

Office of the President of the Republic of Colombia

Press Release, Wednesday 29 October 2008

1. On the 3rd of October, via Resolution 4342 and in reaction to the serious reports of disappearances in the locality of Soacha and alleged murders in the jurisdiction of the 2nd and 7th Divisions of the National Army, the Minister of National Defence created a temporary commission led by the Chief Commander of the Armed Forces to investigate the operational circumstances and recommend appropriate administrative measures.
2. The creation of this Commission complies with the Government's and Ministry of Defence's policy of zero-tolerance towards human rights violations. Throughout six years of unprecedented successes and achievements in the recovery of security, the Democratic Security Policy has been based on efficient transparency and legality.
3. The primary interest of the Minister of Defence and the Chief Commander of the Armed Forces is to ensure the integrity, morality and legitimacy of the military institution, as has been reflected in various policies, orders and directives, such as Directives 10 and 19 of 2007 of the Ministry of Defence and Permanent Directive 300-18 of 2007 of the General Command of the Armed Forces, amongst others.
4. In its administrative and operational investigation, the Commission found in various command levels, incidences of serious negligence in the verification and enforcement of procedures that regulate the use of intelligence and the planning, management, implementation and evaluation of military missions and operations. It also found an inexcusable lack of diligence in the rigorous investigation of alleged cases of irregularities in the jurisdiction.
5. The Commission concluded that this negligence may have facilitated the collusion of some members of the National Army with criminals, who benefitted from impunity, in order to achieve irregular results which go completely against the Democratic Security Policy and military doctrine and honour.
6. These acts are being criminally and disciplinarily investigated by the Public Prosecutor's Office and the Inspector General, respectively. The Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces have collaborated with these investigations and will continue to do so until the situation is clarified.
7. In light of the serious administrative and operational faults established by the Commission, the Ministry of National Defence has decided to dismiss the following officials, regardless of the results of the penal and disciplinary processes:
 - Major General Pico Hernández Roberto, Commander of the 7th Division

- Brigadier General Cortes Franco José Joaquín, Commander of the 2nd Division
- Brigadier General Coronado Gámez Paulino, Commander of the 30th Brigade
- Coronel Herrera Fajardo Santiago, Ex-Commander of the 15th Mobil Brigade
- Coronel Barrera Jurado Juan Carlos, Commander of the 14th Brigade
- Coronel Castro Gómez Rubén Darío, Commander of the 15th Mobil Brigade
- Coronel Bohórquez Botero Carlos, General Chief of the 14th Brigade
- Lieutenant Coronel Tamayo Hoyos Diego, Commander of the 15th Santander Infantry Battalion No 15.
- Lieutenant Coronel Camelo Piñeros Nestor, Ex-Commander of the "Batalla de Calibío" Battalion of Engineers
- Lieutenant Coronel Ramírez Cedeño Wilson, Commander of the "Batalla de Calibío" Battalion of Engineers
- Lieutenant Coronel Castro Pinto Wilson, Ex-Commander of the "General Rafael Reyes" Infantry Battalion
- Lieutenant Coronel Varón Rubio Milton, Ex-Commander of the "Batalla de Bombona" Infantry Battalion
- Lieutenant Coronel Rincón Amado Gabriel, Operations Official of the 14th Mobile Brigade
- Lieutenant Coronel Acosta Vargas Ángel Alberto, Commander of the 14th Service Battalion
- Major Rodríguez M Carlos Gilberto, Intelligence Official of the 14th Mobile Brigade
- Major Baquero Ramos José, Commander of the 96th Counter-Guerrilla Battalion of the 14th Mobile Brigade
- Major Peralta Ramírez, ex-operations official of the "General Rafael Reyes" Infantry Battalion
- Major López Díaz Nemesio, Intelligence Official of the 14th Brigade
- Capitan Alarcón Ávila Javier, Intelligence Official of the "Batalla de Calibío" Battalion of Engineers
- Lieutenant Villany Realpe Eduar, Intelligence Official of the "General Rafael Reyes" Infantry Battalion
- Sergeant Sotelo John Fredy, ex-aide to the Intelligence Section of the "Batalla de Calibío" Battalion of Engineers
- Sergeant Ñiampira Benavides Jesús, aide to the Intelligence Section of the "General Rafael Reyes" Infantry Battalion
- Sergeant Perdomo Bonilla Fredy, clerk of the Santander Infantry Battalion
- Sergeant Castro Ojeda Cristian, weapons clerk of the "Batalla de Calibío" Battalion of Engineers
- Sergeant Pérez Contreras Sandro, subofficial of intelligence of the Santander Infantry Battalion
- Sergeant Cano Gómez Fernando, "Batalla de Bomboná" Infantry Battalion
- 3rd Officer Perdomo Polanía Felipe, Squadron Commander, "Batalla de Calibío" Battalion of Engineers