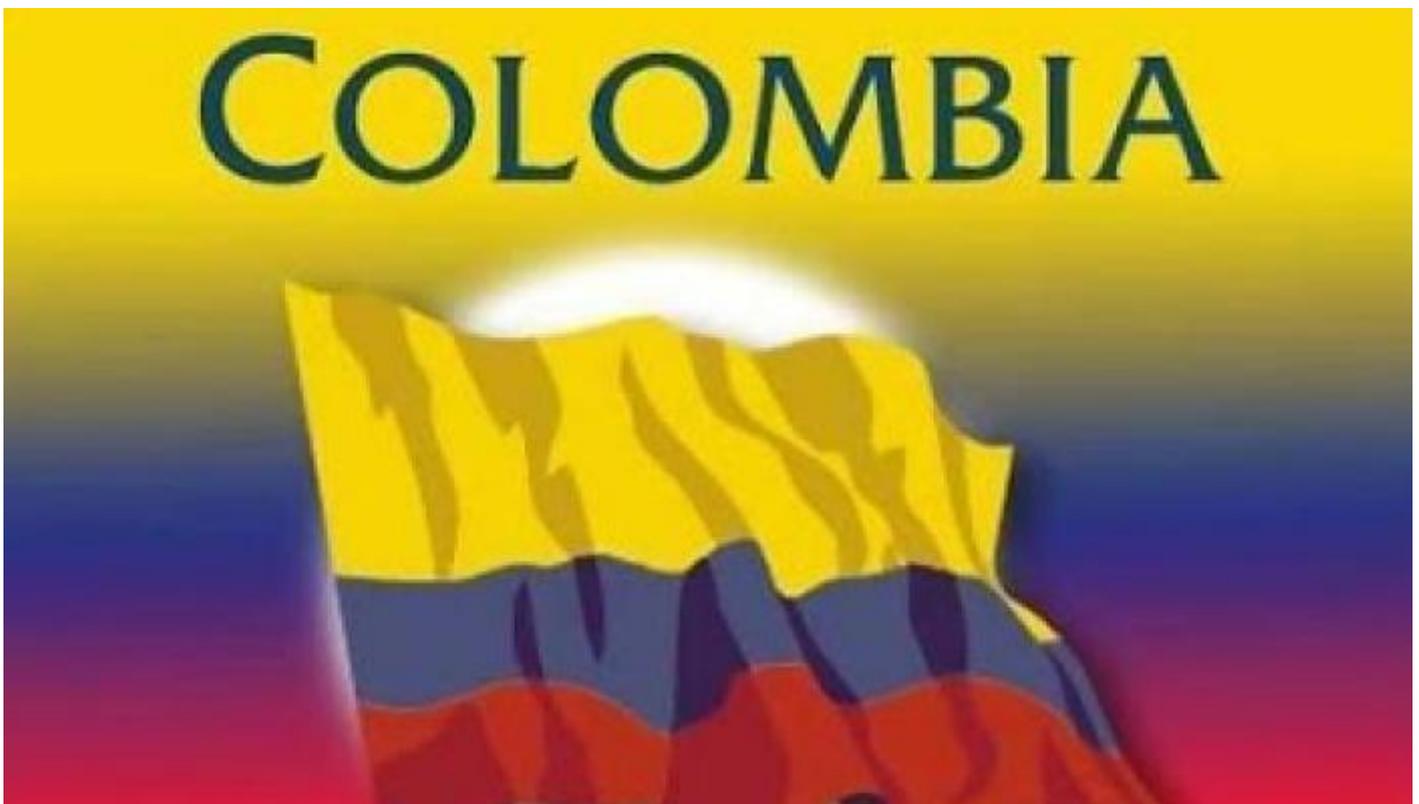


Colombian Authorities Ban US Transnational Operations after Failure to Meet Environment Security Measures



Bogota, January 4 (RHC) The US Drummond Transnational Mining Company was ordered to halt operations at the Colombian harbor of Santa Marta after it failed to meet infrastructural regulations to load and download coal that prevent environmental damage.

The Regional Autonomous Corporation at the Magdalena Department took the measure after the transnational company failed to meet law 1450, issued in 2011, which stipulates that all Colombian ports are obliged, as of January 1, 2014, to use conveyor belts instead of barges to directly manipulate coal or minerals in order to prevent environmental contamination.

Drummond, meanwhile, said that it would not have such infrastructure ready to operate until March and used as a pretext a 52-stoppage carried out by its workers in early 2013.

The Alabama-based US coal transnational company faced an investigation by the Colombian attorney general's office in 2012 for ecological damage at the bay of Santa Mara, after the company dumped some 500 tons of coal in that area to avoid the sinking of one its barges.

The Colombian government imposed a multimillion fine on Drummond on December 12, a figure still considered low by political, social and environmentalist sectors in the country.

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