

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman

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FACT SHEET

U.S.– Colombia Defense Cooperation Agreement

On Friday, October 30, the United States and Colombian governments signed the Defense Cooperation Agreement (DCA), which is now in force.

The United States and Colombia enjoy a close and strategic bilateral relationship. The anticipated signing of the DCA (formally titled a Supplemental Agreement for Cooperation and Technical Assistance and Security, or SACTA) will deepen bilateral cooperation on security issues. The DCA will facilitate effective bilateral cooperation on security matters in Colombia, including narcotics production and trafficking, terrorism, illicit smuggling of all types, and humanitarian and natural disasters.

The DCA does not permit the establishment of any U.S. base in Colombia. It ensures continued U.S. access to specific agreed Colombian facilities in order to undertake mutually agreed upon activities within Colombia.

The agreement facilitates U.S. access to three Colombian air force bases, located at Palanquero, Apiay, and Malambo. The agreement also permits access to two naval bases and two army installations, and other Colombian military facilities if mutually agreed. All these military installations are, and will remain, under Colombian control. Command and control, administration, and security will continue to be handled by the Colombian armed forces. All activities conducted at or from these Colombian bases by the United States will take place only with the express prior approval of the Colombian government. The presence of U.S. personnel at these facilities would be on an as needed, and as mutually agreed upon, basis.

The DCA does not signal, anticipate, or authorize an increase in the presence of U.S. military or civilian personnel in Colombia.

The presence of U.S. military and associated personnel in Colombia is governed by statute. In October 2004, Congress authorized the permanent or temporary assignment of up to 800 U.S. military personnel and up to 600 U.S. civilian contractors. That cap will continue to be faithfully respected. In fact, in recent years the actual presence of such U.S. personnel has averaged half or less of the authorized number. Consistent with U.S. policy to nationalize U.S.-supported activities by turning them over to Colombian authorities, U.S. personnel presence has been in a gradual decline. It is the United States' expectation and commitment that those trends will continue.

At a technical level, the DCA harmonizes and updates existing bilateral agreements, practices, and arrangements on security matters, and continues to ensure appropriate protections and status for U.S. personnel. Bilateral U.S.-Colombian engagement in the security sphere is governed by

conditions set in a number of bilateral agreements, including the 1952 Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement, the 1962 General Agreement for Economic, Technical and Related Assistance, and related subsequent agreements in 1974, 2000, and 2004.

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