



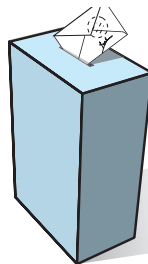
# Colombia

## The Legal Framework

### National Legislation

Systems and Concepts	Military Organization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Decree by which the National Security Council merges with the Superior Council of National Defence and the Commission created by the Decree 813 of 1983 (N° 2.134 - 1992/12/31)</li> <li>- Act which rules over the Organization and Operation of the National Entities, it issues Regulations, Principles and General Rules for the Exercise of the Powers specified in Subsections 15 and 16 of Section 189 of the Political Constitution, as well as other Regulations (N° 489 - 1998/12/29)</li> <li>- Decree by which the Bylaw which regulates the Civil Personnel Administration Regime of the National Ministry of Defence is modified (N° 1.792 - 2000/09/14)</li> <li>- Act on Regulations on the Reincorporation of Members of Irregular Armed Groups which contribute effectively to National Peace, and Humanitarian Agreements (N° 975 - 2005/07/25)</li> <li>- Act on the Special Administrative System for Civilian Public Employees at the Service of the National Ministry of Defence, for the Military Forces, the National Police and its Decentralised Entities (N° 1.033 - 2006/07/19)</li> <li>- Decree which regulates the Special System of Promotions in the Defence Sector and dictates some Rules on Personal Administration (N° 091 - 2007/01/17)</li> <li>- Decree which modifies and determines the Nomenclature and Classification System of the Posts within the Entities Jobs which are part of the Defence Sector (N° 092 - 2007/01/17)</li> <li>- Decree on Basic Wages of Public Employment of Civilian Employees of the National Ministry of Defence, of its Decentralised Entities, related to the Military Forces and National Police (N° 093 - 2007/01/17)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Decree which reorganizes the Military Industry (N° 2.346 - 1971/12/03)</li> <li>- Obligatory Military Service Act (N° 48 - 1993/03/03)</li> <li>- Military Penal Code Act (N° 522 - 1999/08/12)</li> <li>- Decree modifying the Decree which regulates the Rules for the Promotion of Officers and Warrant Officers of the Military Forces (N° 1.790 - 2000/09/14)</li> <li>- Act by which the Rules for Promotions of Officers, Executives, Warrant Officers and National Police Officers are modified (N° 1.791 - 2000/09/14. Reforms: Act N° 1.092 - 2006/09/13 and Act N° 1.168 - 2007/11/21)</li> <li>- Act on the Assessment of the Psychophysical Capacity and the Decline of the Laboral Capacity, and other Disability Aspects (N° 1.796 - 2000/09/14)</li> <li>- Act which dictates Regulations on the Evaluation and Classification for Officers and Warrant Officers of the Military Forces (N° 1.799 - 2000/09/14)</li> <li>- Decree on the Promotions and Statute of Professional Soldiers (N° 1.793 - 2000/09/14)</li> <li>- Decree on the Wages and Benefits of Professional Soldiers (N° 1.794 - 2000/09/14)</li> <li>- Act on the Unique Disciplinary Code (N° 734 - 2002/02/05)</li> <li>- Act on the Statute of Promotions (N° 775 - 2002/12/09)</li> <li>- Act which rules over the Armed Forces Disciplinary Regime (N° 836 2003/07/16)</li> <li>- Act on Regulations, Objectives and Criteria for Pensions and Retirement Benefits for the Members of the Public Force (N° 923 - 2004/12/30)</li> <li>- Act which issues Rules on Requirements on the Appointment of Positions within the Military Penal Jurisdiction (N° 940 - 2005/01/05)</li> <li>- Act on Decrees related with Wage System and Benefits (N° 987 - 2005/09/09)</li> <li>- Act on a Special Procedure in the Penal Military Code (N° 1.058 - 2006/07/26)</li> <li>- Act on Acquisition of Assets and Services (N° 1.089 - 2006/09/01)</li> </ul>

Source: Compilation based on the legislation above mentioned. For constitutional provisions see Chapter 1.



### Political Participation of Military Members

	Retired	On Duty
Are they entitled to vote?	Yes	No
Are they entitled to become candidates for elections?	Yes <sup>(1)</sup>	No

(1) One year after retiring.  
Source: Constitution.

## International Treaties

On Hemispheric Security	On Disarmament	On Human Rights and Justice	On the Hemispheric System
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance: Signature: 1947/09/02 Deposit: 1948/02/03</li> <li>- American Treaty on Pacific Settlement (Pact of Bogota): Signature: 1948/04/30 Deposit: 1968/11/06</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco): Signature: 1967/02/14 Deposit: 1972/08/04</li> <li>- Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons: Signature: 1968/07/01 Deposit: 1986/04/08</li> <li>- Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons: Signature: 1993/01/13 Deposit: 2000/04/05</li> <li>-Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines (Ottawa Convention): Signature: 1997/12/03 Deposit: 2000/09/06</li> <li>- Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction: Signature: 1972/04/10 Deposit: 1983/12/19</li> <li>- Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of certain Conventional Weapons: Accession: 2000/03/06</li> <li>- Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and other Related Materials: Signature: 1997/11/14 Deposit: 2003/02/05</li> <li>- Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions: Signature: 1999/06/07 Unratified</li> <li>- Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT): Signature: 1996/09/24 Deposit: 2008/01/30</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Inter- American Convention on Human Rights (Pact of San Jose de Costa Rica): Signature: 1969/11/22 Deposit: 1973/07/31</li> <li>- Inter-American Convention on Forced Disappearance of Persons: Signature: 1994/08/05 Deposit: 2005/04/12</li> <li>- Inter-American Convention to Prevent and Punish Torture: Signature: 1985/12/09 Deposit: 1999/01/19</li> <li>- International Criminal Court: Signature: 1998/12/10 Deposit: 2002/08/05</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Charter of the Organization of American States: Signature: 1948/04/30 Deposit: 1951/12/31</li> <li>- Antarctic Treaty: Accession: 1989/01/31</li> </ul>

Source: Compilation based on the information supplied by the web pages of the Secretariat for Legal Affairs of the Organization of American States, and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs.

## The Budget

### State Budget 2008

Local currency	125,715,234,306,174
US\$	64,578,637,852
<b>2008 GDP (in US\$)</b>	<b>202,437,000,000</b>

### Defence Budget 2008

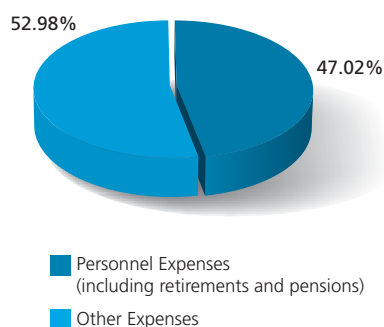
Local currency	11,689,850,000,000
US\$	6,004,957,107
<b>GDP's %</b>	<b>2.97</b>
<b>% of the State Budget</b>	<b>9.30</b>

### Defence Budget 2008 (in Local Currency)

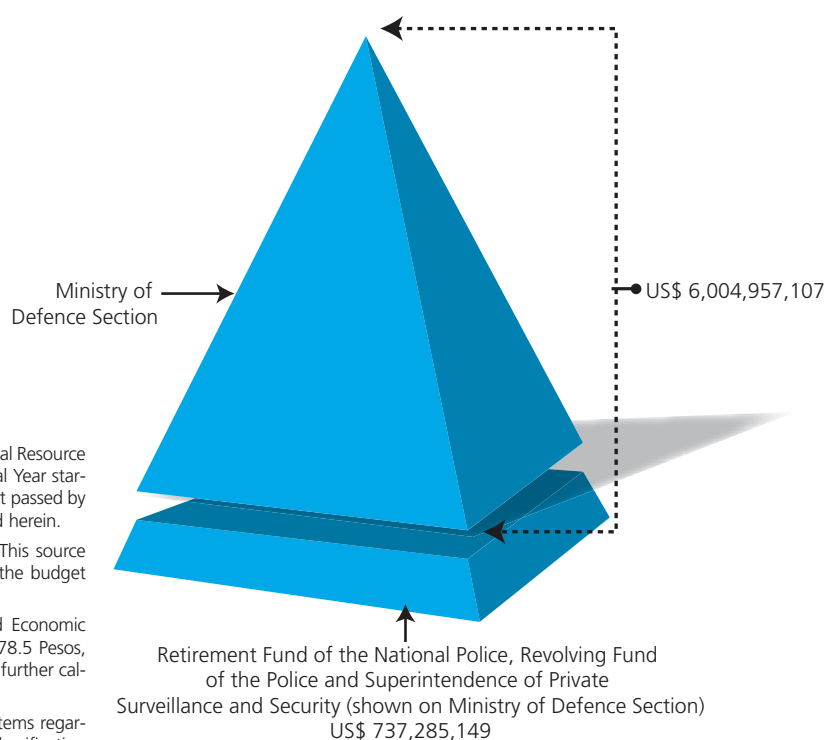
Ministry of Defence Section	Personnel Expenses	Other Operational Expenses*	Investment	TOTAL
<b>Ministry of Defence</b>				
General Management	70,250,100,000	823,197,900,000	14,427,000,000	907,875,000,000
General Command	10,506,000,000	20,499,000,000	42,633,000,000	73,638,000,000
Army	3,052,874,000,000	1,142,456,000,000	1,173,518,000,000	5,368,848,000,000
Navy	488,868,000,000	228,897,000,000	732,976,000,000	1,450,741,000,000
Air Force	270,678,000,000	436,251,000,000	943,980,000,000	1,650,909,000,000
Health	53,977,000,000	441,743,000,000	39,188,000,000	534,908,000,000
General Maritime Directorate	14,415,000,000	21,654,000,000	7,462,000,000	43,531,000,000
Retirement Fund of the Military Forces	3,730,000,000	1,118,052,000,000	1,500,000,000	1,123,282,000,000
Institute <i>Casas Fiscales</i> of the Army	1,595,000,000	18,473,000,000	10,170,000,000	30,238,000,000
Colombian Civil Defence	4,192,000,000	8,230,000,000	1,294,000,000	13,716,000,000
Officers Military Club	5,001,000,000	17,851,000,000	6,621,000,000	29,473,000,000
Military Hospital	40,966,000,000	111,442,000,000	4,781,000,000	157,189,000,000
Logistics Agency of the Military Forces	8,120,000,000	292,430,000,000	4,952,000,000	305,502,000,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,025,172,100,000</b>	<b>4,681,175,900,000</b>	<b>2,983,502,000,000</b>	<b>11,689,850,000,000</b>

\* Includes General Expenses, Current Transferences, Capital Transferences, Commercialization and Production Expenses.

Defence Budget 2008 Breakdown



Composition of Defence Budget 2008



Source: Compilation based on Law by which the Income and Capital Resource Budget is decreed, as well as the Appropriations Law for the Fiscal Year starting January 1 and finishing December 31, 2008. The State Budget passed by the Congress by means of the above mentioned Act is considered herein.

2008 GDP: World Economic Outlook Database Projection, IMF. This source has been taken for comparative purposes. Each country makes the budget based on its own GDP estimation.

The dollar value is the exchange rate considered by the World Economic Outlook Database, IMF. The seller's exchange rate average is 2,078.5 Pesos, based on the information provided by the Bank of Colombia. For further calculations, figures are provided in local currency.

Expressions in Bold Type (Table) make reference to the different items regarding defence, which can be found in a sectorial or institutional classification of the budgetary Act.



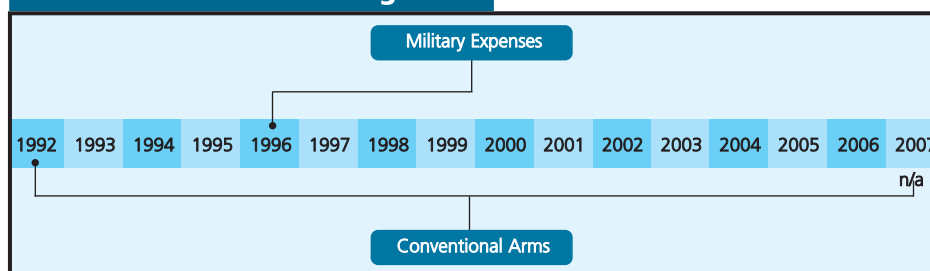
## Political Definitions

### Concepts

What is Defence?	What is Security?
<p>The Consolidation of Democratic Security Policy is the national defence policy of Colombia for the term 2006-2010. Its implementation principles are: achieve security and peace, perform duties legally, have a permanent presence, promote security as a guarantee for the work of justice, be flexible and adaptable, apply coordination among the Forces and with other State agencies.</p> <p>The strategic objectives are set as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Consolidate the territorial control and strengthen the rule of law in all national territory.</li> <li>-Protect inhabitants, by keeping the strategic initiative against all threats to their security.</li> <li>-Increase the cost of engaging in drug-trafficking activities.</li> <li>-Keep a legitimate, modern and effective Public Force, supported by the trust and backing of the people.</li> <li>-Keep the decreasing tendency of all crime indicators in all urban centers of the country.</li> </ul> <p>(<i>Política de Consolidación de la Seguridad Democrática</i>, 2007)</p>	<p>Security is not initially understood as security of the State or citizen's security without the participation of the State, but as the State's protection to citizen and democracy, with the whole cooperation and commitment of all society.</p> <p>(<i>Política de Defensa y Seguridad Democrática</i>, 2003)</p>

Colombia has been part of the Multinational Peace Force and Observers (MFO), in the Sinai since 1982. The MFO is an independent mission founded as the result of peace in 1979.

### Submissions to the UN Registers



Source: Compilation based on reports submitted to the UN Register of Conventional Arms and the UN Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures from 1992 to 2008. The publication of information from the Register of Conventional Arms corresponding to the year 2007 is expected by August 2008.

Colombia published the *Política de Defensa y Seguridad Democrática* (Policy of Defence and Democratic Security) in 2003 and *Política de Consolidación de la Seguridad Democrática* (Democratic Security Consolidation Policy) in 2007

### Constitutional Powers of the Congress

#### Related to War and Peace

- Can it declare war?: No
- Is a congressional authorization required to declare war?: Yes (1,2)
- Can it make peace?: No
- Is a congressional authorization necessary to make peace?: Yes
- Is a congressional authorization necessary for the entry of foreign troops to the national territory?: Yes <sup>(1)</sup>
- Is a congressional authorization necessary for the deployment of national troops outside the country?: N/R

(1) Corresponds to the Senate.

(2) It does not require authorization to repel foreign attacks.

N/R: No reference.

#### Related to Control

- Is its approval required to appoint senior officers of the Armed Forces?: Yes <sup>(1)</sup>
- Can it accuse officers of the Armed Forces?: No
- Can it try officers?: Yes <sup>(1)</sup>
- Does it participate in the election of officials for institutions of external control?: Yes
- Can it modify the national budget?: Yes

(1) Corresponds to the Senate.

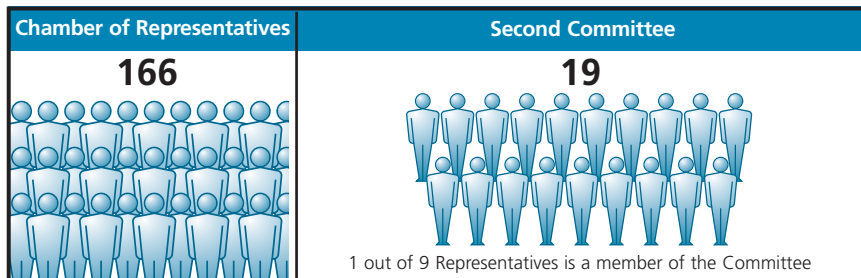
#### States of Exception

Name: State of external war  
Cause: External war  
Participation of the Legislative Power: Requires the approval of the Senate except when it is necessary to repel aggression.

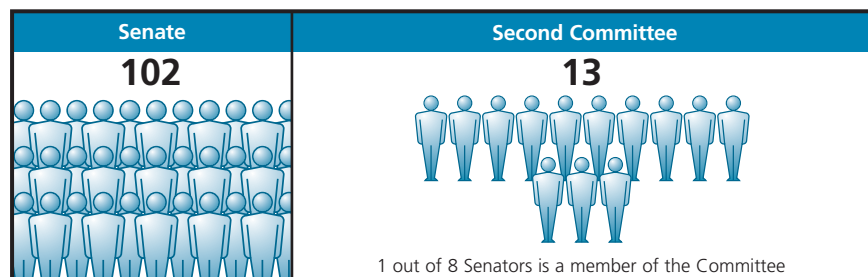
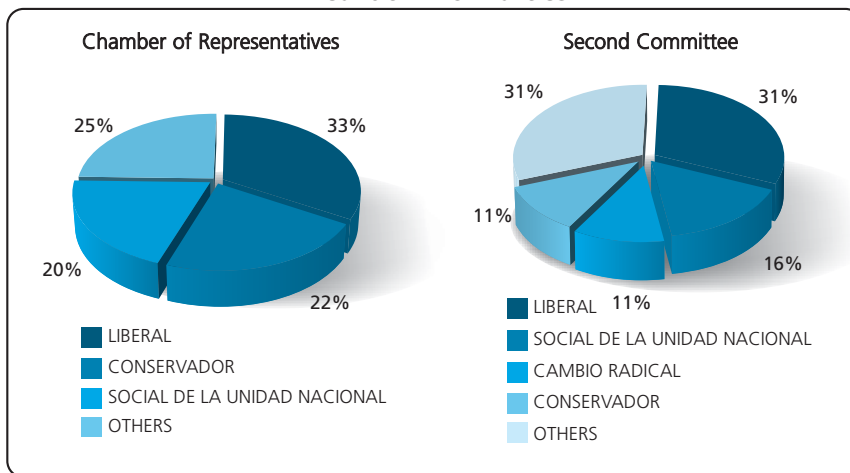
Name: State of internal commotion  
Cause: Grave disturbance of the public order  
Participation of the Legislative Power: The declaration of a third consecutive period requires the approval of the Senate.

Name: State of emergency  
Cause: Situations which disturb or seriously threaten to imminently disturb the economic, social and ecological order or which constitute public calamity  
Participation of the Legislative Power: The Congress shall examine the causes and measures which determined it and those adopted, and shall expressly rule on the convenience and timeliness of such measures.

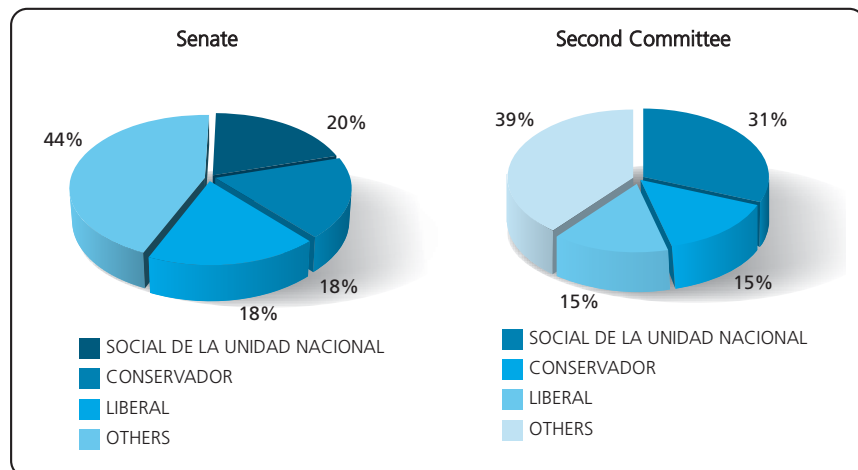
Source: Compilation based on the Constitution.



**Breakdown of Parties**



**Breakdown of Parties**



Source: Compilation based on information provided by the Legislative Power.



**System Organization**

**Functions**

Source: Compilation based on Decreto por el cual se modifica parcialmente la Estructura del Ministerio de Defensa Nacional (N° 3.123 - 2007/08/17) and the Decreto por el cual se fusionan el Consejo Nacional de Seguridad, el Consejo Superior de la Defensa Nacional y la Comisión creada por el Decreto N° 813 de 1983 (N° 2.134 - 1992/12/31).

**Date of Foundation**  
1965

**Current Minister (August 2008)**  
Juan Manuel Santos Calderón

**Can the military members be Ministers of Defence?**  
Yes (if they have retired)

**Number of military members who were Ministers of Defence**  
11

**Number of civilians who were Ministers of Defence**  
11

**Have there been any women in charge of the Ministry of Defence?**  
Yes (Marta Lucía Ramírez de Rincón, 2002-2003)

**Average permanence in the Minister of Defence position**  
1 year and 11 months

[The Minister currently in charge is not considered. The creation date is related to the moment in which the term "Defence" becomes part of the Institution's name]

**State Powers Sphere**

The President of the Republic directs the Public Force and arrange as the High Commander of the Armed Forces, in a direct manner or via the Ministry of National Defence.  
The Superior Council of National Security and Defence is the highest governing body within the system. It is in charge of advising the President on the direction of national security and defence, recommending the policies in that respect, coordinating - along with other State agencies - the national security and defence policies, analyzing the national security and defence scenario, advancing specific security and defence plans in order to face internal public unrest triggers and external security conflict. It is composed of the President of the Republic, the Ministry of Government, the Ministry of Defence, the General Commander of the Military Forces, the General Director of the National Police, the Director of the Administrative Department of the Presidency, the Director of the Administrative Department of Security and the Presidential Counsellor for the National Defence and Security.  
The Congress of the Nation exercises the faculties conferred by the National Constitution and permanently overviews all the matters concerning the defence, through specific commissions in both chambers.

**Ministerial Sphere**

The coordination and orientation of policy-making for the defence of sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, public security and peace, as well as the keeping of the constitutional order and democratic coexistence guarantees, are functions belonging to the realm of the Ministry of National Defence Office.

**Military Sphere**

The command of the Military Forces is in charge of the President of the Republic, who exercises it directly or via the Ministry of National Defence, through the Commander General of the Military Forces, who in turn, has command over the Forces.  
The Commander General of the Military Forces and the Commanders of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force will determine the composition and organization of the integral parts of the Command General of the Military Forces and each of the Forces, within the faculties settled by the law and by means of the Table of Organization and Equipment, approved by the Commander General of the Military Forces and the Ministry of National Defence.

**The Ministry of National Defence**

**Mission:**  
The Ministry of Defence leads the Military Forces and National Police through the formulation, design and execution of defence and security policies and the legitimate use of force, in order to maintain national sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and constitutional order, and guarantee the necessary conditions for the exercise of rights, obligations, and public freedom.

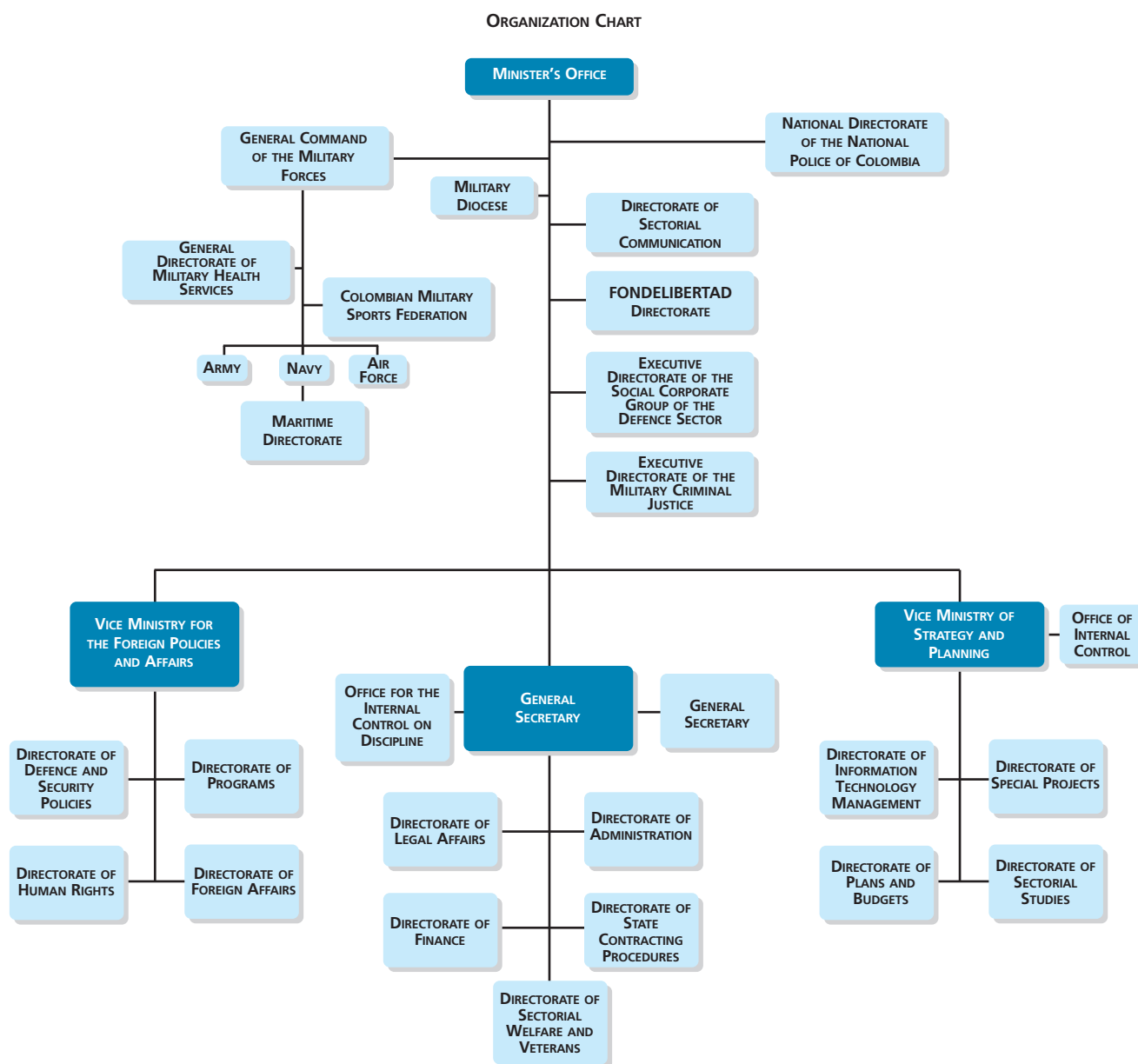
**Vision:**  
The Ministry of Defence shall be a proactive organization, provided with a highly modern and professional public force, helping to keep peace and security for Colombians. It will provide security conditions, protection and promotion of human rights, encouraging economic development and the natural resources protection and conservation.

**Objectives:**  
The National Ministry of Defence is mainly aimed at formulating and adopting policies, general plans, programs and projects from the national defence administrative sector, in order to defend sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity as well as keep the constitutional order and guarantee co-existence in a democratic environment.

**Responsibilities:**

- Take part in determining, developing and executing defence and national security policies, in order to guarantee national sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and constitutional order, the maintenance of the necessary conditions to exercise public freedom, and ensure a peaceful co-existence to Colombians.
- Help other State agencies reach necessary conditions to exercise public rights, obligations and freedom.
- Contribute to peacekeeping for Colombian people in order to reach security that fosters economic development, natural resources protection and conservation, and human rights protection and promotion.

Source: Compilation based on the information provided by the Ministry of National Defence, the *Guía de Planeamiento Estratégico* (1997) and the *Decreto por el cual se modifica la Estructura del Ministerio de Defensa Nacional* (N° 1.512 - 2000/08/11).



Source: Ministry of National Defence.

## Defence Education

### Main Training Courses of Specialization in the Area

Training Course	Institution
-Masters in National Defence and Security -Orientation Course on Defence	Superior War School
- Degree on National Defence and Security Management - High Management of National Defence	Military University Nueva Granada

Source: Compilation based on the information supplied by the web pages of the above mentioned institutions.



**Military Career**

**ARMY**

**Military School of Cadets**

Duration: 4 years  
 Graduation Title: Graduate in Military Sciences  
 Graduation Rank: Second Lieutenant

**Academies of Intermediate Education**

Lieutenant  
 Captain

**Staff College**

**Superior War School**

Major  
 Lieutenant-Colonel  
 Colonel  
 Brigadier General  
 Major General  
 General

**Entry to the Military School of Cadets – 2008 –**

Candidates: 2,500  
 Admitted Candidates: 250

1 out of 10 candidates was admitted

**NAVY**

**Naval School of Cadets**

Duration: 4 years  
 Graduation Title: Graduate in Naval Sciences  
 Graduation Rank: Second Lieutenant

**Academies of Intermediate Education**

Frigate Lieutenant  
 Navy Lieutenant

**Staff College**

**Superior War School**

Corvette Captain  
 Frigate Captain  
 Navy-Captain  
 Rear-Admiral  
 Vice-Admiral  
 Admiral

**Entry to the Naval School of Cadets – 2008 –**

Candidates: 1,141  
 Admitted Candidates: 128

1 out of 10 candidates was admitted

**AIR FORCE**

**Aviation School**

Duration: 4 years  
 Graduation Title: Graduate in Military Sciences  
 Graduation Rank: Second Lieutenant

**Academies of Intermediate Education**

Lieutenant  
 Captain

**Staff College**

**Superior War School**

Major  
 Lieutenant-Colonel  
 Colonel  
 Brigadier General  
 Major General  
 General

**Entry to the Aviation School – 2008 –**

Candidates: 1,500  
 Admitted Candidates: 120

1 out of 12 candidates was admitted

Source: Compilation based on information supplied by the above mentioned institutions. Entry to Academies: Ministry of National Defence. The table strictly follows the order and hierarchy of the ranks shown on each country.

## The Armed Forces

### General Mission

The Military Forces shall defend the sovereignty, independence, integrity of the national territory and the constitutional order. (Constitution, Sec. 217)

### Specific Missions

#### Army

The National Army carries out military operations to defend and maintain sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity to generate a peaceful and safe environment and the development to guarantee the constitutional order of the nation.

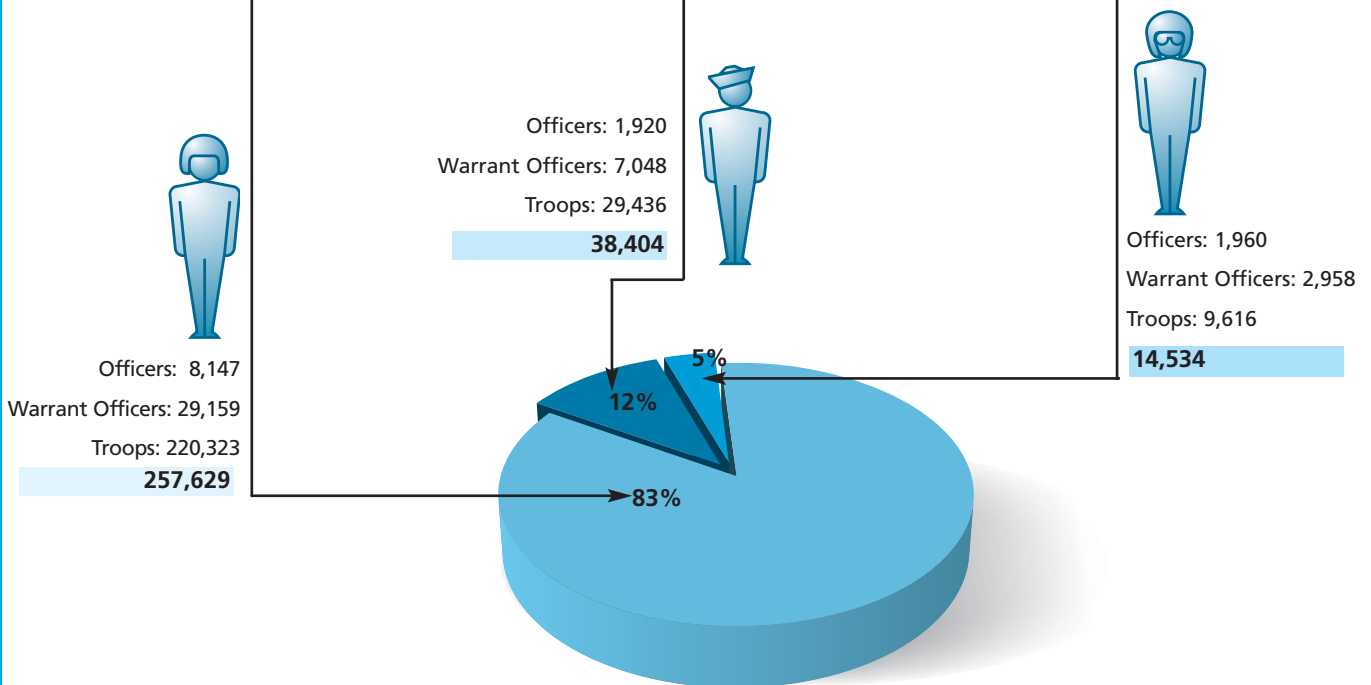
#### Navy

Contribute to the defence of the Nation through the effective use of a flexible navy power in maritime, fluvial and land spaces under its responsibility to comply with the constitutional order and participate in the development of the maritime power and the protection of the Colombian interests.

#### Air Force

The Colombian Air Force dominates and maintains the control over the air space and carries out air operations for the defence of sovereignty, independence, national integrity and constitutional order.

### Total Armed Forces: 310,567



Source: Information supplied by the web pages of each Force (missions) and the Ministry of National Defence (Regular Force).





**Women in the Armed Forces**

		Army	Navy	Air Force
Entry year (Officers)	Staff Corps	1982	1984	1977
	Line Corps	n/a	1997	1997
Rank reached		Colonel	Navy Captain	Colonel

"Line Corps" means those military members trained to perform in combat missions, and who also have command capacity.

"Staff Corps" means those military members who are part of the Forces or who join them, in order to provide technical and/or professional support services.

n/a: No data available

Source: Compilation based on information supplied by the Ministry of Defence.

**Defence and/or Military Attaché Office in:**



Source: Information supplied by the Ministry of National Defence. The country to which the Attaché is posted is considered here as the Office, beyond other cross accreditations to one or many countries.

Analysis:

## The Colombian Singularity: Armed Forces and Internal Security

**Alejo Vargas Velásquez\***

■ Colombia is a country with peculiar characteristics as to its historical development. Its study helps to adequately understand the role that Public Force has played (Armed Forces and National Police), and their current roles.

The Colombian State has never controlled the classical monopolies, which are supposed to be a State claim in any society: coercion, territorial control, justice and tolls. Throughout its history, there has been a recurring persistence of violence carried out by different actors, due to political motivations. But at the same time, this history has been marked by a great capacity – at different times – to solve violent internal confrontations through negotiation. This persistence of violence has led to consider the issue of domestic security as the main threat to stability. In turn, it has also led to the indiscrimination of roles between the Armed Forces and the Police, thus generating a “militarization” of the Police and a “policialization” of the Armed Forces.

Historically speaking, there has been a formal subordination of the military power to civilian power (in the 20th century, there was only a military coup - 1953-1958-, relatively advocated and supported by the political elites of the time). The Colombian political elites, and the whole of society, though, have been deeply untroubled about the security and defence issues, which have brought about a kind of yield to the Armed Forces, under the name of management of “internal public order”. However, Colombia has shown a great institutional endurance, expressed in the respect for administrations and the capacity of its institutions to deal with crises through institutional mechanisms.

The structuring process of the Armed Forces as a national, professionalized and unbiased institution went through several moments. A first moment - incarnated

■ Throughout the Colombian history, there has been a recurring persistence of violence carried out by different actors, due to political motivations.

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by the Army - emerged in the post-independence period. The second one corresponds to its fragmentation, due to the 19th century civil wars. A third one, characterized by the relocation of uncertain and spontaneous armies to the National Army embryo; then professionalism began, keeping the character of an appointed or politicized army, with a governing party wanting to use the military apparatus for its own sake (a moment that extended until the arrival of the liberal-conservative violence in the middle of the 20th century). Subsequently, the time came when the de-partisanship of the Armed Forces was prioritized, and the Army started shaping out as a counter-insurgent army, to finally evolve – without losing its prior character – towards a modern professional Army. Thus, there was a permanent tension among the search for professionalism, the partisan use of the State's military apparatus and, the trends towards its transformation into a guarantee institution responsible for impartiality at the time of dealing with social differences and, therefore, a guarantee of the constitutionality and legitimacy of the political regime.

In addition, it is important to note that the Colombian Army emerged and consolidated in a domestic security function rather than in external security. The fundamental concern throughout its history (as regards risks and threats) is then focused on the domestic issue, be it about on the stigmatized social protest and the (initially) partisan disputes, the resulting liberal guerrillas, or the (more recently) self-styled revolutionary uprising. That defined a characteristic profile in the Colombian Armed Forces, especially in the case of the Army: it is oriented to domestic public order control functions, leaving a functional ambiguity between Army and Police. Consequently, it has been said that in Colombia there is a highly “policialized” Army and a highly “militarized” Police. Paradoxically, that seems to cease being problematic in the post-cold war world, when the classical separation between international and domestic is open to question and, whenever security and defence problems tend to be situated in the category of “intermestic”.

The start of bipartisan violence - halfway through the 20th century - and the upsurge and development of the liberal guerrillas progressively led the Colombian Army towards an irregular war, clearly consolidating itself as a counter-insurgent army. That strengthened the historical tendency to consider that the fundamental threats to security were situated in the domestic sphere, instead of in the external threats against the State security.

In that context the *Teatro Patria* speech of the elected president Alberto Lleras Camargo took place on May 9, 1958, where he set the parameters of the well-known *Doctrina Lleras* (Lleras Doctrine), whose core ideas can be summarized as follows: “Politics is the art of controversy par excellence. Militia is the art of discipline. When the Armed Forces go into politics, the first thing that breaks is its unity, because controversy is installed through its lines. Keeping them away from public deliberation is not a Constitutional whim, but a necessity to their functions. Therefore, the Armed Forces should not deliberate; they should not do it as to politics. Because they have been created by the whole Nation; because the entire Nation - without group, party, colour, or belief exceptions, but as a global mass - has given them the physical power and the assignment of defending the common interests (...) I do not want the Armed Forces to decide how to govern the Nation;

■ The Colombian Army emerged and consolidated in a domestic security function rather than in the external threats.

instead, I want the people to decide it; likewise, I do not want the politicians to determine, in any possible way, how to manage the Armed Forces as to their functions, discipline, regulations, and staff (...)”<sup>1</sup>. The arrival of the *Frente Nacional* (National Front) allowed the agreement on a relational model between the civil administrator and the Military Forces, based on the grounds that the military would not be involved in political parties or government matters, and that civilians would not involve in “public order” matters either, that is to say, security and defence.

During the several administrations of the *Frente Nacional* (1958-1974) the Armed Forces found themselves increasingly confronted to domestic public order problems. Hypothetical external threats were only sporadically given relevance, especially due to bordering problems with Venezuela and Nicaragua. Additionally, the various administrations of the *Frente Nacional* and the post- *Frente Nacional* (1974-1990) repeatedly delegated to the Armed Forces – via the “state of siege” – the control of conflicts and social protest, the temporary running of State areas considered to be sometimes problematic (seaports, airports, prisons) and naturally, the prosecution of civilians as a control tool and a social sanction through the mechanism of War Councils, until the late 80s.

Change processes in the Armed Forces leading towards their transformation into modern professional institutions – and closely linked to the evolution of domestic security problems – will reveal their progressive change into flexible Armed Forces, with professional troops and holding a high mobilization capacity.

The most outstanding point in the last great reform of the Public Force, carried out during the administration of Andrés Pastrana (1998-2002) and the Democratic Security policy during the administration of Alvaro Uribe (2002-2006) has been the reinforcement of the Public Force, needed for a State going through a domestic armed conflict to hold a better deterring and offensive capacity: increase of the military manpower, furtherance of troops professionalism, creation of new Mobile Brigades and new High Mountain Battalions, a program of peasant soldiers, and greater mobility and operational capacity, among other changes.

However, what seems evident in this quick tour through the slow passage towards the Colombian Armed Forces professionalization process is that the response to contextual threats seems to have guided the actions. Even when a State has the right and duty to strengthen its military capacity, as a deterrent factor both in the domestic and hypothetical external threats, that does not involve leaving aside the political dimension. That is why the quest for security, in a case like the Colombian, suitably places diplomacy in the first place in the international sphere, and negotiated conflict resolution in the domestic sphere.

■ Change processes in the Armed Forces leading towards their transformation into modern professional institutions will reveal their progressive change into flexible Armed Forces, with professional troops and holding a high mobilization capacity.

<sup>1</sup> CEPEDA ULLOA, Fernando (Ed.) *Las relaciones cívico-militares, en tiempos de conflicto armado*, Embassy of the United States–Fundación Ideas para la Paz, Caracol, El Espectador, El Tiempo, RCN, Semana, Bogota, 2003.