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WRITENET ALERT: COLOMBIA

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WRITENET ALERT - COLOMBIA

ALERTS

* **The 30 year long civil war shows no signs of coming to an end.** Between 7 August 1994 and 30 August 1995, there were 598 incidents related to the armed conflict including firefights, ambushes, kidnappings, assaults and attacks on military targets. [CINEP, November 1995, p. 4]

  Three guerrilla movements are still active and attempts at a peace process by the government of President Samper were halted following the resignation of the government peace negotiator, Carlos Holmes Trujillo in July 1995 and the subsequent declaration of a "state of internal disturbance" in August which remains in effect. As a consequence, the climate of violence in conflict areas has worsened. [EIU, 4th Quarter 1995, pp. 11-12]

* **The political crisis threatens constitutional stability.** Charges that contributions from Colombia's drugs traffickers financed President Samper's election campaign first appeared two days following his election in June 1994. Following the arrest of the campaign treasurer, Santiago Medina, allegations that Mr. Samper's defence minister Fernando Botero had authorised the receipt of drug money forced Mr. Botero to resign on 2 August 1995. [Radio Caracol, 02/08/95, in BBC, 04/08/95] He was subsequently detained at a military base and, in January 1996, he accused President Samper of knowing about the campaign contributions from the drugs cartels. [Notisur, 26/01/96]

  The President now faces a congressional impeachment investigation. However, Congress itself is under investigation for political donations by drug traffickers to at least thirty congressmen. Executive and legislative authority have been weakened as a consequence. [International Herald Tribune, 21/02/96]

* **The human rights situation remains critical.** During 1995, there was no improvement in the figures for human rights violations. The average of five political assassinations daily and one disappearance every two days continued. During the first nine months of 1995, 47 massacres took place leaving 286 people dead. The majority of these acts were committed by paramilitary groups organised in large cities. [OIDHACO, February 1996, pp. 3-4]

  Aside from the cities, where many of the killings are classified as actions of "social cleansing", most of the human rights violations have taken place in regions where the armed conflict has been particularly acute. In particular, the areas of Urabá, the Norte de Santander and south of Cesar departments, the middle Magdalena region and the department of Meta have suffered from the actions of the army and paramilitary groups tolerated by or directly linked to State authorities. [CINEP, November 1995, pp. 6-14]

* **Levels of internal displacement, already high, are on the increase.** Following a year and a half of research, the Colombian Episcopal Conference released a comprehensive study of forced internal displacement which identified 586,261 people displaced from conflict areas between 1985 and 1994. Of these, only 13,000 have received humanitarian assistance. However, the numbers of internally displaced are rising. The NGO Working Group on the displaced estimates that there were 25,000 people newly displaced during the first nine months of President Samper's government from the four worst regions of conflict. [Exodo, July/August 1995, pp. 4 & 16]

* **Tensions on the Colombia-Venezuela border have been high during 1995.** Following a guerrilla attack on a Venezuelan border post in which several soldiers were killed, tension between the two countries concerning the disputed border has been high and a number of Colombians have been expelled by the Venezuelan army. [CINEP, November 1995, p.12]

* **Impunity is the rule for human rights violators.**ÊInternational human rights experts have pointed out that the levels of human rights violations can only be improved if impunity is effectively fought. The current system of military justice ensures impunity for summary executions, torture and enforced disappearance. However, problems also exist in the civilian courts which prosecute to conviction only about one tenth of all cases of murder. The problem is exacerbated by the regional court system which is seen by many observers as providing a legal legitimacy to cover human rights violations by the military acting as judicial investigators. [UN, 16 January 1995, para. 85-86 & 115-117]

  President Samper's government has done little to improve the situation. He has defended military jurisdiction and the regional court system as well as introducing a "state of internal disturbance" which further restricts the limited ability of citizens to prosecute human rights violators within the security forces. [LCHR, 02/02/96]

* **A generalised climate of violence exists.** In addition to the political violence, Colombia has one of the highest annual murder rates in the world. The majority of violent deaths are due to common crime. One factor seems to be the failure of the weak political system to cope with the levels of urban poverty. Another factor is the levels of drug addiction. By 1991, the government estimated that there were 500,000 addicts of cocaine derivatives. [CIIR, March 1992, p. 20]

ISSUES

Peace and Security

* With the exception of the five years of the military government of Rojas Pinilla (1953-8), Colombian government has been characterised this century by two party democracy and a weak federal state. The two parties, Liberal and Conservative, have dominated Colombian politics since the mid-nineteenth century. [Kline, 1995, pp. 26-55] However, the central state has historically been extremely weak, and where it has intervened in the development of the country, many decisions have been controlled by

the federations of business and landowning interests known as *gremios*. [Pearce, 1990, pp. 42-7]

* Where political conflict between the two parties has not been resolved through the political system, political violence has been the outcome. The period known as *La Violencia* (1948-57) is estimated to have claimed the lives of 200,000 people. It was resolved by a short period of military rule followed by a 16 year pact in which the two parties alternately ruled the country with executive and legislative posts shared in a strictly bipartisan manner regardless of the electoral results. [Kline, 1995, pp. 43-52 & AI, March 1994, p. 14]

* In the 1960s, guerrilla organisations emerged out of a generation of peasants excluded from the political system following *La Violencia* and disenchanted Marxist intellectuals. Despite a number of peace agreements with different guerrilla movements and factions, the civil war has continued to this day. [Pearce, 1990, pp. 165-180] The armed conflict has regularly provided the excuse for presidential declarations of a state of emergency or of internal disturbance. Up until 1994, 37 of the previous 44 years were spent under this suspension of constitutional rule. [AI, March 1994, p. 31]

* Counterinsurgency is highly developed. The army has a sophisticated intelligence structure and specialised counterinsurgency units called mobile brigades. These include civilian assassins (*sicarios*). In addition, much of the counterinsurgency activity is carried out by a variety of paramilitary groups, some operating regionally, others nationally. [AI, March 1994, pp. 46-59] Despite consistent government denials, there is much evidence to suggest that many paramilitary organisations are funded and trained by the Colombian security forces in collaboration with powerful landowners and drug traffickers. [NCOS, 1995].

* As part of a number of peace accords, demobilised guerrilla forces have attempted to enter the political arena. However, in many cases, members of new political parties have become targets of repression. Most often this takes the form of assassination by paramilitary agents. For example, the Patriotic Union (*Union Patriotica* - UP), founded in 1985 by demobilised guerrillas of the FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia - FARC) together with the Communist party, has suffered the murder of two presidential candidates, around twenty congressmen, dozens of mayors and deputies and around 2,500 of its leaders and members. [Perez Casas, June 1995, p. 52].

* An attempt at political reform was made in 1991 with an elected constituent assembly elaborating a new Constitution. The assembly included representatives of guerrilla and demobilised guerrilla movements. The new Constitution enshrined a number of improvements in democratic institutions including the decentralisation of budgetary and other powers to the municipalities, changes in the electoral system to allow minority parties to gain a voice in Congress and a significant reform of the judiciary. Constitutional provisions for a state of emergency were also restricted. However, many of the most serious institutional flaws in the Colombian system were not addressed. The military tribunals were not discussed by the assembly and two of the most repressive decrees issued during the state of emergency were enshrined in law in

the transition period between the old constitution and the new one. The defence of democracy statute of 1988 defined social and political protest as terrorist action, while the defence of justice statute of 1991 introduced the regional courts (see **Alerts**). [CIIR, March 1992, pp. 25-7]

* A number of border incidents have taken place on the disputed Venezuela-Colombia border. It was hoped that the problem had been resolved following talks in November 1995 between foreign ministers in which it was agreed that no incursions across national frontiers would be made in the pursuit of guerrillas and that the Perija border zone will be marked as established by international treaties. [Inravision TV-A, 19/11/95 in BBC, 21/11/95] However, a recent incident involving exchange of fire between Venezuelan troops and Colombian guerrillas in which there were reports of a Colombian navy patrol boat opening fire on the Venezuelans suggests that the problems remain. [Xinuha, 30/11/95]

Human Rights

* Between June 1986 and June 1994, 25,491 Colombian civilians died in political and social violence. Of these deaths, 29 per cent were shown to be the responsibility of guerrilla movements while almost 70 per cent were shown to be committed by the Colombian army or police, or by paramilitary groups. [Carrigan, March/April 1995, p. 9]

* The government of President Samper took some steps to improve the human rights situation. The President publicly acknowledged government responsibility for the 1989-90 massacres in Trujillo. The government announced the formation of a special task force to combat paramilitary groups and several paramilitary leaders were arrested. [DOS, March 1996]

* Despite government measures, paramilitary activity has grown. New paramilitary groups have appeared (Colombia Sin Guerrilla - COLSINGUE and Muerte a Comunistas y Guerrilleros - MACOGUE). During 1995, a number of regions suffered offensives from paramilitary groups. [OIDHACO, February 1996, pp. 5-6]
  The government has also created rural security cooperatives which have been criticised as a means of legitimizing paramilitary groups. [UN, 20 October 1995, Colombia section]

* Impunity has continued under the current government. 97 per cent of all crimes go unpunished. The perpetrators of the Trujillo massacres have not been punished. In another case, the 1990 disappearance, torture and death of Nydia Erik Bautista, the Deputy Prosecutor General, Hernando Valencia Villa, found Brigadier General Hernan Velandia Hurtado responsible and ordered the General's dismissal from active service. President Samper chose instead to issue a decree decorating General Velandia for distinguished military service. As a consequence Mr. Valencia Villa was forced to leave the country after he became the target of death threats. [LCHR, 02/02/96]

* Political violence has been targeted at political leaders, human rights groups, civic committees and peasant and urban union organisers, resulting in severe *de facto*

restrictions of the freedom of assembly and expression. For example, in Meta, the Civic Human Rights Committee, the only non-governmental human rights organisation in the region, has suffered violence, including four assassinations, three disappearances and the forced resignation of many of its members because of fear of assassination. In 1995, it was forced to close its office in Villavicencio and go into exile in Bogota. The president of the committee and various members received threats and were harassed by unknown persons in January and February 1995. [Exodo, July/August 1995, p. 7]

* Indigenous people in Colombia have also suffered human rights violations. For example, the *El Volao* reserve, formed in 1987, was abandoned in March 1995. From 1990 onwards, land in the area was bought and concentrated in the hands of a few landowners. This was accompanied by a paramilitary presence and conflict erupted between paramilitaries and guerrillas of the EPL (Ejercito Popular de Liberación - Popular Liberation Army). In early 1995, two indigenous people were murdered and on 15 March, an EPL column killed the indigenous governor with machetes. The reserve was abandoned a week later. [Grupo de apoyo, June 1995, pp. 5-6]

Economy

* Despite political instability, Colombia's economy has been the most stable in Latin America since 1982, achieving a combination of steady per capita growth and low inflation. [Green, 1995, p. 217]

* For many years, the economy was highly dependent on coffee exports. The discovery of large oil reserves at Cusiana and Cupiagua in the eastern plains will transform the economy with production of crude forecast to double to 1.1 million barrels per day by 1998. Other key exports include bananas, cut flowers, gold, platinum and emeralds. The country is self-sufficient in energy. Manufacturing industry accounts for about 20 per cent of GDP and is concentrated in the three major cities of Bogota, Cali and Medellin. [EIU, Country Profile, pp. 9-22]

* The National Planning Department reported in December that the civil war has cost about US$12.5 billion between 1990 and 1994, averaging about four per cent of Colombia's GDP. The costs include military expenditure and the lost productivity of participants in the war. [Reuters, 26/12/95] Guerrilla movements have also attacked strategic economic targets. According to Ecopetrol, guerrillas blew up the Cano Limon-Coveñas pipeline 34 times in the first seven months of 1994. [EIU, Country Profile, p. 19]

* The trade and export of illegal drugs (particularly cocaine) has become a significant (though unmeasurable) part of the Colombian economy. Colombian government figures suggest that US$10 billion entered the country from the drug trade in the 1980s. [Kline, 1995, p. 94]

* It is possible to talk about two economies in Colombia. The success of the formal economy has been at the expense of the neglect of the informal sector and of small farmers. The expansion of commercial farms has been paralleled by the expulsion of

small farmers while in the towns, the number of jobs provided by the low paid informal sector outstrips the number provided by manufacturing industry. The "cocaine economy" alone is estimated to have provided over half a million jobs, a number equal to that provided by manufacturing. [Pearce, 1990, pp. 69-117]

* President Gaviría (1990-4) introduced a policy of economic opening (*Apertura Economica*) which involved privatization of state industries, public spending cuts, deregulation and the reduction of import tariffs. [CIIR, March 1992, p. 28] President Samper introduced a compensatory social policy directed at the poor (*Salto Social*) to try to mitigate the social effects of this policy. While social expenditure is set to rise substantially, the health sector has failed to make significant progress and policies for the agricultural sector, vital to efforts to reduce rural violence, have also made a poor start. [EIU, 4th Quarter 1995, p. 15]

Environment

* In many areas, cattle-ranching, logging and coca growing have caused extensive soil degradation and loss of habitats for birds. [Dorling Kindersley, 1994, p. 173]

* The economic opening of Amazon and Pacific Coast rainforests for oil exploration, hydroelectric schemes, oil, gold and timber extraction threatens environmental disaster in those regions. [CIIR, March 1992, p. 29]

* The recently created Ministry of the Environment is developing an institutional capacity to monitor environmental regulations which have never been enforced. A number of projects for oil drilling, road construction and natural gas distribution have been delayed by environmental impact studies. [EIU, 4th Quarter 1995, p. 16]

Population Movements

* The study by the Episcopal Conference, which identifies 586,261 people displaced from conflict areas between 1985 and 1994 (See **Alerts**) is the most comprehensive documentation of internal displacement in the country. [UN, 03/10/94, para. 94]

* The detailed causes of internal displacement vary from region to region but include paramilitary violence associated with agrarian counter-reform, the "dirty war" (*guerra sucia*) in which political activists and organisers have been selectively exterminated, and the use of private armies paid by drug traffickers to remove peasants from land purchased for money laundering purposes. [UN, 03/10/94, para. 21-8]

* The problem of internal displacement is particularly serious in Córdoba department, where there is nickel mining and extensive cattle ranching, and in the Magdalena Medio and Meta areas where land colonisation by peasants fleeing *La Violencia* has come under attack from encroachment by larger landowners including drug traffickers. [Romero Medina, June 1992, pp. 1 & 8-9]

* In the last few years, the biggest source of internally displaced persons has been the conflict area of Uraba, Between November 1994 and May 1995 alone, more than 20,000 people have left the area. Entire villages have been deserted as a result of the violence. [Grupo de apoyo, June 1995, p. 18]

* Thousands of Colombians (estimates are as high as 1 million) live illegally in Venezuela where they do menial jobs. The migration is a source of tension between the two countries. [Kline, 1995, p. 126]
  A number of Colombian migrants in Venezuela have been expelled due to the border tension between the two countries. In March 1995, over 400 people from frontier villages were forced to settle in improvised camps on the Colombian side of the border. Despite government promises to provide land and assistance, the local mayor stated that the contributions had not arrived. [CINEP, November 1995, pp. 12-13]

* The principal reception areas for the internally displaced are the departmental capitals, particularly Bogota, Santander and Antioquia. [Exodo, July/August 1995, p. 16]

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

* On 5 December, the UN Committee on Torture reported that there are around 1,200 cases of torture in Colombia each year. [CNN, 24/02/96]

* On 2 February, Prosecutor General Alfonso Valdivieso presented charges to Congress alleging that President Samper had accepted between US$5 million and US$7 million for his 1994 election fund from Cali drugs traffickers. [Interpress Service, 09/02/96]

* On 13-14 February, 40 heavily armed paramilitary group members forcibly evicted over 250 families from lands they have been occupying for ten years in Cesar department. Families who refused to abandon their lands were reportedly beaten, whipped and their houses burnt. The group was also allegedly in possession of a list of the names of the community's leaders. There has been no response to the actions by paramilitaries from government forces despite the proximity of a military base. [AI, 19/03/96]

* On 14 February, eleven banana workers were murdered in the Uraba region. The government suspects FARC guerrillas to be responsible. A national police report said that 116 people were killed in 15 separate massacres in Uraba during 1995. [CNN, 24/02/96]

* On 16 February, President Samper announced the incorporation of Additional Protocol II of the Geneva Conventions into Colombian law and called on the country's guerrilla groups to commit themselves to observing the protocol. However the weakness of the government raises doubts about whether it is in a position to prevent the army from violating the protocol. [The Guardian, 23/02/96]
* On 1 March, the U.S. decertified Colombia. Under a 1986 law, the U.S. is required to certify that certain countries deemed producers or trans-shipment points for drugs entering the U.S. are making sufficient efforts to combat drugs traffic. Decertification

brings an automatic cut in bilateral aid and requires the U.S. to vote against fresh loans for Colombia in international financial institutions. The government called the U.S. decision an interference in internal affairs. It will further weaken the position of the Samper administration. [The Guardian, 21/02/96 and 02/03/96]

* On 11 March, General Hernando Camilo Zuniga resigned as commander of the Colombian armed forces citing personal reasons. Several weeks earlier, it was reported that the U.S. government was considering cancellation of visas for General Zuniga and other senior Colombian military leaders for alleged ties to drug trafficking. He was replaced by Admiral Holdan Delgado Villamil. [VOA, 11/03/96]

* On 12 March, five Latin American presidents approved the creation of an Andean Community economic block to replace the 26 year old Andean Pact. The bloc, comprising Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela, will seek economic and political harmonisation. [The Guardian, 12/03/96]

GROUPS IN CONFLICT/POLITICAL PARTIES OR GROUPINGS

Guerrilla Movements

The following have been the main guerrilla actors in Colombia although there are a number of smaller groups who have largely demobilised over the last decade.

* **Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia** (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia - FARC) with approximately 7,000 fighters. Founded in 1966, the movement is under the direction of the Communist Party.

* **Ejercito de Liberación Nacional** (National Liberation Army - ELN) with approximately 3,000 members. A dissident faction, the Socialist Renovation Current (Corriente de Renovación Socialista) signed a peace agreement in 1994. Founded in 1964, its recent strategy includes the blowing up of oil pipelines and kidnapping of executives of foreign companies. [Pearce, 1990, p. 283]

* **Ejercito Popular de Liberación** (Popular Liberation Army - EPL). Founded in 1967, it signed a peace agreement in 1991. A small dissident faction remains in arms (around 120 fighters) and has killed members of the demobilised guerrillas in Uraba. The demobilised group are believed to have set up Popular Militias (Comandos Populares), responsible for reprisal killings of FARC and EPL guerrillas. [AI, March 1994, p. 70]

* **Movimiento 19 de Abril M-19** (19 April Movement M-19). Founded in 1974, signed a peace agreement in 1989 and entered the political arena (see below).

Paramilitary Organisations

Many paramilitary organisations are locally based and one estimate suggests that there were 250 groups organised in 25 fronts in 1995. [CINEP, November 1995, p. 15]. Some examples:

* **Muerte a Secuestradores** (Death to Kidnappers - MAS). Its formation announced by a pamphlet drop over the city of Cali in 1981, MAS has been used as a cover for numerous different paramilitary groups all over the country and, in many cases, is a front for actions by the security forces. Its actions have included numerous political assassinations and disappearances. [NCOS, 1995, pp. 92-3]

* **Colombia sin Guerrilla** (Colombia without Guerrillas - COLSINGUE) and **Muerte a Comunistas y Guerrilleros** (Death to Communists and Guerrillas - MACOGUE). Two new groups which appeared at the beginning of President Samper's presidency, taking responsibility for the murder of 28 political and social movement leaders. COLSINGUE, in its public communications, has used information from trials which only members of the armed forces and the judiciary could have had access to. [OIDHACO, February 1996, pp. 5-6]

* **Los Tangueros**. Organised by landowner Fidel Castaño Gil, their name comes from the "Las Tangas" farm belonging to him where they have their base, this is one of the many groups responsible for the violence in Uraba. They form part of the advance forces used to attack and displace guerrillas and their social base. [Grupo de apoyo, June 1995, p. 10]

Political Parties

* **Partido Liberal** (Liberal Party - PL). The governing party led by Juan Guillermo Angel currently holds the presidency with President Ernesto Samper.

* **Partido Conservador** (Conservative Party - PC). Led by Fabio Valencia Cossio, the party's factions (including the MSN and NDF) have left it as a weak opposition.

* **Movimiento de Salvación Nacional** (National Salvation Movement - MSN). Led, until November, by Alvaro Gomez Hurtado, the party is a faction of the PC. The assassination of Mr. Gomez on 3 November, provoked a second declaration of a state of internal disturbance by President Samper. Its platform is largely a law and order one. [Inravision TV-A, 03/11/95, in BBC, 04/11/95]

* **Nueva Fuerza Democrática** (New Democratic Force - NDF). Led by Andres Pastrana Arango, NDF is also a faction of the PC which has attempted to become a bipartisan party.

* **Unión Patriótica** (Patriotic Union - UP). Set up by the FARC during its truce in the 1980s, the party has been supported by the Communist Party and its candidates and activists have been subject to repression (see **Issues**)

* **Alianza Democrática M-19** (Democratic Alliance - AD/M-19). Formed by the M-19, the alliance includes former guerrillas, members of other political movements and independent public figures. After winning 27 per cent of the vote in the elections for the 1991 Constituent Assembly, its electoral support declined and it won no seats in the 1994 senate following splits in its leadership. [Kline, 1995, pp. 81-2]

* **Partido Comunista de Colombia** (Colombian Communist Party - PCC). The PCC is over sixty years old but has been illegal at different periods in its history. In addition to supporting the UP, it puts up its own candidates for elections in certain regions. [Kline, 1995, p. 82]

* **Esperanza, Paz y Libertad** (Hope, Peace and Freedom - EPL) Formed by the demobilised EPL guerrillas in 1991.

MIGRATION MOVEMENTS

See *Population Movements*

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSES

* The U.S. response has been largely focused on supporting counter-narcotics and counterinsurgency activities. The regional court system, for example, was largely funded and designed by a U.S. administration of justice programme. [LCHR, February 1994, pp. 25-30] U.S.-Colombia relations have become strained over the last few years due to the crisis over alleged funding of President Samper's election campaign by Cali drug traffickers and the characterisation of Colombia as a "narco-democracy" by the outgoing head of the Drugs Enforcement Administration (DEA). [Actualidad Colombiana 163, October 1994] The recent decertification of Colombia despite the government arrests of leading Cali drug traffickers (see **Recent Events**) adds to the existing tensions.

* Since 1988, various bodies and thematic mechanisms of the UN and OAS systems have been concerned with the situation in Colombia. Numerous recommendations have been made to the government which have not been implemented. In August 1995, the sub-commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities adopted a resolution calling on the government to fulfil the recommendations formulated by various thematic mechanisms. Pressure has grown over the last two years for the UN Commission on Human Rights to appoint a Special Rapporteur to report on the human rights situation in Colombia. [OIDHACO, February 1996, pp. 27-8]

* The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, José Ayala Lasso, is currently considering a proposal for the instalation of a permanent office in Colombia. While there is support for this proposal from both the government and NGOs, differences exist as to the nature, mandate and powers the office should have. [El Tiempo, 2 April 1995]

NOTES/ANALYSES

* Despite the hopes raised by President Samper's initial programme for tackling the war, human rights violations and state responsibility for human rights, the

administration has so far presided over an increase in the levels of violence. [CINEP, November 1995, p. 38]

* The weakness of the government in the face of the current political crisis limits the possibility of peace negotiations. The guerrillas are reluctant to enter into talks with what they see as a discredited government while the army's hand has been strengthened by the declaration of a state of internal disturbance. [The Guardian, [23/02/96]

* The experience of the National Front pact and the subsequent repression of new political forces in the last decade has seriously weakened the legitimacy of the democratic system. In the presidential elections of 1994, around 67 per cent of the electorate abstained. [EIU, Country Profile, p. 4] The continuing dominance of the traditional parties over the political system despite the elaboration of a new constitution in 1991, limits the possibilities of reforms that would make Colombia a more inclusive democracy. [Kline, 1991, pp. 131-2]

WHO'S WHO

* **Fernando Botero Zea** Minister of Defence forced to resign in August 1995 and currently detained at a military base.

* **Humberto de la Calle** Vice-President who will take over the presidency if President Samper resigns.

* **Juan Carlos Esguerra** Minister of Defence who replaced Fernando Botero Zea in August 1995.

* **Fidel Castaño Gil** Landowner who has financed and organised a number of paramilitary groups.

* **Carlos Medellin** Minister of Justice

* **Jose Vicente Mogollon** Minister of Environment

* **Cecilia Lopez Montano** Minister of Agriculture

* **Santiago Medina** Former campaign treasurer to Ernesto Samper whose allegations sparked the political crisis.

* **Orlando Obregon** Minister of Labour since 19/12/95, replacing Conservative Party minister Maria Sol Navia.

* **Dr. Rodrigo Pardo** Minister of Foreign Affairs

* **Guillermo Eduardo Perry** Minister of Finance

*	**Ernesto Samper Pizano**	President
*	**Luis Alfredo Ramos Botero**	Minister of Foreign Trade who replaced Conservative Party minister Daniel Mazuera Gomez who resigned on 08/11/95.
*	**General Rosso José Serrano**	Director of the National Police
*	**Noemi Sanin**	Foreign Minister under President Gaviría (1990-94) and Conservative Party member, she resigned as UK ambassador in August 1995.
*	**Horacio Serpa Uribe**	Minister of the Interior
*	**Juan Manuel Turbay**	Minister of Communications
*	**Miguel Urrutia**	President of the Central Bank
*	**Dr. Alfonso Valdivieso Sarmiento**	Prosecutor General

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