

Colombian Court Investigates Ex-President Uribe over Massacre



Bogotá, February 5 (RHC-teleSUR) -- A Colombian court ordered an investigation into the actions of former Colombian President Alvaro Uribe Tuesday for allegedly allowing a group of paramilitaries to use a helicopter in order to assassinate 15 peasants in the province of Antioquia October 22, 1997. Uribe was governor of Antioquia from 1995 to 1998 before becoming president in 2002.

The court asked for the investigation during the reading of a ruling against a former paramilitary leader, Ramiro Vanoy, for his role in the 1997 massacre. Other paramilitary leaders have gone on record to state that the paramilitaries responsible for the massacre used a helicopter belonging to the provincial government.

According to the Colombian magazine *Semana*, investigators also determined that a government helicopter was at the scene of the massacre.

In the case of the 1997 massacre, the Interamerican Human Rights Court found the Colombian state guilty of violating the right to life due to the collaboration of government officials in the crime.

Upon hearing the news, the former president denied the allegations, saying they were nothing new and had been previously explained. Uribe has claimed that he is the victim of judicial and political persecution for opposing the peace process the Colombian government has been conducting with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or FARC.

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