls and paying them to perform sexual acts. They also complain that in the communities of Dipurdu and San Miguel (Choco Province) commercial child prostitution locations cater to Colombian Armed Forces.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, *El Mundo*, Medellín, and news magazine *Semana*, March 17, 2009.

* March 17, 2009. A demobilized paramilitary commander, Ubre Dario Yanez Cavadias, alias "Comandante 21", pleaded guilty to his part in the massacre of five adults and three children near San Jose de Apartado (Antioquia Province) in February 2005. He will be sentenced to 20 years in prison. Ten active military and one retired officer have also been charged for their part in the massacre.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellín and Attorney General's web site, March 17, 2009.

* March 16, 2009. A Colombian woman, her sister, and her three nieces complain that they were assaulted and injured by police officers. She complains that she and two friends were walking down the street when a police officer demanded to inspect her purse. When she resisted, he grabbed her by the hair and tried to force her into a passing patrol car, she asserts.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, March 16, 2009.

* March 16, 2009. A Colombian Police lieutenant, arrested and charged with aggravated criminal conspiracy and aggravated forced disappearance was denied bail. He is one of eight police officers captured in October 2008. The group will also be charged with robbery, bank robbery, and murder.

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/secvalle/SvTteDesapMar16.htm>

* March 15, 2009. The commanding general of the Colombian Air Force complained that a financial organization created by a retired officer and current officers within the Air Force was fraudulent and defrauded members of the Air Force, including the general.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Pais*, Cali, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, *El Colombiano*, Medellín, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, March 15, 2009,

and *El Mundo*, Medellin, March 16, 2009.

* March 16, 2009. Two Colombian National Police officers were arrested and charged with aggravated homicide and torture in the death of a 15-year-old boy, Rodolfo Blandon Serrano. The complaint alleges that they took him to a deserted area and tortured him to gain information about some drug dealing, and then shot him to death.



Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/secbogota/SbPoliHomiMar16.htm>

* March 12, 2009. Colombian criminal court judges have ordered an investigation of the Army's report of four "guerrillas killed in combat" on November 30, 2003. The Army report included the capture of four shotguns, two rifles, a revolver, a grenade, 400 bullets, two communication radios and some explosives, but failed to mention the killing of a 9-month-old baby who had eight bullet wounds and massive head injuries, and the injury of a 3-year-old child in the same location. Three soldiers reported that the baby's body had been buried by soldiers.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 12, 2009.

* March 12, 2009. Two Colombian guerrillas were captured after they had infiltrated the Army and posed as soldiers for two years. They had provided guerrillas with information about troop movements, locations for explosive charges, and made plans to steal Army weapons and equipment.

Source: *El Tiempo*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, and *El Pais*, Cali, March 12, 2009.

* March 11, 2009. Investigators looking into the illegal wiretapping by the DAS (Colombian FBI) have found evidence that DAS officials sold the illegal wiretaps to private law firms. A firm's client could buy illegal wiretaps for one million pesos (about \$500) per day, depending on the person being wiretapped and the demands of the officials.

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

* March 11, 2009. Colombia's Supreme Court of Justice has ordered the Attorney General to re-open its investigation of retired Brig. Gen. Rito Alejo del Rio for the crimes of criminal conspiracy, misuse of government property and falsification of documents, allegedly committed while he commanded the Army's 17th Brigade headquartered in Carepa. A previous investigation, in 2004, had been closed for lack of evidence. Recent testimony by demobilized paramilitary commanders, making their confession under the Justice and Peace law, has provided new evidence of Alejo's cooperation with the paramilitaries.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, March 12, 2009, and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 11, 2009.

* March 11, 2009. A Colombian Army 2d lieutenant, a corporal, and two soldiers were each sentenced to 30 years in prison. They were convicted of the murder of a civilian, Jaime Antonio Velasquez Vasquez, and presenting his body as a guerrilla killed in combat. The evidence showed that he had been murdered and that there had been no combat.



Source: Attorney General's web [site.http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/secvillavi/SvFalsosPosiMar11.htm](http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/secvillavi/SvFalsosPosiMar11.htm)

* March 10, 2009. A new trial has been ordered for 144 Colombian soldiers who found a cache of \$46 million U.S. dollars, presumably belonging to the guerrillas. They never reported the find or turned it over to their superiors. The new trial will be conducted jointly by a military judge and a representative of the Attorney General's office.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 10, 2009.

* March 10, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier has been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide in the death of a civilian, Ever Benavides Rollet on February 10, 2006 in the town of Platanal (Bolívar Province). The victim was reported as a guerrilla killed in combat.

Source: *El Herald*o, Barranquilla, March 10, 2009, and Attorney General's web site, March 9, 2009.

* March 10, 2009. Retired Colombian Army Major Julio Cesar Parga Rivas has been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide and aggravated criminal conspiracy for his part in the murder of five civilians who were presented as kidnappers and extortionists killed in combat. According to the Attorney General's investigation, the five victims were contacted in Barranquilla and offered jobs on farms in Córdoba Province in February 2007 and then murdered by soldiers stationed in Córdoba.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, and Attorney General's web site.

* March 10, 2009. Two witnesses claim that they saw two Colombian Police officers take away a 15-year old whose body was later found with one bullet wound to the head. The witnesses claim that they have received death threats after they gave their statements. The witnesses say that the officers were not wearing identification and that they took the boy away on a motorcycle that did not have license plates.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, March 10, 2009.

* March 10, 2009. Two Colombian Police officers have been charged with crimes after they allegedly went to an apartment, presented a forged search warrant, entered the apartment and stole 40,000 pesos (about \$20,000).

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 10, 2009.

* March 10, 2009. Officials of the DAS (Colombian FBI) illegally tapped the telephones of Supreme Court Justices, including the Justice who is examining the connections between politicians and paramilitaries.

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



* March 9, 2009. A demobilized paramilitary commander, Augusto Guillermo De Hoyos Gutierrez, alias “Memo”, complained that he was forced to retract his testimony last September because lawyers for Col. Hernan Mejia threatened his family. Col. Mejia has been charged with cooperating with paramilitaries. “Memo” testified that Col. Mejia also promised him seven million pesos (about \$3,500) for retracting his testimony and he was given half that in advance. Just before he was to testify in a hearing in Col. Mejia’s prosecution, he again received threats against his family. He is now in witness protection.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 9, 2009.

* March 6, 2009. Families of victims of extrajudicial executions by the Colombian Armed Forces marched in Medellin, Bogotá, and other cities, protesting the more than 1,400 reported cases of extrajudicial execution and demanding that the Minister of Defense be discharged.

Source: *El Espectador* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Herald*, Barranquilla, March 6, 2009, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, March 7, 2009.

* March 6, 2009. Colombian Army soldiers linked to the “false positives” or extrajudicial killings revealed last year are free and are have been working for the last five months to prepare their defenses. More than 30 soldiers are facing six prosecutions.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, March 6, 2009.

* March 5, 2009. Families of victims of extrajudicial executions by the Colombian Armed Forces plan to march to the offices of the Minister of Defense and to present petitions to the Attorney General. They will urge prompt investigation of the cases and the creation of a group of prosecutors specializing in extrajudicial killings by the military. In another protest, victims’ families complained that they have been threatened and intimidated.

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

* March 5, 2009. Colombia’s Minister of Defense claims that the problem of extrajudicial killings by the Colombian Armed Forces is now resolved. He stated that there have been no new complaints of extrajudicial killing since last October when a particular series of them came to light.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 5, 2009.

* March 5, 2009. Three former Colombian National Police officers have been arrested and

charged with theft and falsifying public and private documents. A captain, a lieutenant colonel, and a major in the National Police are accused of stealing 30 million pesos (about \$15,000) which was part of a 50 million peso (about \$25,000) reward that was to be awarded to an informant. The defendants are being held without bail.



Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 5, 2009.

* March 5, 2009. A former Colombian National Police officer has been charged with forced disappearance and criminal conspiracy in connection with the disappearance of two other officers. A witness alleges that the defendant was involved in bank robberies and assaults, as well as murder, for which he furnished police uniforms and weapons to civilians.

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

* March 5, 2009. Four Colombian Army soldiers have been convicted of kidnapping and homicide in the death of a civilian who had been accused of a crime and was under house arrest. The four soldiers were found to have taken the victim from his house on August 15, 2007. His body was found the next day, with a carbine, a communications radio, fragmentation grenades and an item with the label FARC (guerrillas).

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

* March 5, 2009. The United Nations issued its 2008 report on human rights in Colombia, emphasizing that the government had taken action and made progress, but that extrajudicial murders of civilians by members of the Armed Forces continue.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, March 5, 2009.

* March 5, 2009. A demobilized paramilitary, making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, testified that paramilitaries worked with the Colombian Army in Norte de Santander Province to provide "false positives". He stated that on December 27, 1997, he worked with Army officers to fake a "combat" in which a young civilian would be killed so that the soldiers could present his body as a "guerrilla killed in combat."

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

* March 5, 2009. The president of a Colombian nongovernmental organization complained that the Attorney General's office had closed 60 investigations of alleged extrajudicial killings of civilians by the military. He said that farmers, laborers, unemployed people and street people were killed by soldiers and presented as guerrillas killed in combat.

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

* March 4, 2009. Two hundred family members of victims of extrajudicial killings will gather

in Bogotá with human rights organizations. One of the organizations will present a report entitled: “Extrajudicial Executions, A Reality That Cannot Be Concealed”. It states that there have been 1,122 extrajudicial executions in Colombia in the last five years and that the cases follow a pattern: professional “recruiters” are used and the victims are transferred from their home locality to another locality.



Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 4, 2009.

* March 4, 2009. Four former paramilitaries are accused of taking part in the massacre at San Jose de Apartado (Antioquia Province) on February 21, 2005. Eight persons were murdered, including three children. Ten active Colombian Army soldiers and one retired soldier have already been charged with taking part. An Army captain, Guillermo Armando Gordillo Sanchez has been charged and pleaded guilty as part of a plea bargain.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, March 5, 2009, and Attorney General’s web site, March 4, 2009: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/DH/DhApartadoMar04.htm>

* March 4, 2009. Retired Colombian Army General Rito Alejo del Rio appealed the issuance of charges against him in connection with the murder of a peasant farmer in Choco Province in 1997, but his appeal was denied. At the time he was the commander of the 17th Brigade and witnesses have testified that his troops worked closely with the paramilitaries.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá and Attorney General’s web site, March 4, 2009.

* March 3, 2009. An extradited paramilitary commander, Diego Fernando Murillo, alias “Don Berna”, filed an affidavit in a U.S. federal court in Manhattan in which he states that his paramilitary troops worked together with Colombian Army troops commanded by retired General Mario Montoya. In 2007, the *Los Angeles Times* also reported that the Colombian Army 4th Brigade, headquartered in Medellin, joined forces with Murillo’s troops to remove leftist rebels from an area in Medellin.

Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, March 3, 2009, and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, March 2, 2009.

* March 3, 2009. Colombia’s Inspector General has asked the Supreme Court of Justice to re-open the investigation of retired General Rito Alejo del Rio’s connections with the paramilitaries. The investigation had been closed by a prior Attorney General.

Source: *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, March 3, 2009.

* February 27, 2009. Demobilized paramilitary high commander Salvatore Mancuso, making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, testified that Jose Miguel Narvaez, former assistant director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) regularly visited paramilitary camps to give lectures on the “fight against communism”. The talk was titled “Why it is legal to kill communists”.

* February 22, 2009. A Mexican newspaper quotes Colombian newsweekly *Semana* on the DAS (Colombian FBI) wiretapping scandal. It reports that, for months, the DAS spied on opposition leaders, journalists critical of the administration and judges, illegally tapping their telephones and e-mails. It also asserts that DAS officials sold official intelligence information to drug traffickers, guerrillas, and paramilitaries.



Source: *El Informador*, Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico, February 22, 2009.

* February 19, 2009. A Colombian National Police officer, Hector Villalobos Rios, in a plea bargain with prosecutors, pleaded guilty to false imprisonment and aggravated homicide in the death of a homeless man who was killed by a gunshot to the head. His body also showed signs of a beating. According to witnesses, two police officers were rounding up homeless men when one of them started an argument. They hit him several times and tried to deliver him to a shelter, but the shelter would not admit him because of his injuries. They then shot him in the head and left his body. The other officer involved has not admitted the charges.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 19, 2009.

* February 19, 2009. The Council of State, Colombia's highest administrative court, has ordered the government to pay damages to citizens in three separate cases. In the first case, the court awarded 500 million pesos (about \$250,000) to survivors of a family that on August 3, 1991, was taking an evening horseback ride. As they passed a military headquarters, detectives from the Attorney General's office opened fire on them. In another case, April 29, 1991, five people, including two women were killed by a Cali Metropolitan Police death squad, apparently in a kind of "social cleansing". The court ordered payment of 174 million pesos (about \$87,000) to their families. In the third case, November 4, 1995, a young soldier was visiting his family in Puerto Tejada (Cauca Province) when he was stopped at a military checkpoint and beaten up by soldiers using their rifle butts. He is permanently disabled.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, February 19, 2009.

* February 19, 2009. Colombia's Inspector General has discharged and sanctioned the director of a military prison for allowing prisoners to come and go without following the applicable regulations. Many of the prisoners allowed passes were not eligible to receive them. Now retired Major Henry Vargas Polania will have to pay a fine of four million pesos (about \$2,000).

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, February 19, 2009.

* February 19, 2009. Three Colombian National Police officers were sentenced to 47 years in prison after being found guilty of kidnapping, illegal use of weapons, aggravated theft, and attempted extortion. They were surprised in an unauthorized search of a private residence in Bogotá. They broke into the house and took jewelry and valuables and kidnapped nine members of the family who lived there. They demanded 500 million pesos (about \$250,000) for their release. After the police were captured, their civilian accomplices testified against

them.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, February 19, 2009.

* February 19, 2009. Demobilized paramilitary Juan Vicente Gamboa Valencia, alias “Pantera” (The Panther), making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, accused General Rodrigo Guinonez Cardenas, three colonels, and one captain of masterminding the El Salado massacre, which left behind almost 100 victims and is considered one of the bloodiest ever attributed to paramilitaries. There were tortures, decapitations, mutilations and dismemberment. According to Gamboa, the officers, who were assigned to an infantry brigade, met with ex-paramilitary chief “Rodrigo Cadena” to plan the massacre.



Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, February 19, 2009.

* February 19, 2009. Detectives attached to the Attorney General’s office have arrested three Colombian Army soldiers charged with homicide. The three are charged with killing three peasant farmers at La Jagua del Pilar (Guajira Province) on July 3, 2006. The three victims were later presented as guerrillas killed in combat.

Source: *El Espectador*, and *Caracol* Radio, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, February 19, 2009.

* February 18, 2009. Five Colombian Police officers were captured in Villavicencio (Meta Province) and charged with kidnapping a commercial pilot on January 23, 2009. They told him they had a warrant for his arrest. They took him to a hotel and demanded 500 million pesos (about \$250,000) to cancel the warrant.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, *El Espectador* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, February 18, 2009.

* February 17, 2009. The Attorney General’s office has arrested a Colombian Army lieutenant and five soldiers and charged them with the kidnapping and murder of a farmer on January 4, 2007 in the town of El Totumo (Casanare Province). They are also charged with theft, illegal use of weapons and destruction of public documents. According to the investigation, they set up an unauthorized checkpoint, dressed in ski masks and civilian clothes, and took the victim off a local bus. After killing him, they presented his body as having been killed in combat. The victim had previously filed a complaint because his house had been searched without a warrant.

Source: Attorney General’s web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/secvillavi/SvFalsoPosiFeb17.htm>

* February 16, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier was sentenced to 40 years in prison after being convicted of aggravated homicide in the death of three civilians on July 3, 2006. He

was seen getting into a taxi with the three victims, who were later presented as guerrillas killed in combat.

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/DH/DhCondHomiFeb16.htm>



* February 15, 2009. Families of some of the victims of the Trujillo massacre are worried that procedural delays will interfere with the prosecution of Colombian Army officers accused of taking part in the massacre. Retired Col. Alirio Antonio Uruena Jaramillo, Police Lieutenant Jose Fernando Berrio and Sergeant Anibal Alvarez are the first members of the Armed Forces to be charged criminally for their part in the massacre. The Attorney General has urged the President of the Supreme Judicial Council not to let the prosecutions lapse. As of this date, no one has been convicted for their actions in the massacre, in which 245 people were killed and 28 people disappeared and have not been found.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, February 15, 2009.

* February 13, 2009. A Colombian Police aide has been charged with torture and attempted murder. He is one of two officers who burned two teenagers at the police station in south Bogotá on Sunday, February 8, 2009.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, *El Espectador*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site, February 13, 2009.

* February 13, 2009. Two Colombian Army noncommissioned officers and three soldiers, part of the 44th Infantry Battalion stationed in Tauramena (Casanare Province), have been charged with aggravated homicide in an incident on September 30, 2007 where two civilians, first cousins, were murdered and their bodies presented as terrorist who had tried to blow up some oil tanks. The two victims were offered a nonexistent job and taken in a truck to the oil tank installation, where they were killed. A rifle and a communications radio were placed next to their bodies. The five defendants are being held without bail.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 13, 2009 and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, February 14, 2009.

* February 12, 2009. A Colombian Army officer and three soldiers were sentenced to 33 years in prison for murdering a civilian. They were attached to the 4th Brigade. They chased a young man, Gabriel Valencia Ocampo, through the streets of Argelia (Antioquia Province) on October 4, 2005. He was later reported as killed in combat in the town of El Zancudo. A scanner, two fragmentation grenades, 150 meters of fuses, and communications codes were found beside his body. The Attorney General's investigation showed that he had no connection to the guerrillas. He was a farmer, well known to other farmers in the community.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 12, 2009, and *El Mundo*, Medellín, February 13, 2009.



* February 12, 2009. Demobilized paramilitary commander, Ever Veloza Garcia, alias "H.H.", making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, testified that Retired Colombian Army General Rito Alejo del Rio, formerly the commander of the 17th Brigade headquartered at Carepa (Antioquia Province) and former Col. Byron Carvajal, now serving a prison sentence for murder and accused of drug trafficking, worked closely with the paramilitaries in the area.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, Medellín, February 12, 2009, and Attorney General's web site, February 11, 2009. *El Colombiano* added Veloza's statement that ex-Col. Carvajal and his troops carried out patrols with the paramilitaries in 1995 and that, when the paramilitaries killed someone for whatever reason, Carvajal would report the body as a guerrilla killed in combat with his soldiers.

* February 12, 2009. Two Colombian National Police officers are charged with killing a homeless man on January 9 of this year. According to witnesses, they were rounding up homeless men to take to a shelter when one of the officers took away his blanket. When the man complained, the two officers began hitting and kicking him. He was handcuffed and returned to the truck, where he was hit with a baseball bat. When the others got out of the truck, he could not stand, and fell, hitting his face on the sidewalk. The shelter manager refused to admit him because of the severity of his injuries. The two officers then took him to another part of the city, shot him in the head, took off his clothes and left him lying. The two officers were caught immediately because there were numerous witnesses.

Source: *El Tiempo*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, February 12, 2009.

* February 12, 2009. A Colombian National Police aide is being investigated for his part in an aggravated attempted homicide. On February 9th, four Police officers burned two teenagers by throwing gasoline on them and setting them on fire, while the two were being detained in the police station in south Bogotá. The two victims were taken to the hospital. Prosecutors expect to prefer charges immediately.

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA;noticias2009/CTI/CTIPoliQuemaFeb12.htm>

* February 11, 2009. General Oscar Naranjo, Director of Colombia's National Police, apologized for the conduct of police officers who set two teenagers on fire at a police station. He promised a full investigation and exemplary sanctions. The officers have already been discharged. The Attorney General, Mario Iguaran Arana, asked that the case be handled in the ordinary civilian justice system and that the charge be attempted murder.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, and *El Mundo*, Medellín, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, February 11, 2009.

* February 10, 2009. The Attorney General of Colombia announced that he intended to charge the police officers who set two teenagers on fire at a police station with attempted murder. General Oscar Naranjo, Director of the National Police asked the country's pardon on behalf of the National Police. Meanwhile, Major Paul Rodriguez, who was in command of the station where the acts took place has been relieved of his command. A Senator has asked that psychological examinations for police recruits be strengthened.



Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Mundo*, Medellin, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, and *El Pais*, Cali, February 10, 2009.

* February 10, 2009. Following up on the report of police officers burning two teenagers at police headquarters, *El Tiempo* reports that in 2008, 166 National Police officers were disciplined for physical aggression against prisoners. Another 135 were disciplined for abuse of authority, 60 for assault and battery, and 86 for verbal aggression. There are 147,000 police officers. In 2008, the Public Defender's office received 558 citizen complaints, nearly all of them citing physical aggression. There have also been 14,000 unlawful detentions.

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

* February 10, 2009. The Council of State, Colombia's highest administrative court, has ordered the National Police to apologize publicly to the family of Wilson Duarte Ramon. On March 26 and 27, 2002, Duarte was arrested and taken to the police station in Saravena (Arauca Province). There he was tortured. Around midnight, he was taken to a deserted area and shot in the back. The family has also received financial recompense, and the officers have been punished criminally.

Source: *El Espectador* and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá.

* February 10, 2009. Two Colombian Army noncommissioned officers have been charged with the murder of two peasant farmers in San Calixto, (Norte de Santander Province) on October 6, 1996. After they shot the victims to death, they hid the bodies in a thicket, altered the crime scene, and failed to notify their superiors. Four months later, local residents found the bodies and the murders were discovered.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/secsderes/SsSubofHomiFeb10.htm>

* February 10, 2009. Ten more Colombian Army soldiers and one DAS (Colombian FBI) agent were arrested and charged with murdering two civilians in Casanare Province and presenting them as guerrillas killed in combat. The investigation showed that the two young men were farmers and were traveling to Paz de Aripuro to buy cattle on April 16, 2007 when they were killed.

Source: Attorney General's web site, *Caracol Radio*, and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 10, 2009.

* February 9, 2009. A Colombian Army soldier, Francisco Javier Vanegas Cespedes, has been arrested and charged with kidnapping, aggravated torture, and aggravated homicide in the death of a 16-year-old girl in the town of El Morro (Antioquia Province) in 2003. According to the investigation, soldiers from the 4th Brigade of the Army dragged her from her sister's house. A little later, her family identified her body.



Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, February 9, 2009.

* February 9, 2009. Two Colombian Marines were sentenced to 50 years in prison after authorities discovered that they were actually guerrilla infiltrators. They were found guilty of the deaths of 16 soldiers in an assault on a naval base in Narino Province in February 2005. Two other Marines were found guilty of helping them plan and carry out the assault. The plot came to light when a man who was being held captive in a guerrilla camp observed soldiers from the base delivering munitions and camouflage uniforms to the guerrillas.

Source: *El Tiempo*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, February 9, 2009.

* February 6, 2009. Colombia's Attorney General has ordered an investigation into the actions of retired General Hector Jaime Fandino in connection with the 2005 massacre of eight people in San Jose de Apartado (Antioquia Province). At that time, General Fandino commanded the 17th Brigade, headquartered in Carepa. Eleven soldiers under his command have been charged with murder in the massacre. A captain serving under General Fandino, Guillermo Armando Gordillo Sanchez has admitted that on the day of the massacre, troops of the 17th Brigade patrolled along with 50 paramilitaries. Gordillo has entered into a plea bargain and claims that General Fandino urged him to lie about the fact that the soldiers and paramilitaries patrolled together on that day.

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

* February 6, 2009. A Colombian appellate court has nullified the negligent homicide convictions of three Air Force officers who dropped cluster bombs on a residence in Santo Domingo in December 1998. Seventeen civilians were killed and 21 were injured. The Court held that the evidence supported charges of intentional homicide and sent the case back for action on that charge.

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

* February 3, 2009. A retired Colombian Police captain and two others entered into a plea bargain in which they pleaded guilty to aggravated criminal conspiracy, illegal use of public documents, and trafficking of weapons belonging to the Armed Forces. The three were involved with a paramilitary commander and drug dealer, Wilber Alirio Varela, Alias "Jabon" (Soap).

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias20009/unaim/UnaRedJabonFeb03.htm>

* February 3, 2009. Eleven members of the Colombian National Police, along with three civilians, have been charged with theft and drug trafficking. The prosecutor charges that on August 3, 2006 in Cartagena, in the course of their duties, they discovered a cache of money and cocaine. Instead of reporting the find, they kept the money and cocaine. A small amount of the money has been retrieved.



Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/seccosta/ScPoliNarcoFeb03.htm>

* February 3, 2009. Two Colombian marines, now discharged, have been sentenced to 50 years and nine months in prison for aiding the guerrillas in their attack on the Navy base at Iscuande (Narino Province) on February 1, 2005. Fifteen marines were killed and 25 injured in the attack.

Source: Attorney General's web site and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, February 3, 2009, and *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, February 4, 2009

* February 2, 2009. A 2nd lieutenant in the Colombian National Police pleaded guilty to criminal conspiracy to obtain drug formulating materials. He informed the drug traffickers of the location of authorities and was involved in the theft of the drug materials.

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2009/secpereira/SpAsegSubOfiFeb02.htm>

* January 21, 2009. Demobilized paramilitary commander Miguel Angel Mejia Munera, alias "El Mellizo" ("The Twin"), making his confession under the Justice and Peace Law, testified that the Colombian Air Force helped make it possible for his paramilitary troops to take over Arauca Province and his (Mejia's) battle with another paramilitary bloc. He related how the Colombian Air Force had allowed paramilitary troops to carry out one of the bloodiest internal confrontations in Colombia's history. Authorities believe that more than 2000 paramilitaries were killed. He also related how his troops were supported by the Air Force when they battled the guerrillas.

Source: *Semana News Magazine*, Bogota, January 21, 2009.

* January 18, 2009. A demobilized paramilitary commander, Eliecer Manuel Herrera Mercado, alias "El Mona" ("The Drunk"), making his confession under the Justice and Peace Law, describes the planning and execution of the massacre at Mapiripan (Meta Province). It was carried out between July 15 and July 20, 1997 and at least 49 civilians were murdered. Herrera testified that the plan was for the Army to leave and for 140 paramilitaries to enter the town, but the paramilitaries attacked early. Someone in the town was able to make a call for help. On July 20, the Army sent some helicopters to fly over the scene, and the paramilitaries left immediately, but by that time 49 people had been tortured, had their throats cut, been eviscerated, and buried in common graves or thrown in the river.

Herrera recounted how the paramilitaries were flown in from Uraba (Antioquia Province). They left from airports where they were guarded by soldiers from the Army's 17th Brigade, then headed by General Rito Alejo del Rio, so that the police would not perform the routine searches. They landed in San Jose de Guaviare (Guaviare Province), where they were guarded by soldiers from the local batallion and by antinarcotics police. No Army or Police checkpoints halted the paramilitaries as they traveled to Mapiripan.



General Uscategui, in command of the 7th Brigade, headquartered in Villavencio (Meta Province), was absolved by a military court but sentenced to 40 years in prison by a civilian court. An appeals court later overturned that sentence. A colonel and two noncommissioned officers were sentenced to 40 years in prison.

Source: [www.verdadabierta](http://www.verdadabierta.com), a link from *Semana.com*, Bogota, January 18, 2009.

* January 7, 2009. The United States NGO National Security Archive has released recently declassified documents that make clear that the “body count syndrome” has been a guiding principle for the Colombian Army for years. National Security Archive documents first mentioned this in 1990 when the U.S. Ambassador to Colombia cabled his concern about the worrisome increase in human rights violations by the Colombian Army. In a specific case, where soldiers had killed nine “guerrillas” in El Ramal (Santander Province) on June 7, 1990, he cabled that “The investigation strongly suggests that the nine were executed by the Army and later dressed up in fatigue uniforms. A military judge at the scene realized that there were no bullet holes in the uniforms to match the wounds in the victims’ bodies”. The documents show that the Embassy was also aware of the connection between Colombian armed forces and paramilitaries.

Source: *Semana.com*, Bogota, January 7, 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*, Bogotá; *El Colombiano*, Medellin; *El Heraldo*, 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 Bogotá 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*, Bogotá; *El Colombiano*, Medellin; *El Heraldo*, 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*, Bogotá, December 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 Quindío (Quindío 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*, Bogotá, 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*, Bogotá; *El Colombiano*, Medellín; *El País*, 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 Herald*o, 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*, Bogotá, 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*, Bogotá; *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 too 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*, Bogotá, 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*, Bogotá, *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*, Bogotá, 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>

* November 30, 2008. *New York Times* correspondent Simon Romero writes that the extrajudicial killings by the Colombian Armed Forces, known as "false positives" have called into question the depth of recent strides against the guerrillas. He notes that reports of civilian killings are climbing, while prosecutors and human rights researchers are investigating hundreds of such deaths and disappearances. They contend that Colombia's security forces are increasingly murdering civilians and making it look as if they were killed in combat, often by planting weapons by the bodies or dressing them in guerrilla fatigues. A study of civilian killings by Amnesty International and Fellowship of Reconciliation found that 47 percent of the cases reported in 2007 involved Colombian units financed by the United States.

Source: *New York Times*, October 30, 2008.

* November 25, 2008. A Colombian National Police patrolman, Luis Miguel Herrera

Nunez, has been arrested and charged with the murder of Irina Mercedes Mier Ruiz on October 20, 2006. Mier was killed in a motel in Bolivar Province.

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/seccosta/ScPoliHomiNov25.htm>



* November 25, 2008. A Colombian Army sergeant and eight soldiers have been arrested and charged with the murder of Diego Alfonso Ortiz Munoz on June 4, 2005, in Medellin. The soldiers had claimed that the victim died when four suspects fired on them. The Attorney General's office determined that the technical evidence and the testimony of witnesses did not support their claim.

Source: *El Tiempo* and www.Semana.com, Bogotá, Attorney General's web site, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, November 25, 2008.

* November 24, 2008., A Colombian Army officer, Lt. Roger Leroy Moreno Osorio, is being held without bail, charged with kidnapping for extortion. The Attorney General charges that on June 16, 2006 in the tow of Las Palmas del Vino (Norte de Santander Province) soldiers searching the area detained two laborers, Guber Chorria Trigos and Yeison Jesus Medina Alba. They questioned them and beat them up. Later they made them sign a document stating that they had been treated well, kept them overnight, and then let them go.

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/DH/DhOficialSecNov.24.htm>

* November 24, 2008. Colombia's Inspector General has ordered the discharge of seven members of the Colombian Army for their part in the death of four laborers, including a six-month old baby. The investigation revealed that the four were killed by mistake, in the belief that they were guerrillas. However, when the mistake was discovered, the soldiers killed a fifth man who had survived the initial attack.

Source: *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, November 24, 2008.

* November 24, 2008. In a long article, *Semana's* web site, www.verdadabierta.com

reviews the confession of demobilized paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso and of one of his paramilitary officers, Edwin Manuel Tirado Morales. Mancuso was a rancher who went to the Colombian military in 1990 and 1991 to seek protection from the threats, murders, and kidnappings by the guerrillas. Mancuso decided to form his own paramilitary organization, but he felt free to visit Army Brigade headquarters to recruit soldiers who were retiring. The paramilitaries provided "support" to the Army, furnishing information, carrying out killings, and identifying individuals presumed to be guerrillas or sympathetic to the guerrillas. They joined with the Army in combat with guerrilla groups. The 11th Brigade transported Mancuso in its helicopters.

Tirado described how, in the 1990's, the paramilitaries delivered "false positives" to the Army soldiers. In one military operation, Mancuso commanded a squadron of a sergeant and 19 men, mostly Army soldiers. They used Galil rifles and machine guns belonging to the Army. Tirado also named a number of Army colonels who had "good relations" with Mancuso.



Source: Web site of *Semana*: <http://www.verdadabierta.com>

* November 23, 2008. Colombia's Comptroller General will re-open an investigation into the Army's reward payments to soldiers for successful operations. Expenditures for intelligence, counterintelligence, criminal investigation and witness protection are classified as secret, but the Comptroller's office is concerned that payments may have been made for "false positives". NGO's and some officials have asked that the Defense Ministry Directive 029, providing for rewards, be rescinded.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, November 23, 2008.

* November 22, 2008. A Colombian Army officer, a noncommissioned officer, and five soldiers headquartered in Medellin were sentenced to 23 years and eight months in prison for torturing four young men. In December, 2006, after a young woman entered the base and complained of sexual abuse by the four young men, the soldiers found the four and tortured and beat them. The sentence has been appealed.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, November 21, 2008, *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, November 22, 2008, and *El Pais*, Cali, November 23, 2008.

* November 21, 2008. A Colombian judge has ordered the Minister of Defense, Juan Manuel Santos, to turn over the results of its investigation into "false positives" to the Attorney General. The Attorney General's Human Rights unit has asked for the report on several occasions. The Attorney General argued that the Defense Ministry investigation, which led to the discharge of 27 military officers, is needed to carry out the criminal investigations.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, November 21, 2008.

* November 21, 2008. The Colombian Senate Human Rights Committee visited Soacha, the town where 11 young men disappeared and were later reported as guerrillas killed in combat, to hold a public hearing. One of the senators announced that the Committee would hold hearings in other towns where there have been complaints of extrajudicial killings or "false positives". At the Soacha hearing, the relatives of the murdered young men complained that they had received threats on their lives because they had complained about the murders.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, November 21, 2008.

* November 21, 2008. The extradited paramilitary commander, Salvatore Mancuso, testifying

in the third day of a hearing in a U.S. federal court, stated that his paramilitary group had a monthly payroll of 700 million pesos (about \$350,000) to pay public officials in Cordoba Province to collaborate. The payroll included police, prosecutors and the Army. He named a Col. Barrero, who commanded a battalion of the 11th Brigade, who helped the paramilitaries between 1996 and 1998. Mancuso claimed that the police furnished him with bodyguards.



Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla and *El Mundo*, Medellin, November 21, 2008 and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, November 20, 2008.

* November 20, 2008. The Colombian news magazine *Cambio* recounts Salvatore Mancuso's testimony before a U.S. court in Washington, D.C. Satellite transmissions made his confession available in Bogotá, Ituango, Cucuta, Monteria, and Sincelejo. He named nine Colombian Army officers who facilitated and participated directly in his "war on subversives", and described how he and one of the colonels, a National Police commander, and another paramilitary planned the massacre at Pichilin (Sucre Province) of December 4, 1996 in which 12 people were killed. The people to be killed were named on a list of "guerrilla collaborators" sent by a Colombian Marine detachment.

Mancuso also testified that when Jorge Noguera was Director of the DAS (Colombian FBI) the DAS became the principal source of intelligence for the paramilitaries. He asserted that a number of murders of professors and students at the University of Cordoba were committed after the DAS identified the targets.

Finally, Mancuso revealed that the massacre at El Aro (Antioquia Province) was supported by the commander of the Colombian Army's 4th Brigade, Gen. Alfonso Manosalva (now deceased) who supplied information and maps. The El Aro massacre began on October 25, 2007 and lasted six days. The paramilitaries, along with the soldiers, killed and tortured fifteen people, raped several women, burned 43 houses, stole cattle, and forced the displacement of 900 people.

Source: *Cambio*, Bogotá, November 19, 2008.

* November 20, 2008. Extradited paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso, testifying at a hearing before a U.S. federal court, stated that in 1996, a Colombian National Police Colonel Suarez (He didn't give a first name.) furnished him with two bodyguards. Besides providing security, they gave intelligence information to the paramilitaries. Mancuso also revealed that the Army trained the paramilitaries in Cordoba Province.

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

* November 20, 2008. The Attorney General has asked the Colombian military justice system to turn over to the civilian criminal justice system a case involving soldiers from the Army's 10th Brigade. Two young men, a student and a municipal employee met a patrol of 12 soldiers. Neighbors heard shots and the soldiers told them that they had fired on two criminals from one of the criminal gangs in the region. The next day the neighbors protested

the deaths and a delegation from the 10th Brigade told the protesters that the two victims attacked a woman who lived in the community. She denied the attack under oath, stating that the two had not harmed her and that she had known them since they were babies.



The military justice system closed the case, but the Inspector General appealed the decision and the Attorney General's office asked that the case be pursued in the civilian criminal justice system.

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

* November 19, 2008. Extradited paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso is continuing his confession under the Justice and Peace Law in federal court in Washington, D.C. He testified that Colombian soldiers were involved in the 1997 murder of Freddy Francisco Fuentes Paternina, a teachers union member in Cordoba Province. A police officer furnished the location for the murder.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Mundo*, Medellin, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, November 19, 2008.

* November 18, 2008. Extradited paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso is making his confession under the Justice and Peace Law in federal court in Washington, D.C. He described the "logistical assistance" the Colombian Army gave to the paramilitaries in the massacre at El Aro, where 15 people were killed. General Manosalva and the commander of the 4th Brigade, General Ospina, headed the planning. He said that the Army furnished a helicopter and that a government official from Antioquia province furnished another one. He said he flew in the Army helicopter because he had to deliver additional ammunition.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, *El Pais*, Cali, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, November 18, 2008.

* November 16, 2008. Carolina Gutierrez Torres of *El Espectador* interviews some of the "mothers of Soacha", mothers whose sons were recruited for nonexistent jobs, murdered by Colombian soldiers and presented as guerrillas killed in combat.

* November 12, 2008. *CNN.com*, citing Bogotá news magazine *Semana*, reports that a Colombian Army company needed a guerrilla kill so that they would get leave on Mother's Day. They lured a civilian to their camp, but one of the soldiers found that the intended victim was his brother whom he had not seen for 15 years. He thought he had helped his brother escape, but the next week he was found dead, listed as a "guerrilla kill" with three bullets in his torso and a knife wound in his face. A gun he did not own was found near his body. After his family complained, the soldiers were arrested and charged, along with some 480 soldiers now under investigation for extrajudicial murders of civilians.

Source: <http://www.cnn.com/2008/WORLD/americas/11/12/colombia.soldier.killing.ap/>

* November 16, 2008. A group of mothers and other relatives of young men from Soacha who were lured to another province, killed by soldiers, and represented as guerrillas killed in combat gathered in a municipal office in Soacha. Some had made a 14-hour trip to recover their sons in body bags. They complained that they are being watched and followed and threatened because they have spoken out about the murders.



Source: El Espectador, Bogotá, November 16, 2008.

* November 7, 2008. *The Christian Science Monitor* reports that the Colombian Army successes “have been muted by a macabre revelation that the Colombian military reportedly killed civilians to inflate their rebel body count in an effort to appear more successful.”

The *Monitor* notes that NGO’s have reported on that practice for years, but the Colombian government has not reacted. A military analyst with an NGO in Bogotá pointed to “... a lack of command and control in the military and misguided incentive policies that rewarded soldiers with extra leave for every killed or captured rebel.”

Source: *Christian Science Monitor*, November 7, 2008.

* November 12, 2008. Some of the survivors of the massacre in Segovia (Antioquia Province) gathered in Medellin to remember what happened on November 11, 1988. Forty-two people, men, women, and children were killed and more than 50 wounded. A miner who survived and fled to Medellin stated that the reason was political and that the Police and the Army collaborated. He refused to give his name because he still has family in the area.

Source: El Mundo, Medellin, November 12, 2008.

* November 6, 2008. Gustavo Duncan, an opinion columnist writing in *El Pais*, Cali, states that, in his view, the Minister of Defense ought to have resigned when the first “false positives” came to light, and, now that hundreds of such cases have been discovered, and it is known that the practice was “systematic”, the Minister of Defense should not remain in office.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, November 6, 2008.

* November 6, 2008. In an editorial, El Tiempo expresses concern that public opinion in Colombia has seemed indifferent to the extrajudicial killing of civilians by members of the Armed Forces in order to obtain rewards or inflate their numbers of guerrillas killed. It points out that the killing of young men in cold blood by members of the armed forces is unacceptable in a democratic country.

Source: #1 Tiempo, Bogotá, November 6, 2008.

* November 6, 2008. The Deputy Attorney General of Colombia, Guillermo Mendoza Diago, stated that it may be necessary to interview all of the 27 Army officers discharged when the Soacha “false positives” were discovered, including General Mario Montoya, the Commander of the Army, who also stepped down.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, November 6, 2008, and *Caracol Radio*, November 5, 2008.



* November 6, 2008. Colombian Army Lt. Edwin Leonardo Toro Ramirez, attached to the 4th Brigade, has been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide, aggravated torture, and kidnapping. Investigators allege that a patrol commanded by Lt. Toro Ramirez broke into a residence and forced a 16-year-old girl to come with them. The next day she was reported as a guerrilla killed in combat. Antioquia’s Secretary of Government has reported that 30 similar cases in Antioquia Province are now being investigated.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, November 6, 2009, and Attorney General’s web site. November 5, 2008.

* November 6, 2008. A retired Colombian Army officer, Camilo Javier Romero Abril, has been sentenced to an additional prison term after he was found guilty of attempted aggravated homicide and kidnapping. On December 10, 2005 a member of his patrol fired on a civilian. Believing him dead, they activated an explosive. The victim was rescued by police who came to investigate the explosion. He was blinded by the explosion. Romero was found guilty of multiple homicides in March of this year and was sentenced to 40 years in prison in that case.

Source: Attorney General’s web site:

* November 5, 2008. Gen. Mario Montoya, the top commander of Colombia’s army resigned after an investigation implicated three generals and other officers in the killings of civilians who were later presented as guerrillas or criminals killed in combat. In the past, Gen. Montoya had been accused of helping the paramilitaries, but it was only after an internal investigation conducted by the military disclosed numerous “false positives”, that he stepped down.

Source: *Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., and *The New York Times*, New York, New York, November 5, 2008.

* November 4, 2008. Daniel Samper Pizano, an opinion writer in *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, states that the President of Colombia should have listened to NGO’s who warned him that Colombian Army personnel were murdering increasing numbers of civilians. He blames the significant increase in such murders on a Defense Ministry directive that rewards soldiers who kill guerrillas. He claims that such a philosophy stimulates corruption and shields a “criminal industry” that employs recruiters, aides and contract killers.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 4, 2008.

* November 4, 2008. *Reuters* news service reports that Colombia's top army commander, General Mario Montoya, resigned after President Uribe purged 27 officers and soldiers from the Army and the United Nations urged Colombia to stop security forces from killing civilians to bolster the guerrilla body count. President Uribe announced the military purge after investigators linked soldiers to the deaths of young men who disappeared from Soacha, a poor neighborhood near Bogotá. Their bodies were later found in mass graves hundreds of miles away. The Army initially reported them as armed fighters killed in combat. The U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights called executions of civilians by soldiers "widespread and systematic".



Source: *Reuters* web site: <http://www.reuters.com/articlePrint?articleId=USTRE4A37DP20081105>

* November 3, 2008. In an editorial, *El Heraldo* points out that, while the Colombian Army claims to have improved human rights training for its soldiers, three generals were among the officers discharged for permitting extrajudicial killings ("false positives"). It argues that generals have received long-time professional and ethical training of the highest quality that the country can offer. Yet they lacked commitment to their institutional responsibilities. There is nothing worse that a member of the Armed Forces can do than to fire on unarmed civilians, stated the editorial. Citizens now have to question the authenticity of the military's claims of success.

Source: *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, November 3, 2008.

* November 3, 2008. Colombia's President Alvaro Uribe complained of the Army's failure to capture two drug traffickers, Daniel Barrera, alias "El Loco" (The Crazy Man) and "Cuchillo" (The Knife). He emphasized "... Are we going to be able to catch them or not? I'm questioning especially the Villavicencio Division. Are they able to catch "Loco" Barrera, or is it that they are protecting him?"

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, November 3, 2008.

* November 3, 2008. Colombia's Attorney General announced that his agency has received more than 1,000 complaints of extrajudicial killings by the Army.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, November 3, 2008.

* November 3, 2008. After President Uribe criticized the Attorney General for his investigation of extrajudicial killings by the Army, "false positives", the Attorney General responded that his investigation had produced solid evidence. He expressed concern that complaints of extrajudicial killings are increasing and it appears that there are thousands of cases, especially in the provinces of Antioquia, Meta, Cordoba, Norte de Santander, and Casanare.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, November 3, 2008.

* November 3, 2008. Twelve of the soldiers discharged for being involved in “false positives” were part of the Colombian Army’s 14th Brigade, headquartered in Puerto Berrio (Antioquia Province). The brigade’s commandant, Col. Juan Carlos Barrera, two lieutenant colonels, a battalion commander, two intelligence officers, a squad leader and four other soldiers were among those discharged. A human rights investigator stated that he had received 20 complaints of extrajudicial killing by 14th Brigade members in the last 18 months.



Source: *El Pais*, Cali, November 3, 2008.

* November 3, 2008. The Colombian Senate will call the Minister of Defense, Juan Manuel Santos, the Commander of the Army, General Mario Montoya, and the Attorney General, Mario Iguaran, to a hearing to explain the forced disappearances and extrajudicial killings of civilians by the Army. The Senator calling for the hearing is concerned that only low-level soldiers and officers will be punished for the murders. The Attorney General admitted that in Colombia, “thousands of people have disappeared.”

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, November 3, 2008.

* November 3, 2008. *El Pais* newspaper and *Colprensa* news service publish a survey of the Army’s extrajudicial killings (“false positives”), suggesting that the Attorney General and the Inspector General have been slow to crack down on a situation that has gone on at least since 2006. An international group counts 535 such cases between January 2007 and July 2008, with 58% of the victims being minors. 93.7% of the victims, 443 people, were killed by Army personnel. Fifty % of the victims were aged 18 to 30, 22% were 31 to 42, and 16.9 % were between 43 and 60. Most of the victims were farmers, community or social leaders, laborers, merchants, indigenous people and students.

Last year the Attorney General created a subunit on extrajudicial executions. Between 2007 and 2008, 247 arrest warrants have been issued.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali, November 3, 2008.

* November 2, 2008. Colombia’s former president, Andres Pastrana states that the Army’s extrajudicial killings of civilians, known as “false positives”, is the worst scandal experienced by the current government and that it will be very difficult for the government to improve its image internationally. He told *Caracol Radio* that when he became president in 1998 there was a similar situation, and that he had to discharge nine officers, including generals and admirals.

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

* November 2, 2008. Seven former members of Colombia’s judicial police will be charged with forced disappearance and aggravated criminal conspiracy. They are implicated in a series of bank robberies. Their alleged victims were other police officers who found about the crimes, and a bank employee.

Source: *El Pais*, Cali and *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 2, 2008.



* November 2, 2008. *El Tiempo* reports that the Attorney General is pursuing 1,019 investigations of extrajudicial killings by the Army, involving 2,300 soldiers. The Inspector General is also investigating and his office observes that the majority of victims were labor leaders, community leaders, or demobilized individuals living in rural areas, but that in the Soacha cases, the victims were unemployed, poor, some with criminal records. The investigations reveal that the military reports are contrary to the physical evidence. For example, most of the victims were shot in the back, at angles showing that they were kneeling or lying down when they were killed. The uniforms placed on the victims do not show bullet holes matching the wounds on the victims' bodies. And, the Inspector General points out, in the reported combat, no Army personnel are ever wounded, as might be expected if combat had occurred.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 2, 2008.

* November 1, 2008. The newsweekly *Semana* describes efforts by the Colombian military to determine the procedures that led to the extrajudicial killings by Army soldiers. After the complaints from Soacha, the Minister of Defense appointed a special committee to investigate. The committee found that the "operations" were not based on intelligence reports, were not based on plans, and sometimes superiors were not informed. They worked at night and always reported that they had seen suspicious shadows, called out "halt", the shadow had fired a pistol, and the patrol had responded with a hail of bullets. While the victim had three bullet wounds, the account would report the expenditure of 1,000 bullets.

The committee's report was presented to President Uribe and he acted immediately to discharge 27 officers, including three generals. The head of the Army resigned a few days later. The Army and the Attorney General are trying to measure the extent of the wrongdoing. The article identifies four kinds of extrajudicial killing or "false positives" by the Army. Some simply cover up the accidental killing of a civilian. Rather than admit it, the soldiers dress the victim in camouflage and present him as a guerrilla killed in combat. The second is aimed at achieving higher body counts, and victims are chosen from the poor, street people, drug addicts, men with mental problems or criminal records. The third is a tactic taken from the paramilitaries. The victims are suspected of connections with the guerrillas but there is no proof sufficient to arrest them. So they are killed in simulated combat. In the fourth case, as in Soacha, "recruiters" are used to entice victims to places where they can be killed and presented as guerrillas killed in combat.

Finally, sometimes the weapons supposedly expended in the pretended combat end up in the hands of criminal gangs.

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

* November 1, 2008. The Colombian Senate has called on the Minister of Defense and the commander of the Colombian Army to testify on plans for improving the military's training on human rights. Senators also expressed concern about recruitment of young people, keeping better records of disappearances, and about extrajudicial killings by military forces.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Colombiano*, Medellín, November 1, 2008.



* November 1, 2008. Two Colombian soldiers attempted to kill Daniel Alfonso Guerra Ruiz, a demobilized paramilitary who had worked for them as a “recruiter” to obtain young men whom they could murder and then present as guerrillas killed in combat. Guerra escaped and asked the police for protection, while the soldiers were taken into custody. Guerra confessed that he had obtained seven victims by offering them nonexistent ranch jobs. All of them were later found dead, with only one bullet wound and wearing new boots, with a weapon placed beside their bodies.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, November 1, 2008.

* November 1, 2008. Detectives from the Colombian Attorney General’s office are making surprise inspections at various military installations, seeking evidence related to extrajudicial killings of civilians by members of the Armed Forces. Investigators have found a “common pattern” in the killings that authorities find disturbing.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, November 1, 2008.

* October 31, 2008. A Colombian National Police officer has been arrested for aggravated homicide, aggravated theft, illegal use of weapons and property damage. He and five other members of a criminal gang stole 320 million pesos (about \$160,000) from DRFE, a business in Pasto (Putumayo Province) and killed an employee of the business.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, October 31, 2008.

* October 31, 2008. An officer, four patrolmen and two retired agents of Colombia’s Judicial Police have been charged with the crimes of forced disappearance and criminal conspiracy. The criminal complaint alleges that they were part of a criminal gang that “disappeared” two National Police officers. They were also involved in muggings, bank robberies, and murders. Sometimes they employed civilians and gave them uniforms and military weapons. They are being held without bail.

Source: Attorney General’s web site, October 31, 2008.

* October 31, 2008. A former Foreign Minister of Colombia believes that the “false positives” scandal will have serious repercussions with international assistance agencies that have been providing aid to Colombia, and especially with Plan Colombia, financed by the United States. Minister Augusto Ramirez Ocampo states that Colombia will have to demonstrate that what happened was not part of a government policy. In his view that requires serious investigations and punishment of those responsible.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, October 31, 2008.

* October 31, 2008. A Colombian National Police major is accused of being part of a criminal organization that trafficked cocaine to Spain and Italy. According to the Attorney

General's investigation, the organization out of Palmira (Valle Province) and Pereira (Risaralda Province).

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, October 31, 2008.

* October 30, 2008. The *Washington Post* reported that the Colombian government fired 27 army officers and soldiers, including three generals, because poor young men had been lured from slums in the capital to Army posts where they were killed by troops. According to the *Post* article, by Juan Forero, the Army has long resisted reforms. The President of Colombia issued a statement outlining serious command and control problems and said that soldiers might have collaborated with criminal bands to inflate the number of combat deaths, traditionally used by the military as a measure of success. Forero quotes military officials as saying that the deaths of innocent civilians, amounting to hundreds in recent years, is a byproduct of the use of body counts to assess results in the guerrilla conflict. A Colombian attorney representing seven families that have reported the deaths of relatives said that "extrajudicial executions" are neither new nor limited to a few military units. An official in the Attorney General's office said that investigators are handling 550 cases involving as many as 1,000 victims. The killers, he said, come from all branches of the armed services, including police, navy and army.

Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington, D.C., October 30, 2008.

* October 30, 2008. Two days after his historic purge of the Colombian Army because of "false positives", President Uribe questioned publicly why the Army had not been able to capture two notorious drug traffickers. "I'm asking the headquarters in Villavicencio if they are able to capture "El Loco" Barrera or if they are protecting him." General Guillermo Quinonez, commander of the Division, answered, "I know that some of our men are tied up with criminals and that they are selling themselves for a "mess of pottage", but my conscience is clear because every time I find out about that, I apply the law." There are indications that some Army units have allied with criminals to protect them in return for help in presenting "positives". Some residents of the area claim that two Army representatives attended a meeting that Barrera held with ranchers. Barrera has escaped encirclement by the Police and the Army on five different occasions.

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

* October 30, 2008. *El Colombiano* reports that, since President Uribe took office, 1,300 Colombians have been killed in extrajudicial executions by the Armed Forces. This figure is reported by the International Mission for the Observation of Extrajudicial Executions and Impunity in Colombia. The group includes experts from Germany, Spain, the United States, France, and the United Kingdom. The report states that between January 2007 and July 2008 there have been 535 cases of extrajudicial execution and that 58% of the victims have been minors. Colombia's Inspector General is investigating 930 cases involving more than 2,300 military personnel.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, October 30, 2008.





* October 30, 2008. Colombia's Attorney General warned that extrajudicial executions are a systematic and generalized practice in the Colombian military, and it may be a crime against humanity under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court. He made the statement at the inauguration of the XVI Congress on Forensic Science. He said that the Soacha cases are horrifying, but not surprising. He stated that there are 90 open investigations in the Human Rights unit in his office, plus 90 more in regional offices and 247 arrest warrants.

* Source: Attorney General's web site, October 30, 2008.

* October 30, 2008. A Colombian Army noncommissioned officer, Freimy Snisterra Panan, has been sentenced to 25 years in prison for killing Ildelfonso Cifuentes Velasquez and Luis Alfonso Florez Toro, who was a minor. According to the investigation, the two were shot in the town of Montenegro (Antioquia Province) supposedly in combat. The minor, Florez Toro, survived the attack and succeeded in escaping. But the next day the defendant Snisterra found him and took him back to the battleground and murdered him. Three soldiers have already been sentenced for their part in the killings.

Source: Attorney General's web site, October 30, 2008.

* October 28, 2008. *El Pais* newspaper in Madrid reports that more than 500 Colombians who have defended human rights are refugees in Europe because of threats from the paramilitaries and the Colombian Armed Forces. One of the refugees, who fled Colombia under the protection of Amnesty International, reported that besides telephoned threats and searches of her office, she had experienced "unexpected visits" from high military commanders, asking questions and trying to extract information.

Source: *El Pais*, Madrid, October 28, 2008.

* September 30, 2008. Carlos Mario Montoya, a demobilized paramilitary commander, making his confession under the Justice and Peace law, stated that officers in the Colombian Army helped the paramilitaries to steal cattle from a ranch in Urrao (Antioquia Province) in 1996. He said that Col. August Betancourt Llanos met with the paramilitary commanders to plan activities. He also admitted that he had taken part in the torture of a captured guerrilla and in burning houses and forcing the displacement of people in Urrao in 2001.

Source: *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellin, and Attorney General's web site, September 30, 2008.

* September 30, 2008. Relatives of two young men who were found dead have complained that they were murdered by soldiers from the 4th Brigade, headquartered in Medellin. The family of Diego Alexander Londono stated that he had left home at about 4 P.M. and several hours later they were informed that he had been killed in combat in El Gaitero (Antioquia Province). The body of a young student was found next to his. Two pistols were found next to the bodies although the families insist they had never possessed a weapon.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, September 30, 2008.

* September 30, 2008. A young man who escaped death as a “false positive” because he did not believe the “recruiters”, has told investigators that a Colombian Army soldier sent three men to go to parties that would be attended by young men in Soacha and ask them if they wanted to help dig up a treasure that was hidden at a ranch in La Mesa (Cundinamarca Province). They were promised two million pesos each (about \$1,000). The witness was acquainted with two of the victims whose bodies were found in Ocana (Norte de Santander Province). He says that this has been going on since January 2008 in poor neighborhoods in Bogotá and Soacha.



Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, September 30, 2008.

* September 29, 2008. Colombia’s Supreme Court has ordered the re-opening of criminal proceedings against Gen. Rito Alejo del Rio for criminal conspiracy and aiding paramilitaries while he commanded the Army’s 17th Brigade headquartered in Carepa (Antioquia Province). Demobilized paramilitary commanders making their confession under the Justice and Peace law have testified that he was a close advisor and “. . . a very important figure . . .” for the paramilitaries in the area.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, September 29, 2008.

* September 29, 2008. Colombia’s Liberal Party will demand that the Minister of Defense appear before the House of Representatives to explain the possible existence of Army officers who demand dead bodies as a measure of the results of military operations. The Party spokesman stated that he would not allow a secret session because the country needs to know the truth. The Attorney General, the Inspector General and the Public Defender will also be invited, so that victims’ families can learn what happened.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, September 29, 2008.

* September 28, 2008. Colombia’s Inspector General has ordered the discharge of Major Elver Isidro Zambrano Chavarro, Chief of Police in Tame (Arauca Province). The investigation found that Zambrano had detained a civilian, Octavio Gonzalez Capera on October 5, 2005, for more than 24 hours without any legal basis.

Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, September 28, 2008.

* September 28, 2008. A Colombian Army officer, Col. Alirio Uruena and a National Police officer, Capt. Jose Fernando Berrio are accused of murder as terrorists for their part in the massacre at Trujillo. They are both in custody. The statute of limitations has run on two other charges, torture and criminal conspiracy. They are alleged to be responsible for the deaths of at least four of the civilians who were killed at Trujillo. Demobilized paramilitary commanders have testified to their part played by Uruena and Berrio in planning and carrying out the massacre.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, and *El Pais*, Cali, September 28, 2008.



* September 28, 2008. In a column headlined “Cannon Fodder”, opinion writer Natalia Springer of *El Tiempo* calls the Colombian Army’s extrajudicial killings of young men who are then presented as guerrillas killed in combat a criminal network made up of individuals in the Armed Forces who are exclusively motivated by personal gain. They pay informants or “recruiters” to follow the young men, contact them, and deceive them into traveling to the place where they will be murdered. The paid “recruiters” are also responsible for obtaining the weapons that are later found next to the dead bodies and removing their identity documents so that they can be buried as “no-names”. She reveals that, in at least five cases known so far, the victims were minors.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, September 28, 2008.

* September 26, 2008. Colombia’s Minister of Defense states “They tell me that there are still units in our armed forces where commanders are demanding bodies to show results of their operations. I find it hard to believe that that is true”. He said that it is preferable for a guerilla to demobilize or to be captured. However, at this moment, the Attorney General has about 400 open cases that involve hundreds of soldiers in murders outside of combat. So far, the Attorney General knows of 19 cases where young men from south Bogotá have disappeared and then turned up as guerrillas killed in combat. There are many other cases in other parts of the country.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *Caracol Radio* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, *El Mundo* and *El Colombiano*, Medellín, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, and *El Pais*, Cali, September 26, 2008.

* September 26, 2008. Hebert Veloza Garcia, alias “HH”, a demobilized paramilitary commander said he is sticking to his story, even though he has been warned not to continue revealing connections between the paramilitaries and former governor and ambassador Juan Jose Chaux and General Rito Alejo Del Rio.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano* and *El Mundo*, Medellín, *El Pais*, Cali, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, September 26, 2008.

* September 26, 2008. *El Tiempo* reports that “false positive” murders are not confined to Soacha and Bogotá, where 19 young men have disappeared and their bodies later presented as guerrillas killed in combat. The same thing has happened in Risaralda Province, where young men have left their houses in La Virginia, Pereira and Dosquebradas and later been found “killed in combat” in Quindio, Caldas, Antioquia and Santander. Their families insist that they had no connection with guerrillas or criminal gangs. The Attorney General’s office is investigating.

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

* September 25, 2008. “We are dealing with a system of forced disappearances for the purpose of executions,” announced Clara Lopez, Bogotá’s Secretary of Government. In nine of the cases, the young men died between 24 and 48 hours after they left their homes. At first it was thought that there were 11 cases, but it now appears that there are 19. General

Paulino Coronado, commander of the Army in Norte de Santander Province insists that all died in combat and that they were not cases of “false positives”.



The Public Defender stated that he had alerted authorities about the situation two months ago and a spokesman for a human rights NGO commented that the Army’s version was strange. “The idea that they had been recruited (by guerrillas) is not convincing because there was such little time between their disappearance and their (supposed) participation in combat”, he said.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Colombiano*, Medellín, *El Pais*, Cali and Attorney General’s web site, September 25, 2008.

* September 25, 2008. Demobilized paramilitary commander Salvatore Mancuso, making his confession under the Justice and Peace Law, testified that he had two different meetings with General Rito Alejo del Rio, one in Cordoba and the other in Uraba. At that time, General Del Rio commanded the Army’s 17th Brigade. He also mentioned meetings with General Alfonso Manosalva (deceased) and General Ivan Ramirez, former Chief of Intelligence for the Army and the commander of the Army’s Brigade in Monteria.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, September 25, 2008.

* September 24, 2008. Bogotá police are investigating a case caught on video where an officer on a motorcycle runs over a young woman near the soccer stadium and fails to stop and give aid. None of the officers who saw the incident helped her as she was lying on the pavement. In another incident, two officers were seen chasing and hitting with batons a young man who later died. Police headquarters stated that he died from a heart attack.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, September 24, 2008.

* September 24, 2008. The Colombian Attorney General has issued warrants for the arrest of 20 people, including 12 retired Army personnel in connection with the massacre at Trujillo in Norte del Valle Province, in which 245 people were killed. The Army personnel include colonels, captains, lieutenants and soldiers. Two paramilitary commanders, already in prison, will be prosecuted for their part in the massacre that involved the dismemberment with chain saws of living people.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, and *El Pais*, Cali, September 24, 2008.

* September 24, 2008. The Attorney General will investigate the disappearances of young men who are later killed and their bodies presented as guerrillas killed in combat. The Attorney General’s staff is exhuming the bodies and identifying them, so that they can be turned over to their families.

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

* September 23, 2008. A Colombian Army corporal, Jimmy Rolando Salazar Carlosama, has been arrested and charged with the murder of a civilian, Rodrigo Alberto Rincones Murgas. Rincones was killed on February 6. Corporal Salazar is being held without bail.



Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/seccioales/ScCaboHomiSep23.htm>

* September 23, 2008. A retired Colombian Army officer, Major Javier Becerra Herrera, has been arrested and charged with aggravated homicide, assault and battery, falsifying a public document, and procedural fraud. The complaint alleges that on April 4, 2004 in the town of La Cecilia (Norte de Santander Province) his squad reported a group of guerrillas and there was an exchange of fire in which Jesus Alexis Perez Jacome was killed and Olimpia Maria Torres de Ascanio was injured. According to the investigation, there was no combat. Major Becerra is being held without bail.

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/secpereira/SpMayorHomiSep23.htm>

* September 23, 2008. The Council of State, Colombia's highest administrative court, has upheld the Inspector General's decision to discharge Sgt. Juan Carlos Gamarra Polo because of his support of paramilitaries. Not only did he take part in the massacre at Mapiripan, July 15-29, 1997, but also he continued to be allied with paramilitaries throughout the year.

Source: *El Colombiano*, Medellin, September 23, 2008.

* September 23, 2008. Colombia's Attorney General has charged a third person in the assassination of Senator Manuel Cepeda Vargas on August 9, 1994 in Bogotá. Two other killers, Army sergeants Hernando Medina Camacho and Justo Zuniga Labrador have already been found guilty and sentenced to 43 years in prison.

Source: *El Tiempo*, Bogotá, September 23, 2008.

* September 23, 2008. A coalition of NGO's has warned that the human rights situation in Colombia is getting worse. In a report directed to the United Nations Human Rights Council, the group noted that the cases of extrajudicial executions, forced disappearances, tortures, arbitrary detention and displacement have increased and that there is now greater participation by the Colombian Armed Forces in these human rights violations.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, and *El Pais*, Cali, September 23, 2008.

* September 22, 2008. The attorney representing the family of a university student who was killed by police three years ago plans to bring the case to the Inter-American Commission

on Human Rights. Although the Attorney General's office determined that the student had been shot by police at a university demonstration, no responsible individual has been identified and no one is being investigated. The attorney stated that he plans to inform the Commission of other killings of students and social leaders by the Mobile Anti-Disturbance Squad (ESMAD is the Spanish acronym.) of the police.



Source: *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, September 22, 2008.

* September 22, 2008. Colombia's Inspector General has charged ten members of the Colombian Army in the death of an indigenous man, Victor Hugo Maestre Rodriguez, of the Kankuamo tribe on October 6, 2004, The victim was found armed and dressed in military uniform and presented as killed in combat. After an investigation, the Inspector General alleges that there were "serious inconsistencies" in the evidence and that the crime scene had been altered. Maestre's family testifies that on October 4, 2004, he had been dragged from his house by a group of armed and masked men.

Source: *El Tiempo* and *El Espectador*, Bogotá, September 22, 2008, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, September 23, 2008.

* September 21, 2008. The Colombian Army today admitted its responsibility in the deaths of two indigenous men in Cumbal (Narino Province). The Battalion Commander, Colonel Marco Mayorga, admitted that they were killed by mistake.

Source: *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, September 21, 2008, and *El Mundo*, Medellin, September 22, 2008.

* September 19, 2008. Colombia's Supreme Court of Justice affirmed two lower court decisions sentencing two Army corporals to 40 years in prison for killing two ex-guerrillas in a supposed combat in 2000. The evidence showed that the victims were kidnapped and murdered and there was no combat.

Source: *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, September 19, 2008.

* September 17, 2008. Two Colombian Army noncommissioned officers and three soldiers have been arrested and charged in the disappearance and murder of a farmer, Douglas Antonio Perez, on August 5, 2006. On that date, armed men entered a cockpit in Las Carmelitas de Puerto Asis (Putumayo Province). They threatened the people in attendance, stole cell phones and money, and took Perez away. The next day he was found dead nearby and presented as a guerrilla killed in combat. Beside his body were a revolver, a hand grenade and explosives. The defendants are charged with aggravated homicide, aggravated kidnapping and aggravated torture.

Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/seccionales/ScHomiCampSep17.htm>

* September 18, 2008. A captain in Colombia's National Police was sentenced to 60 months in prison after being found guilty of weapons trafficking, aggravated private use of Armed Forces munitions, financing of terrorism, providing resources to terrorists and falsifying records. When arrested he was driving a truck carrying 25 rifles of different makes, 89 7.62 and 5.56 cartridges, rifle butts and other short and long range weapons.



Source: Attorney General's web site: <http://www.fiscalia.gov.co/PAG/DIVULGA/noticias2008/seccionales/ScCapitanSep18.htm>

September 18, 2008. The Colombian Attorney General's office has issued a report revealing that 99 Army officers are being investigated for "false positives", namely, extrajudicial murders and schemes to present victims as enemies killed in battle. At this point, six colonels are included, as well as 803 soldiers. The report states that Antioquia, Cordoba and Meta are the provinces that have had the most extrajudicial killings of civilians by the military.

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, September 18, 2008.

* September 18, 2008. Colombia's Foreign Minister Jaime Bermudez denied that Colombia's Attorney General was investigating General Mario Montoya for his connections with the paramilitaries, as stated in *The Washington Post*. The Attorney General did not comment publicly on the *Post* article.

* September 17, 2008. A demobilized paramilitary leader, Luis Adrian Palacio, has testified that General Mario Montoya, the head of the Colombian Army, collaborated with death squads that took control of poor neighborhoods in Medellin. Four other demobilized paramilitary commanders have also testified to Montoya's aid to and collaboration with the paramilitaries. Palacio claimed that Montoya personally delivered a vehicle loaded with assault rifles and a grenade launcher. Montoya has denied this. Source in the Colombian Attorney General's office told *The Washington Post* that Montoya is being investigated by Colombian authorities.

A CIA report disclosed by the *Los Angeles Times* in 2007 said that Montoya worked together with the paramilitaries in Medellin, and residents of the Medellin neighborhood have claimed that the paramilitaries, working with the Army, killed residents of the neighborhood and buried them in unmarked graves.

Source: *The Washington Post*, Washington D.C., September 17, 2008.

* September 12, 2008. Retired Colombian Army General Rito Alejo del Rio is being investigated for his alleged support for paramilitaries when he commanded the Army's 17th Brigade in 1997. He is in custody and the Attorney General is considering evidence which links him to crimes against humanity including murder, displacement and forced disappearances.

Source: Attorney General's web site, *El Tiempo*, *El Espectador*, news magazine *Semana*, and *Caracol Radio*, Bogotá, *El Pais*, Cali, *El Heraldo*, Barranquilla, and *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga, September 12, 2008.

* September 12, 2008. Opinion columnist Maria Elvira Bonilla writes in *El Pais* that Colombian Army generals have “clay feet”. She writes that the policy of Democratic Security has brought soldiers into remote villages. There they have absolute power and can impose the law as they wish, regulating the lives of the community. They fall in love and make girls pregnant, they open and close businesses, they make threats, they arrest people at their discretion, and they can end up in corruption, drug trafficking, and denial of human rights, all because of the prestige of the Army as an institution. She mentions Gen. Marco Pedreros, in charge of Antioquia Province, and Gen. Jesus Antonio Gomez, in charge of Valle de Cauca Province, who have just been discharged because of wrongdoing by their subordinates, and their alleged connections with criminals.



Source: *El Pais*, Cali, September 12, 2008.

* September 10, 2008. Colombian government agencies and the United Nations Office for Human Rights in Bogotá all agree that the Colombian Army has advanced in its observation of human rights. Nevertheless, observes news magazine *Cambio*, there are still some danger signs. There are 668 ongoing prosecutions of military for aggravated homicide and extrajudicial executions, but only 14 convictions. The Public Defender has questioned the slowness of the military justice system in turning such cases over to the civil justice system, and warns that in some cases, even the victims’ families don’t know where the case is being handled. The United Nations Office for Human Rights continues to receive complaints about extrajudicial executions, presenting victims as guerrillas killed in combat, and altering of crime scenes.

Demobilized paramilitary commanders have testified about the aid and cooperation they received from Colombian Army officers of high rank, including retired General Rito Alejo del Rio, retired Col. Victor Hugo Matamoros, General Mario Montoya Uribe, commander of the Army, retired General Julio Charry Solano, retired General of Police Rosso Jose Serrano, Colonel of Police William Alberto Montezuma, and retired Admiral Rodrigo Quinones, among others.

Source: *Cambio*, Bogotá, September 10, 2008.

* 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 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, Bogotá, 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*, Bogotá, 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*, Bogotá, *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*, Bogotá; *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*, Bogotá, *El Herald*, 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*, Bogotá, 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*, Bogotá, 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*, Bogotá; 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*, Bogotá, 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*, Bogotá, 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*, Bogotá, 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 riverboat 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 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 Herald*, 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 Medellin. General Pedreros was responsible for security in Antioquia, Cordoba, and Choco 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 (Caqueta 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 (Atlantico 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 Pais*, 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 Herald*, 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 Herald*, 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 Herald*, 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 Heraldo*, 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, 2002.

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 Herald*, 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*, Medellin, 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*, Medellin, 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 Herald*o, 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*, Medellín, *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,

* 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 Herald*, 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 Tuluá, 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/seconales/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/DhjuvenesFeb29.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 their 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 Pais*, Cali; *El Herald*o, 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 Herald*o, 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 Pais*, 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 Herald*, 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 1006, 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 1006, 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 Medellín. 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*, Medellín, *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 Medellín. 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 Herald*, 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/DhVelerod18.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*, Medellin; *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 Heraldo*, 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 investigating 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 Herald*, 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 Caucasia 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 Herald*o, Barranquilla; *Vanguardia Liberal*, Bucaramanga; *El Pais*, Cali; and *El Mundo*, Medellín, 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. Carvahal had provided information and assistance to the paramilitaries. Col. Carvahal, 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=PT24qmq72yvRR72Tt18amijrk5q4deq2ZBE9G1nPjdg68XQ66

* 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*, Medellín, 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 Herald*, 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/SaSansonSep07.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 Herald*, 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 Herald*, 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 Pais*, 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*, Medellin, 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=UPml168mKn72KvTn72jBKyCEl2SEo2l8WgoPTHL8WoASTI66

* 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 Tulua. 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 Herald*, 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 Pais*, 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 Pais*, 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*, Medellín, August 10, 2007.

* August 10, 2007. The Public Prosecutor has charged ten Colombian Army soldiers with torturing four young men in western Medellín. 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*, Medellín, 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*, Medellín, and *El Pais*, 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 “Carapollo”, 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 Herald*, 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*, Medellín, 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 Medellín 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 Herald*, 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 investigation 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*, Medellin, *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*, Medellin, 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 Ibague (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*, Medellin, *El Pais*, 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*, Medellin, 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 Piedad 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 Medellin 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 Medellin were discharged “for the illegal arrest and subsequent murder of a man apparently involved in the theft of a vehicle.”

Source: *El Mundo*, Medellin, 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 Pais*, 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 Herald*, 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 Pais*, 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 Pais*, 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 Pais*, Cali, January 14, 2007 and *El Colombiano*, Medellin, 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 Fundacion 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 Pais*, 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*, Cali 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 Mapiripan v Colombia*. The Court found the Colombian Army guilty of aiding paramilitaries who massacred 49 people at Mapiripan (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 Mapiripan 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.***

