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## Human Rights in Latin America: Human Rights in Colombia

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## Human Rights in Colombia

by Mariko Frame

With its notoriously vicious paramilitary death squads, rampant drug trade and collusive government, Colombia remains a complex and tumultuous nation. Needless to say, the human rights history of this country has been marked by political violence, absence of due process, and at times a general lawlessness that has made it perpetually unstable. Coupled with Colombia's domestic problems, U.S. involvement in its 'war on drugs' has exacerbated the situations that already were at a boiling point. With an ongoing power struggle between the government, the military and the drug lords, it is no exaggeration to describe Colombia as in a constant state of war. All activists and marginalized peoples are under steady attack from all sides as they strive to secure for themselves and for their country a safe and peaceful future.

### Books on Colombia

2000. "Plan Colombia: Rhetoric, Reality, and the Press." *Social Justice*. 27(4): 63.

*Abstract: Discusses the anti-narcotics drug aid package of the United States to Colombia, known as Plan Colombia, and the objections of human rights groups to the package. Opposition of the U.S. government to human rights conditions; Support of drug-connected paramilitaries to U.S. policy; Paramilitary massacres and violations; Political issue behind press coverage of Colombia; Rhetorics behind Plan Colombia's objectives.*

Americas Watch Committee. 1982. *Human Rights in the Two Colombias: Functioning Democracy, Militarized Society*. New York, NY: Americas Watch.

This source, written by America's Watch Committee, contains an analysis of Colombia's paradoxical political setting which is characterized by a functioning democracy and a militarized society. Critically examines violations against civil rights and human rights in Colombia's crisis. It also provides the political context for Colombia's crisis and discusses the government's role.

Americas Watch and Human Rights Watch. 1992. *Political Murder and Reform in Colombia: The Violence Continues*. New York; London: Human Rights Watch.

This report examines a series of political reforms made between 1990-1991. It concludes that despite reforms, the government of Cesar Trujillo has been unable to curb politically motivated violence. It ascribes the responsibility of such violence to a broad range of actors including the government, paramilitary groups, and insurgents.

Amnesty International. 1993. *Colombia: The Killing Must Stop*. New York, NY: Amnesty International.

This source written by Amnesty International concerns human rights abuses in Colombia; particularly death squads, disappeared persons, and political persecution. It also provides information on politics and government in 20th-century Colombia. Finally, it discusses the social conditions of Colombia's crisis and examines this crisis in the context of human rights.

Amnesty International. 1994. Political Violence in Colombia: Myth and Reality. New York, NY: Amnesty International.

This publication by Amnesty International provides information on the political aspect of Colombia's crisis from 1974 onwards. It discusses political persecution and low-intensity conflicts. It also examines violations of human rights in Colombia's crisis.

Amnesty International U. S. A. 1988. Colombia. New York, N.Y.: Amnesty International USA.

This source contains information on the continuing violence in Colombia's crisis, addressing the issues of human rights and civil rights. Next, it examines the political setting of Colombia's crisis, with discussion of politically motivated violence. Finally, it analyzes the legal rights of political prisoners and their status under law.

Amnesty International. U. S. A. 1989. Colombia: Human Rights Developments: "Death Squads" on the Defensive? New York, N.Y.: Amnesty International USA.

This human rights report published by Amnesty International provides a background to recent increases in human rights violations in Colombia, explaining the legislation introduced by executive decree under state of siege. Also, it contains information on extrajudicial executions and the particular forces responsible for these executions. Finally, it examines various sectors under attack; the communist party, trade unionists, teachers, etc.

Cynthia Arnson; Robin Kirk and Human Rights Watch Americas. 1993. State of War: Political Violence and Counterinsurgency in Colombia. New York: Human Rights Watch.

In 1992, the Colombian President Trujillo adopted a series of executive decrees which restricted civil liberties and granted more power to the Colombian armed forces. These authoritarian decrees have not resulted in any progress against the insurgent forces; instead the Colombian armed forces themselves are implicated in serious cases of human rights abuses. This report criticizes the ongoing abuses perpetrated by both the Colombian armed forces and the insurgents.

Cynthia Arnson; Jane Marcus and Program Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Latin American. 1995. Colombia: Human Rights and the Peace Process. Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

This publication is a series of working papers written by various scholars. It contains presentations on the historical context of violence and human rights in Colombia, the international law and institutional efforts against impunity, and the Peace Process. It also seeks to present a variety of views and expose the complexities of the Colombian situation for a more intelligent policy debate in the United States.

Sara Cameron. 2000. "The Role of Children as Peace-Makers in Colombia." *Development*. 43(1): 40.

*Abstract: Sara Cameron reports on the Children's Movement for Peace in Colombia which, with the support of organizations like UNICEF, has put into practice the fundamental principles of child rights and participation. Cameron shows how the Convention on the Rights of the Child gave the power to these children to protest against war in ways that have profoundly transformed communities across the country. She argues that the Children's*

*Movement for Peace provides many lessons for other countries and communities in conflict for children to exert a strong influence on adults to make peace.*

Donald T. Fox and Anne Stetson. 1992. "The 1991 Constitutional Reform: Prospects for Democracy and the Rule of Law in Colombia. (Cover Story)." *Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law*. 24(2): 139.

Considers the prospects for accomplishing the interlocking goals of promoting democracy and effectively protecting human rights through the new constitutional framework. Overview of the constitutional changes rendered by the Colombian Constitutional Assembly (Constituyente) to the legislative and executive branches; Analysis of the adequacy of steps taken by the Assembly toward a strong and independent judiciary; Constitutional treatment of human rights; Conclusion.

Javier Giraldo. 1996. Colombia: The Genocidal Democracy. Monroe, Me: Common Courage Press.

*Abstract: Describes the role of the U.S. in helping Colombia to carry out human rights abuses. Shows the connection between military and death squad activities, and how responsibility of abuses committed by paramilitaries is shifted away from the Colombian military. Also provides information for what Americans can do to change the situation.*

Javier Giraldo. 1999. "Corrupted Justice and the Schizophrenic State in Colombia." *Social Justice*. 26(4): 31.

*Abstract: Examines human rights violation cases in Colombia from the viewpoint of a non-governmental organization working with the poor. Failure by the state to comply with its responsibilities; Denial of justice to the victims of violations; Government efforts to improve the performance of justice; Military criminal justice system; Role of the Public Ministry, headed by the Procurator General in protecting human rights.*

Pilar Hernández. 2002. "Trauma in War and Political Persecution: Expanding the Concept." *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*. 72(1): 16.

*Abstract: Explores the contributions of narrative and liberation psychology to the understanding of politically based trauma in Colombia. Concept of trauma in the context of war and political repression; Relationship between the concept and the diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder; Analysis of how human rights activists make sense of the political persecution and trauma.*

Human Rights Watch . 2002. Colombia: A Wrong Turn: The Record of the Colombian Attorney General's Office. New York, NY: Human Rights Watch.

This Human Rights Watch publication criticizes Colombia's Attorney General for failing to make progress in curtailing human rights abuses. The Attorney General directly undermining prosecutions and investigations of major human rights violations in Colombia.

Human Rights Watch. 2001. Colombia: Beyond Negotiation: International Humanitarian Law and Its Application to the Conduct of the FARC-EP New York: Human Rights Watch.

This Human Rights Watch publication examines the actions of the left-wing insurgency group FARC in the context of international law. It analyzes the transgressions that FARC has

committed against international law. It also discusses the assassinations of political figures, other politically motivated crimes, and human rights abuses in Colombia.

Human Rights Watch. 2000. *Colombia: The Ties That Bind: Colombia and Military-Paramilitary Links*. New York, N.Y.: Human Rights Watch.

This source presents detailed evidence of the continuing close ties between the Colombian Army and the paramilitary groups responsible for gross human rights violations. This evidence is compiled by Colombian government investigators and Human Rights Watch. Also, this source contends that military support for paramilitary activity continues even in areas which are receiving aid from the United States.

Human Rights Watch. 2005. *Smoke and Mirrors: Colombia's Demobilization of Paramilitary Groups*. New York, N.Y.: Human Rights Watch.

This Human Rights Watch publication examines the growing power of right-wing paramilitaries and their gross human rights abuses in Colombia. It also criticizes a newly approved law which is effectively a negotiation between paramilitaries and the Colombian government: it allows paramilitaries demobilization if they are immune from extradition for drug trafficking. Finally, it describes the ramifications of allowing paramilitaries legal protection against prosecution.

Human Rights Watch. 1998. *War without Quarter: Colombia and International Humanitarian Law*. New York, N.Y.: Human Rights Watch.

This book examines Colombia's war in the context of international law. It proposes that the failure to address fundamental issues, such as impunities for violations of both human rights and international laws, contributes greatly to Colombia's conflict. It also discusses transgressions against international law for both paramilitaries and guerillas and the role that the international community plays in the conflict.

Human Rights Watch; International Amnesty and Washington Office on Latin America. 2002. *Colombia Human Rights Certification III: Briefing Paper*. New York, N.Y.: Human Rights Watch.

This Human Rights Watch document contains a review of the Public Law 107-1115 signed by the Bush administration which will allow continued funding for the Colombian government to support its 'war on terror.' It concludes that the Colombian government has not satisfied conditions of protection for human rights. According to HRW, there is evidence that the government continues to support paramilitary groups responsible for human rights abuses. Finally, this document urges the Bush administration to implement measures which will help secure human rights in Colombia.

Robin Kirk. 2003. *More Terrible Than Death: Massacres, Drugs, and America's War in Colombia*. New York: Public Affairs.

A human rights investigator, Robin Kirk, travels deep into rural Colombia to gather and then retell the personal narratives of men and women caught in the Colombian drug conflict. Kirk sets the historical context for the role of the United States in providing training and weapons

originally intended to fight illegal drugs for armed operations against factions which are seeking to gain control of Colombia.

Harvey F. Kline. 1999. State Building and Conflict Resolution in Colombia, 1986-1994. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.

*Abstract: Discusses the policies of the Virgilio Barco and Cesar Gaviria governments; drug and self-defense policies, as well as for the paramilitary groups. Explains how Colombian state failed to maintain military control, provide an adequate police force, and court system to protect civilian rights. Also provides a historical context concerning the weak Colombian state and the emergence of opposition.*

Harvey F. Kline and Netlibrary Inc . 1999. State Building and Conflict Resolution in Colombia, 1986-1994. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.

This book provides the context for Colombia's conflict in terms of politics and the government, discussing the administrations of Virgilio Barco and Gaviria Trujillo. It also examines the roles that paramilitary forces and drug trafficking play in the crisis, and discusses the human rights abuses being committed by Colombia's rival factions.

Mark Knoester. 1998. "War in Colombia." *Social Justice*. 25(2): 85.

*Abstract: Presents information as it relates to the increase in drug production and export in Colombia, highlighting 'war on drugs' in the region. Information on Colombia which is described as one of the most violent countries in the world; Examination of the penalty for human rights violators suffered by the Colombian people; Recommendations for violent situations in Colombia; Estimated amount of money the United States is spending in military aid to Colombia.*

Alex Kuo. 1998. "Clashing Ideals." *Harvard International Review*. 21(1): 9.

*Abstract: Criticizes the inconsistencies in United States policy toward human rights abuses in China, Colombia and the Russia Federation. Implication of the U.S. relationship with Russia; Suggestion for policymakers in designing framework for action.*

Robin Lloyd and Media Green Valley. 1997. The Courageous Women of Colombia. Burlington, VT: Green Valley Media.

*Abstract: Investigates whether the U.S. government uses the "Drug War" as a smokescreen to justify arms sales to Colombia and exposes the human rights abuses of the Colombian army against its people and how women specifically have responded to this. In 1996, a delegation sponsored by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) traveled to Colombia to take part in the International Day of Actions Against Violence Against Women. The delegation traveled to Apartado in support of its mayor, a courageous young woman named Gloria Cuartas, who is trying to govern the city in an atmosphere of terror. Includes an interview with Mayor Cuartas.*

Gabriel Marcella; Donald E. Schulz. 1999. Colombia's Three Wars. Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College.

This book addresses the strategic dimensions of Colombia's crisis. It argues that Colombia's future will deeply affect regional security and U.S. interests. It also presents the view that

counterinsurgency cannot be separated from counternarcotics, and it calls for a scaling back of restrictions on U.S. funding and training of counterinsurgency forces.

Joanne Mariner; Malcolm Smart and Human Rights Watch. 2001. *The “Sixth Division”: Military-Paramilitary Ties and U.S. Policy in Colombia*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

*Abstract: Paramilitaries commit many of the human rights abuses in Colombia. Provides evidence on the relationship among Colombian army brigades, police and paramilitaries. Shows how the Colombian government has failed to take effective measures to break these links, and how the Colombian military and police often profit from paramilitaries. Also describes the failure of American policy makers to enforce U.S. human rights laws, and how the U.S. contributes to the situation by continuing to provide military assistance to the government despite its poor human rights abuses record.*

Kenneth Maxwell. 2002. “Colombia/Colombian Labyrinth/the Sixth Division (Book).” *Foreign Affairs*. 81(1): 219.

*Abstract: The article contains three reviews on books pertaining to Colombia: 'Colombia: Fragmented Land, Divided Society,' by Frank Safford and Marco Palacios, 'Colombian Labyrinth: The Synergy of Drugs and Insurgency and Its Implications for Regional Stability,' by Angel Rabasa and Peter Chalk, and 'The Sixth Division: Military-Paramilitary Ties and U.S. Policy in Colombia,' by Human Rights Watch. In 'Colombia,' Safford and Palacios discuss the current turmoil taking place in Colombia, including economic troubles and violence. Rabasa and Chalk, in 'Colombian Labyrinth,' explore the strengths and weaknesses of Colombia's guerrillas and paramilitaries. Human Rights Watch, in 'The Sixth Division,' discuss Colombia's military and state institutions.*

Juan E. Méndez and Human Rights Watch. 1990. *The “Drug War” in Colombia: The Neglected Tragedy of Political Violence*. New York, NY: Human Rights Watch.

This book documents the criminal activities of the Colombian armed forces. It contains interviews with witnesses and victims who retell their stories of murder and death threats issued by government forces. It also criticizes the Colombian government for its state-sponsored terrorist operations in the war against guerrillas and narcotraffickers.

Mario Novelli. 2004. “Globalisations, Social Movement Unionism and New Internationalisms: The Role of Strategic Learning in the Transformation of the Municipal Workers Union of Emcali 1.” *Globalisation, Societies & Education*. 2(2): 161.

*Abstract: The paper explores processes of social movement learning within SINTRAEMCALI, a public service trade union in the South West of Colombia, which has successfully prevented a series of attempts by the national government to privatise public utilities. The paper develops the concept of 'strategic learning' and applies it to an exploration of the transformation of SINTRAEMCALI from a narrow 'corporate' trade union focused on the defence of members' particular interests, to a 'social movement union' that linked workers and local communities in the defence of public services and operated on a range of scales from the local to the global.*

Joseph R. Nuñez; Institute Army War College. Strategic Studies and B. Fascell North-South Center Dante. 2001. *Fighting the Hobbesian Trinity in Colombia: A New Strategy for Peace*. Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College: May be obtained from the Publications and Production Office.

This book contains an analysis of the complexity of the drug intervention in Colombia. The author summarizes reasons for the continuing crisis and explains which forces are working against democracy and human rights. He suggests new strategies for government accountability and peace building and argues that current policies are heading in the wrong direction. He also presents alternatives to drug intervention.

Karl H. Offen. 2003. "The Territorial Turn: Making Black Territories in Pacific Colombia." *Journal of Latin American Geography*. 2(1): 51.

*Abstract: Over the last decade, a wide range of global forces have combined to promote the territorial titling of collective lands to indigenous and black communities in the lowland tropics of Latin America. I describe the World Bank-funded Natural Resource Management Program's effort to demarcate and title some 5 million hectares of national lands to black community councils in Pacific Colombia since 1996. In so doing, I examine how environmental, human rights, and multilateral lending interests have come together over the last few decades to strengthen ethnic rights to collective lands throughout the Latin American lowlands. Although it is too early to make definitive assessments, I argue that the machinations of the World Bank-funded project interacted in very complex and significant ways with how black social movements instituted a novel ethnic-territorial relationship.*

Timothy Pynch. 1997. "Letter from Cartagena." *Convergence*. 30(4): 18.

*Abstract: Narrates the author's experiences at the 1997 World Congress on Participatory Action Research in Cartagena, Colombia. Declaration issued by Congress participants in relation to the assassination of three members of a family of human rights activists in Colombia; Presentation of approaches to action research; Content of the session.*

Victoria Sanford. 2003. "Learning to Kill by Proxy: Colombian Paramilitaries and the Legacy of Central American Death Squads, Contras, and Civil Patrols." *Social Justice*. 30(3): 63.

*Abstract: The article traces the founding of Colombian paramilitaries to the Cold War era when the U.S. helped the Colombian and Central American governments establish proxy paramilitary forces in its fight against international communism. The author summarizes the devastating effects this paramilitarism had on Colombian and Central American society during the 1960s to the late 20th century. A concluding section provides an update on the impact of paramilitarism on human rights in contemporary Colombia, and on the implications for peace in the region.*

Peter Santana. 1998. "Army of Terror." *Harvard International Review*. 21(1): 40.

*Abstract: Presents information on human rights abuses in Colombia since Andres Pastrana assumed presidency in 1998. Factors behind government abuses; Paramilitary terrorism; Military support from the United States.*

Michael Shifter and Vinay Jawahar. 2004. "State Building in Colombia: Getting Priorities Straight." *Journal of International Affairs*. 58(1): 143.

*Abstract: Examines the state-building efforts of Colombia. Information on the illegal armed groups in the country; Increase in the defense budget allocated by President Alvaro Uribe in 2002; Impact of the September 11 terrorist attacks on the politics of U.S. policy toward Colombia; Views of human rights groups on the consequences of Uribe's strengthening of security institutions.*

Doug Stokes. 2005. *America's Other War: Terrorizing Colombia*. London; New York: Zed Books: Distributed in the USA exclusively by Palgrave Macmillan.



This book critically analyzes the role of the United States in funding and training the Colombian military. It contains Cold War and post-Cold War history of the U.S.'s role in Latin and South America in supporting various regimes, and it seeks to illustrate the ulterior economic motives behind America's continued role rather than defaulting to the orthodox explanations of "Soviet containment" or a "war on terror."

Juan Gabriel Tokatlian. 2000. "Colombia at War: The Search for a Peace Diplomacy." *International Journal of Politics, Culture & Society*. 14(2): 333.

*Abstract: This essay analyzes Colombian foreign policy over the last three decades with specific emphasis on Bogota's peace diplomacy from 1978 up to 2000 in the context of an ongoing and degrading internal war. Initially, it assumes a modified realist perspective that links international relations with domestic structures. Then, the text defines three models of Colombian peaceful diplomacy according to the purposes, the means, and the rationales employed by the administrations that covered the above-mentioned period. After empirically evaluating the governments of Presidents Turbay, Betancur, Barco, Gaviria, and Samper, and the first two years of the presidency of Pastrana, the article concludes with an assessment of the country's peace diplomacy and its impact on internal violence and instability.*

Relations United States. Congress. Senate. Committee on Foreign. 2004. Challenges and Successes for U.S. Policy toward Colombia: Is Plan Colombia Working? Hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations, One Hundred Eighth Congress, First Session, October 29, 2003. Washington: U.S. G.P.O.: For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O.

This report is a testimony by the Assistant Secretary of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement before the U.S. Senate Committee. It presents his views considering the progress the U.S. has made in its fight against drug trafficking. He concludes by praising the success of Plan Colombia, but insists that continued efforts must be made to eradicate all sources of drug trafficking.

Toine Van Dongen. 1992. "The Restrepo Case: Murky Waters." *Human Rights Quarterly*. 14(3): 289.

*Abstract: The article discusses insights into an exceptional episode of human rights fact-finding, in which a commission of inquiry set up by the United Nations Secretary-General discovered the disappearance of two boys in Quito, Ecuador. The two boys became notorious not only in their own country but also in neighbouring Colombia and beyond. It was the work of Ecuadorian National Police, who killed them and secretly disposed of their bodies. In the first few months after their disappearance, the boys' parents had kept quiet as the members of police offered them vague stories and promises that the boys were still alive, and that they had been seen in different places. After seven months, fed up with vague stories of police officers, the boys' parents turned to the media. Thereupon, the public started taking a wide interest in the affair. A Special Commission of Inquiry was formed to look into the case. The Commission sought reports from an ex-policeman and General Gilberto Molina who were considered witnesses in this case.*

Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Latin American. 1995. Colombia: Human Rights and the Peace Process. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center, Latin American Program.

This report is based on an all-day conference held at the Wilson Center on April 4, 1995. It includes bibliographical references and working papers from the Woodrow Wilson International

Center for Scholars Latin American Program which discuss the issue of civil rights and human rights in Colombia's crisis. It also addresses factors which either help or hinder Colombia's peace process.

## Funding

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U. S. State Department. Support for Plan Colombia. <http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rt/plncol/>.

Plan Colombia is the main financial aid program provided by the United States in an effort to support counterinsurgency projects by the Colombian government. Plan Colombia is a \$7.5 billion project which provides funding to the Colombian military, as well as military training. This U.S. State Department website contains information on the mission and financial allocations of 'Plan Colombia,' and also provides pertinent links to Department of State releases concerning Plan Colombia.

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This report examines a series of political reforms made between 1990-1991. It concludes that despite reforms, the government of Cesar Trujillo has been unable to curb politically motivated violence. It ascribes the responsibility of such violence to a broad range of actors including the government, paramilitary groups, and insurgents.

Amnesty International. 1993. *Colombia: The Killing Must Stop*. New York, NY: Amnesty International.

This source written by Amnesty International concerns human rights abuses in Colombia; particularly death squads, disappeared persons, and political persecution. It also provides information on politics and government in 20th-century Colombia. Finally, it discusses the social conditions of Colombia's crisis and examines the crisis in the context of human rights.

Amnesty International. 1994. *Political Violence in Colombia: Myth and Reality*. New York, NY: Amnesty International.

This publication by Amnesty International provides information on the political aspect of Colombia's crisis from 1974 onwards. It discusses political persecution and low-intensity conflicts. It also examines the violations of human rights in Colombia's crisis.

Amnesty International U. S. A. 1988. *Colombia*. New York, N.Y.: Amnesty International USA.

This source contains information on the continuing violence in Colombia's crisis, addressing the issues of human rights and civil rights. Next, it examines the political setting of Colombia's crisis,

with discussion of politically motivated violence. Finally, it analyzes the legal rights of political prisoners and their status under law.

Amnesty International U. S. A. 1989. *Colombia: Human Rights Developments: "Death Squads" on the Defensive?* New York, N.Y.: Amnesty International USA.

This human rights report published by Amnesty International provides a background to recent increases in human rights violations in Colombia, explaining the legislation introduced by executive decree under state of siege. It also contains information on extrajudicial executions and the particular forces responsible for these executions. Finally, it examines various sectors under attack; the communist party, trade unionists, teachers, etc.

Cynthia Arnson; Jane Marcus and Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. 1995. *Colombia: Human Rights and the Peace Process*. Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

This publication is a series of working papers written by various scholars. It contains presentations on the historical context of violence and human rights in Colombia, the international law and institutional efforts against impunity, and the Peace Process. It also seeks to present a variety of views and expose the complexities of the Colombian situation for a more intelligent policy debate in the United States.

Donald T. Fox and Anne Stetson. 1992. "The 1991 Constitutional Reform: Prospects for Democracy and the Rule of Law in Colombia. (Cover Story)." *Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law*. 24(2): 139.

*Abstract: Considers the prospects for accomplishing the interlocking goals of promoting democracy and effectively protecting human rights through the new constitutional framework. Overview of the constitutional changes rendered by the Colombian Constitutional Assembly (Constituyente) to the legislative and executive branches; Analysis of the adequacy of steps taken by the Assembly toward a strong and independent judiciary; Constitutional treatment of human rights; Conclusion.*

Robin Kirk. 2003. *More Terrible Than Death: Massacres, Drugs, and America's War in Colombia*. New York: Public Affairs.

A human rights investigator, Robin Kirk, travels deep into rural Colombia to gather and then retell the personal narratives of men and women caught in the Colombian drug conflict. Kirk sets the historical context for the role of the United States in providing training and weapons originally intended to fight illegal drugs for armed operations against factions which are seeking to gain control of Colombia.

Joseph R. Nuñez; Institute Army War College. Strategic Studies and B. Fascell North-South Center Dante. 2001. *Fighting the Hobbesian Trinity in Colombia: A New Strategy for Peace*. Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College: May be obtained from the Publications and Production Office. <http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS12009>.

This book contains an analysis of the complexity of the drug intervention in Colombia. The author summarizes reasons for the continuing crisis and explains which forces are working against democracy and human rights. He suggests new strategies for government accountability

and peace building and argues that current policies are heading in the wrong direction. He also presents alternatives to drug intervention.

Timothy Pynch. 1997. "Letter from Cartagena." *Convergence*. 30(4): 18.

*Abstract: Narrates the author's experiences at the 1997 World Congress on Participatory Action Research in Cartagena, Colombia. Declaration issued by Congress participants in relation to the assassination of three members of a family of human rights activists in Colombia; Presentation of approaches to action research; Content of the session.*

Michael Shifter and Vinay Jawahar. 2004. "State Building in Colombia: Getting Priorities Straight." *Journal of International Affairs*. 58(1): 143.

*Abstract: Examines the state-building efforts of Colombia. Information on the illegal armed groups in the country; Increase in the defense budget allocated by President Alvaro Uribe in 2002; Impact of the September 11 terrorist attacks on the politics of U.S. policy toward Colombia; Views of human rights groups on the consequences of Uribe's strengthening of security institutions.*

Doug Stokes. 2005. *America's Other War: Terrorizing Colombia*. London; New York: Zed Books: Distributed in the USA exclusively by Palgrave Macmillan.

This book critically analyzes the role of the United States in funding and training the Colombian military. It contains Cold War and post-Cold War history of the U.S.'s role in Latin and South America in supporting various regimes, and it seeks to illustrate the ulterior economic motives behind America's continued role rather than defaulting to the orthodox explanations of "Soviet containment" or a "war on terror."

Juan Gabriel Tokatlian. 2000. "Colombia at War: The Search for a Peace Diplomacy." *International Journal of Politics, Culture & Society*. 14(2): 333.

*Abstract: This essay analyzes Colombian foreign policy over the last three decades with specific emphasis on Bogota's peace diplomacy from 1978 up to 2000 in the context of an ongoing and degrading internal war. Initially, it assumes a modified realist perspective that links international relations with domestic structures. Then, the text defines three models of Colombian peaceful diplomacy according to the purposes, the means, and the rationales employed by the administrations that covered the above-mentioned period. After empirically evaluating the governments of Presidents Turbay, Betancur, Barco, Gaviria, and Samper and the first two years of the presidency of Pastrana, the article concludes with an assessment of the country's peace diplomacy and its impact on internal violence and instability.*

## Human Rights Abuses

Amnesty International. 1993. Colombia: The Killing Must Stop. New York, NY: Amnesty International.

This source concerns human rights abuses in Colombia; particularly death squads, disappeared persons, and political persecution. It also provides information on politics and government in 20th-century Colombia. Finally, it discusses the social conditions of Colombia's crisis and examines the crisis in the context of human rights.

Amnesty International. 1994. *Political Violence in Colombia: Myth and Reality*. New York, NY: Amnesty International:

This publication by Amnesty International provides information on the political aspect of Colombia's crisis from 1974 onwards. It discusses political persecution and low-intensity conflicts. It also examines the violations of human rights in Colombia's crisis.

Amnesty International U. S. A. 1989. *Colombia: Human Rights Developments: "Death Squads" on the Defensive?* New York, N.Y.: Amnesty International USA.

This report provides a background to recent increases in human rights violations in Colombia, explaining the legislation introduced by executive decree under state of siege. Also, it contains information on extrajudicial executions and the particular forces responsible for these executions. Finally, it examines various sectors under attack; the communist party, trade unionists, teachers, etc.

Amnesty International U. S. A. *Colombia, Human Rights Concerns*.  
<http://www.amnestyusa.org/countries/Colombia/index.do>

This Amnesty International website contains information regarding human rights abuses in Colombia and links to the latest news and reports on Colombia's human rights crisis. It also provides links to important official, related websites and U.S. Policy organizations. Finally, it provides information on grassroots organizations which are protesting against Colombian human rights abuses, as well as information on how to get involved.

Sara Cameron. 2000. "The Role of Children as Peace-Makers in Colombia." *Development*. 43(1): 40.

*Abstract: Sara Cameron reports on the Children's Movement for Peace in Colombia which, with the support of organizations like UNICEF, has put into practice the fundamental principles of child rights and participation. Cameron shows how the Convention on the Rights of the Child gave the power to these children to protest against war in ways that have profoundly transformed communities across the country. She argues that the Children's Movement for Peace provides many lessons for other countries and communities in conflict for children to exert a strong influence on adults to make peace.*

Colombia Support Network. <http://www.Colombiasupport.net/>.

Colombia Support Network is a grassroots organization that is seeking to build a democratic and economically-just Colombia. The organization condemns human rights abuses by all factions of Colombia's crisis, including paramilitaries, insurgents, the government, and U.S.-backed projects. This website provides background information on Colombia and links to various articles related to the rival factions, the destruction of Colombia's environment, human rights abuses, U.S. involvement, etc.

Javier Giraldo. 1999. "Corrupted Justice and the Schizophrenic State in Colombia." *Social Justice*. 26(4): 31.

*Abstract: Examines human rights violation cases in Colombia from the viewpoint of a non-governmental organization working with the poor. Failure by the state to comply with its responsibilities; Denial of justice to the victims of violations; Government efforts to improve the performance of justice; Military criminal justice system; Role of the Public Ministry, headed by the Procurator General in protecting human rights.*



Pilar Hernández. 2002. "Trauma in War and Political Persecution: Expanding the Concept." *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*. 72(1): 16.

*Abstract: Explores the contributions of narrative and liberation psychology to the understanding of politically based trauma in Colombia. Concept of trauma in the context of war and political repression; Relationship between the concept and the diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder; Analysis of how human rights activists make sense of the political persecution and trauma.*

Human RightsWatch. 2002. *Colombia: A Wrong Turn: The Record of the Colombian Attorney General's Office*. New York, NY: Human Rights Watch.

This Human Rights Watch publication criticizes Colombia's Attorney General for failing to make progress in curtailing human rights abuses by undermining prosecutions and investigations of major human rights violations in Colombia.

Human Rights Watch. 2001. *Colombia: Beyond Negotiation: International Humanitarian Law and Its Application to the Conduct of the FARC-EP*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

This Human Rights Watch publication examines the actions of the left-wing insurgency group FARC in the context of international law. It analyzes the transgressions that FARC has committed against international law. It also discusses the assassinations of political figures, other politically motivated crimes, and human rights abuses in Colombia.

Human Rights Watch . 2005. *Smoke and Mirrors: Colombia's Demobilization of Paramilitary Groups*. New York, N.Y.: Human Rights Watch.

This Human Rights Watch publication examines the growing power of right-wing paramilitaries and their gross human rights abuses in Colombia. It also criticizes a newly approved law which is effectively a negotiation between paramilitaries and the Colombian government in which paramilitaries will demobilize if they can avoid extradition for drug trafficking. Finally, it describes the ramifications of allowing paramilitaries legal protection against prosecution.

Robin Kirk. 2003. *More Terrible Than Death: Massacres, Drugs, and America's War in Colombia*. New York: Public Affairs.

A human rights investigator, Robin Kirk, travels deep into rural Colombia to gather and then retell the personal narratives of men and women caught in the Colombian drug conflict. Kirk sets the historical context for the role of the United States in providing training and weapons originally intended to fight illegal drugs for armed operations against factions which are seeking to gain control of Colombia.

Harvey F. Kline. 1999. *State Building and Conflict Resolution in Colombia, 1986-1994*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.

This book provides the context for Colombia's conflict in terms of politics and the government, discussing the administrations of Virgilio Barco and Gaviria Trujillo. It also examines the role that paramilitary forces and drug trafficking play in the crisis, and discusses the human rights abuses being committed by Colombia's rival factions.

Mark Knoester. 1998. "War in Colombia." *Social Justice*. 25(2): 85.

*Abstract: Presents information as it relates to the increase in drug production and export in Colombia, highlighting 'war on drugs' in the region. Information on Colombia which is described as one of the most violent countries in the world; Examination of the penalty for human rights violators suffered by the Colombian people; Recommendations for violent situations in Colombia; Estimated amount of money the United States is spending in military aid to Colombia.*

Robin Lloyd and Media Green Valley. 1997. The Courageous Women of Colombia. Burlington, VT: Green Valley Media.

*Abstract: Investigates whether the U.S. government uses the "Drug War" as a smokescreen to justify arms sales to Colombia and exposes the human rights abuses of the Colombian army against its people and how women specifically have responded to this. In 1996, a delegation sponsored by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) traveled to Colombia to take part in the International Day of Actions Against Violence Against Women. The delegation traveled to Apartado in support of its mayor, a courageous young woman named Gloria Cuartas, who is trying to govern the city in an atmosphere of terror. Includes an interview with Mayor Cuartas. [videoreording]. 1 videocassette (24 min.)*

Juan E. Méndez and Human Rights Watch. 1990. The "Drug War" in Colombia: The Neglected Tragedy of Political Violence. New York, NY: Human Rights Watch.

This book documents the criminal activities of the Colombian armed forces. It contains interviews with witnesses and victims who retell their stories of murder and death threats issued by government forces. It also criticizes the Colombian government for its state-sponsored terrorist operations in the war against guerrillas and narcotraffickers.

Peter Santana. 1998. "Army of Terror." *Harvard International Review*. 21(1): 40.

*Abstract: Presents information on human rights abuses in Colombia since Andres Pastrana assumed presidency in 1998. Factors behind government abuses; Paramilitary terrorism; Military support from the United States.*

Toine Van Dongen. 1992. "The Restrepo Case: Murky Waters." *Human Rights Quarterly*. 14(3): 289.

*Abstract: The article discusses insights into an exceptional episode of human rights fact-finding, in which a commission of inquiry set up by the United Nations Secretary-General discovered the disappearance of two boys in Quito, Ecuador. The two boys became notorious not only in their own country but also in neighboring Colombia and beyond. It was the work of Ecuadorian National Police, who killed them and secretly disposed of their bodies. In the first few months after their disappearance, the boys' parents had kept quiet as the members of police offered them vague stories and promises that the boys were still alive, and that they had been seen in different places. After seven months, fed up with vague stories of police officers, the boys' parents turned to the media. Thereupon, the public started taking a wide interest in the affair. A Special Commission of Inquiry was formed to look into the case. The Commission sought reports from an ex-policeman and General Gilberto Molina who were considered witnesses in this case.*

Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Program. Latin American. 1995. Colombia: Human Rights and the Peace Process. Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center, Latin American Program.

This report is based on an all-day conference held at the Wilson Center on April 4, 1995. It includes bibliographical references and working papers from the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Latin American Program which discuss the issue of civil rights and human rights in Colombia's crisis. It also addresses factors which either help or hinder Colombia's peace process.

### Key Players

2000. "Plan Colombia: Rhetoric, Reality, and the Press." *Social Justice*. 27(4): 63.

*Abstract: Discusses the anti-narcotics drug aid package of the United States to Colombia, known as Plan Colombia, and the objections of human rights groups to the package. Opposition of the U.S. government to human rights conditions; Support of drug-connected paramilitaries to U.S. policy; Paramilitary massacres and violations; Political issue behind press coverage of Colombia; Rhetorics behind Plan Colombia's objectives.*

Americas Watch Committee. 1982. *Human Rights in the Two Colombias: Functioning Democracy, Militarized Society*. New York, NY: Americas Watch.

This source, written by the Americas Watch Committee, contains an analysis of Colombia's paradoxical political setting which is characterized by a functioning democracy and a militarized society. Critically examines the violations against civil rights and human rights in Colombia's crisis. It also provides the political context for Colombia's crisis and discusses the government's role.

Americas Watch Committee. 1992. Political Murder and Reform in Colombia: The Violence Continues. New York; London: Human Rights Watch.

This report examines a series of political reforms made between 1990-1991. It concludes that despite reforms, the government of Cesar Trujillo has been unable to curb politically motivated violence. It ascribes the responsibility of such violence to a broad range of actors including the government, paramilitary groups, and insurgents.

Cynthia Arnson; Robin Kirk. 1993. State of War: Political Violence and Counterinsurgency in Colombia. New York: Human Rights Watch.

In 1992, the Colombian President Trujillo adopted a series of executive decrees which restricted civil liberties and granted more power to the Colombian armed forces. These authoritarian decrees have not resulted in any progress against the insurgent forces; instead the Colombian armed forces themselves are implicated in serious cases of human rights abuses. This report criticizes the ongoing abuses perpetrated by both the Colombian armed forces and the insurgents.

Javier Giraldo. 1996. Colombia: The Genocidal Democracy. Monroe, Me: Common Courage Press.

*Abstract: Describes the role of the U.S. in helping Colombia to carry out human rights abuses. Shows the connection between military and death squad activities, and how responsibility of abuses committed by*

*paramilitaries is shifted away from the Colombian military. Also provides information for what Americans can do to change the situation.*

Human Rights Watch. 2002. *Colombia: A Wrong Turn: The Record of the Colombian Attorney General's Office*. New York, NY: Human Rights Watch.

This Human Rights Watch publication criticizes Colombia's Attorney General for failing to make progress in curtailing human rights abuses by directly undermining prosecutions and investigations of major human rights violations in Colombia.

Human Rights Watch. 2001. *Colombia: Beyond Negotiation: International Humanitarian Law and Its Application to the Conduct of the FARC-EP*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

This Human Rights Watch publication examines the actions of the left-wing insurgency group FARC in the context of international law. It analyzes the transgressions that FARC has committed against international law. It also discusses the assassinations of political figures, other politically motivated crimes, and human rights abuses in Colombia.

Human Rights Watch. 2000. *Colombia: The Ties That Bind: Colombia and Military-Paramilitary Links*. New York, N.Y.: Human Rights Watch.

This source presents detailed evidence of the continuing close ties between the Colombian Army and paramilitary groups responsible for gross human rights violations. This evidence is compiled by Colombian government investigators and Human Rights Watch. Also, this source contends that military support for paramilitary activity continues even in areas which are receiving aid from the United States.

Human Rights Watch. 2005. *Smoke and Mirrors: Colombia's Demobilization of Paramilitary Groups*. New York, N.Y.: Human Rights Watch.

This Human Rights Watch publication examines the growing power of right-wing paramilitaries and their gross human rights abuses in Colombia. It also criticizes a newly approved law which is effectively a negotiation between paramilitaries and the Colombian government in which paramilitaries will demobilize if they can avoid extradition for drug trafficking. Finally, it describes the ramifications of allowing paramilitaries legal protection against prosecution.

Human Rights Watch. *The Ties That Bind: Colombia and Military-Paramilitary Links*.

This source presents detailed evidence of the continuing close ties between the Colombian army and the paramilitary groups responsible for many of the worst human rights abuses in Colombia. This evidence is compiled by Colombian government investigators and Human Rights Watch. It contains first-hand accounts and interviews of victims of Colombia's human rights crisis. Finally, it describes in detail which brigades of the Colombian military have paramilitary links.

Human Rights Watch. 1998. *War without Quarter: Colombia and International Humanitarian Law*. New York, N.Y.: Human Rights Watch.

This book examines Colombia's war in the context of international law. It proposes that the failure to address fundamental issues, such as impunities for violations of both human rights and international laws, contributes greatly to Colombia's conflict. It also discusses transgressions

against international law for both paramilitaries and guerillas and the role that the international community plays in the conflict.

Human Rights Watch; International Amnesty and America Washington Office on Latin. 2002. Colombia Human Rights Certification Iii: Briefing Paper. New York, N.Y.: Human Rights Watch.

This Human Rights Watch document contains a review of the Public Law 107-1115 signed by the Bush administration which will allow continued funding for the Colombian government to support its 'war on terror.' It concludes that the Colombian government has not satisfied conditions of protection for human rights. According to HRW, there is evidence that the government continues to support paramilitary groups responsible for human rights abuses. Finally, this document urges the Bush administration to implement measures which will help to secure human rights in Colombia.

Harvey F. Kline. 1999. State Building and Conflict Resolution in Colombia, 1986-1994. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press. <http://lcweb.loc.gov/catdir/toc/98-25405.html>.

*Abstract: Discusses the policies of the Virgilio Barco and Cesar Gaviria governments; drug and self-defense policies, as well as for the paramilitary groups. Explains how Colombian state failed to maintain military control, provide an adequate police force, and court system to protect civilian rights. Also provides a historical context concerning the weak Colombian state and the emergence of opposition.*

Harvey F. Kline and Netlibrary Inc. 1999. State Building and Conflict Resolution in Colombia, 1986-1994. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.

This book provides the context for Colombia's conflict in terms of politics and the government, discussing the administrations of Virgilio Barco and Gaviria Trujillo. It also examines the role that paramilitary forces and drug trafficking play in the crisis, and discusses the human rights abuses being committed by Colombia's rival factions.

Robin Lloyd and Media Green Valley. 1997. The Courageous Women of Colombia. Burlington, VT: Green Valley Media.

*Abstract: Investigates whether the U.S. government uses the "Drug War" as a smokescreen to justify arms sales to Colombia and exposes the human rights abuses of the Colombian army against its people and how women specifically have responded to this. In 1996, a delegation sponsored by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) traveled to Colombia to take part in the International Day of Actions Against Violence Against Women. The delegation traveled to Apartado in support of its mayor, a courageous young woman named Gloria Cuartas, who is trying to govern the city in an atmosphere of terror. Includes an interview with Mayor Cuartas. [videoreording]. 1 videocassette (24 min.)*

Joanne Mariner; Malcolm Smart and Human Rights Watch. 2001. The "Sixth Division": Military-Paramilitary Ties and U.S. Policy in Colombia. New York: Human Rights Watch.

*Abstract: Paramilitaries commit many of the human rights abuses in Colombia. Provides evidence on the relation between Colombian army brigades, police and paramilitaries. Shows how the Colombian government has failed to take effective measures to break these links, and how the Colombian military and police often profit from paramilitaries. Also describes the failure of American policy makers to enforce U.S. human rights laws, and how*

*the U.S. contributes to the situation by continuing to provide military assistance to the government despite its poor human rights abuses record.*

Kenneth Maxwell. 2002. "Colombia/Colombian Labyrinth/the Sixth Division (Book)." *Foreign Affairs*. 81(1): 219.

*Abstract: The article contains three reviews on books pertaining to Colombia: 'Colombia: Fragmented Land, Divided Society,' by Frank Safford and Marco Palacios, 'Colombian Labyrinth: The Synergy of Drugs and Insurgency and Its Implications for Regional Stability,' by Angel Rabasa and Peter Chalk, and 'The Sixth Division: Military-Paramilitary Ties and U.S. Policy in Colombia,' by Human Rights Watch. In 'Colombia,' Safford and Palacios discuss the current turmoil taking place in Colombia, including economic troubles and violence. Rabasa and Chalk, in 'Colombian Labyrinth,' explore the strengths and weaknesses of Colombia's guerrillas and paramilitaries. Human Rights Watch, in 'The Sixth Division,' discuss Colombia's military and state institutions.*

Juan E. Méndez and Human Rights Watch. 1990. *The "Drug War" in Colombia: The Neglected Tragedy of Political Violence*. New York, NY: Human Rights Watch.

This book documents the criminal activities of the Colombian armed forces. It contains interviews with witnesses and victims who retell their stories of murder and death threats issued by government forces. It also criticizes the Colombian government for its state-sponsored terrorist operations in the war against guerrillas and narcotraffickers.

Mario Novelli. 2004. "Globalisations, Social Movement Unionism and New Internationalisms: The Role of Strategic Learning in the Transformation of the Municipal Workers Union of Emcali 1." *Globalisation, Societies & Education*. 2(2): 161.

*Abstract: The paper explores processes of social movement learning within SINTRAEMCALI, a public service trade union in the South West of Colombia, which has successfully prevented a series of attempts by the national government to privatise public utilities. The paper develops the concept of 'strategic learning' and applies it to an exploration of the transformation of SINTRAEMCALI from a narrow 'corporate' trade union focused on the defence of members' particular interests, to a 'social movement union' that linked workers and local communities in the defence of public services and operated on a range of scales from the local to the global.*

FARC-EP Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia People's Army. FARC-EP Homepage. <http://www.farcep.org/>.

This website is the homepage of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia People's Army: FARC-EP. It contains their mission statement and plenum. The self-ascribed history of FARC is provided, as well as interviews and dialogues with various FARC members. The website also contains information on the laws enacted within the insurgent army and the protocol expected of its members. Finally, it provides pertinent documents and criticisms of the role of the U.S. in Colombia's crisis.

Victoria Sanford. 2003. "Learning to Kill by Proxy: Colombian Paramilitaries and the Legacy of Central American Death Squads, Contras, and Civil Patrols." *Social Justice*. 30(3): 63.

*Abstract: The article traces the founding of Colombian paramilitaries to the Cold War era when the U.S. helped the Colombian and Central American governments establish proxy paramilitary forces in its fight against*

*international communism. The author summarizes the devastating effects this paramilitarism had on Colombian and Central American society during the 1960s to the late 20th century. A concluding section provides an update on the impact of paramilitarism on human rights in contemporary Colombia, and on the implications for peace in the region.*

Doug Stokes. 2005. America's Other War: Terrorizing Colombia. London; New York: Zed Books: Distributed in the USA exclusively by Palgrave Macmillan.

This book critically analyzes of the role of the United States in funding and training the Colombian military. It contains Cold War and post-Cold War history of the U.S.'s role in Latin and South America in supporting various regimes, and it seeks to illustrate the ulterior economic motives behind America's continued role rather than defaulting to the orthodox explanations of "Soviet containment" or a "war on terror."