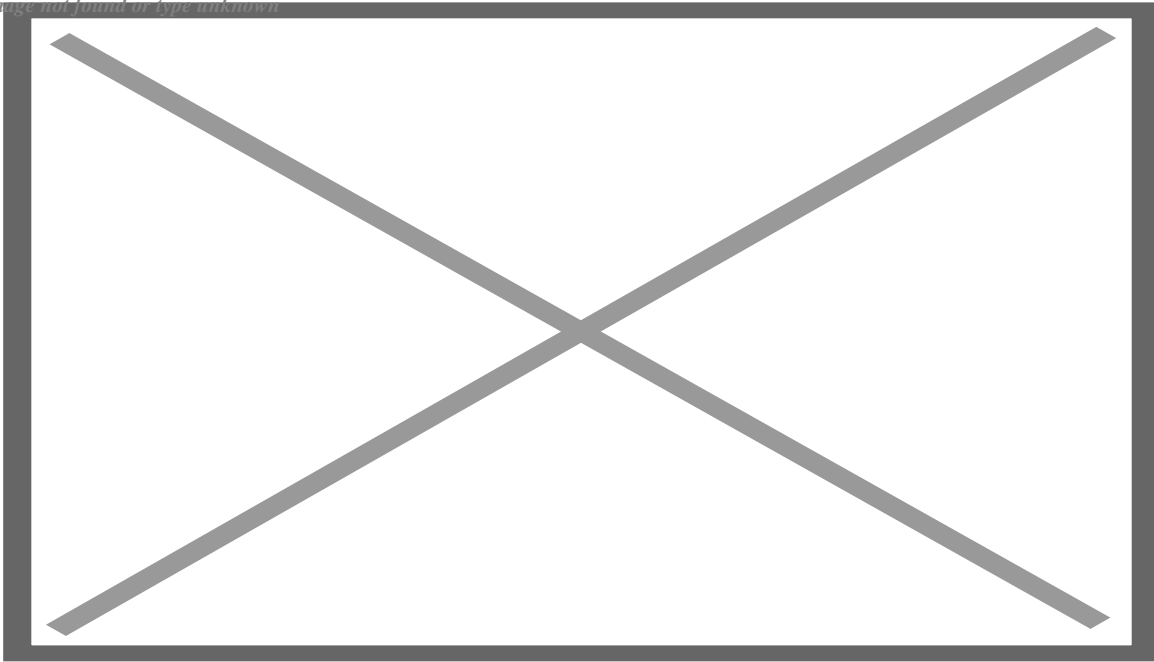


Colombian president Gustavo Petro criticizes coup plotters

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The Colombian Prosecutor's Office has opened an investigation to establish possible crimes committed through some statements by retired Army Colonel John Marulanda, who spoke of "defenestrating" President Gustavo Petro.

Bogota, May 13 (RHC)-- The Colombian Prosecutor's Office has opened an investigation to establish possible crimes committed through some statements by retired Army Colonel John Marulanda, who spoke of "defenestrating" President Gustavo Petro.

In an interview with W Radio, Marulanda, a former president of the Colombian Association of Retired Officers of the Military Forces (ACORE), spoke about removing Petro from office just as the Peruvians did with President Pedro Castillo.

"I believe that Colombia is following in the footsteps of Peru, where the military in reserve were successful in the sense that they managed to oust a corrupt president. Here we are going to try to do our best to oust a guy who was a guerrilla," he said.

Petro, who was a member of the April 19 Movement (M-19) and demobilized after signing a peace agreement with the State in 1990, responded to those statements warning of the possibility of a coup that far-right activists would seek to promote.

"Why do they conspire for a coup d'etat? Because they are terrified that we end impunity. The truth intimidates them so much that they are desperate," the Colombian President tweeted. "They judicially hide what society already knows: the enormous corruption in the State and the genocide, as well as the violence and terror unleashed on the people, are two sides of the same coin," he added.

On Wednesday, 3,000 retired military and police officers filled Bolivar Square in downtown Bogota to protest against Petro's policies, including the reduction of the military budget and the proposal to transfer the Police from the Defense Ministry to the Interior Ministry.

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