

# *Case against former President Álvaro Uribe reactivated in Colombia*

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By María Josefina Arce

Former President Álvaro Uribe is once again in the spotlight of Colombian society. In recent days it became known that he will be called to trial for alleged bribery and procedural fraud, in a case that goes back more than a decade.

It all began in 2012 when Uribe, then a senator, filed a complaint against leftist legislator Iván Cepeda for an alleged plot against him, supported by false testimonies to link him and his brother Santiago Uribe with paramilitary groups.

But the attack against Cepeda became a boomerang for Uribe, who served as Colombia's president from 2002 to 2010. The Supreme Court decided not to prosecute the leftist Alternative Democratic Pole

senator, and instead in 2018 opened an investigation against the former president on the same grounds.

However, the appointment in August of that same year as Attorney General of Francisco Barbosa, a personal friend of Iván Duque, who had taken office as president days earlier, led to several attempts to close the case against the political godfather of the tenant of the Casa Nariño.

The case has been tinged by Uribe's house arrest order issued in 2020 by the Supreme Court, his resignation two weeks later as senator and the transfer of his file to an ordinary court.

Now the case is gaining momentum again, after the announcement by the Prosecutor's Office that, based on the physical evidence and the material evidence, it has decided to call the former governor to trial.

The truth is that since the 90's Uribe has been linked to illegal armed organizations, known as paramilitaries, which spread through localities of Antioquia, when he was governor of that department between 1995 and 1997.

Uribe is a controversial figure in Colombia. He has the support of many, but many others question his presidential term for human rights violations such as false positives, as the army's killings of non-belligerent civilians are called.

The Special Jurisdiction for Peace determined that more than 6,000 people were victims of these deaths illegitimately presented by the State as combat casualties between 2002 and 2008.

Uribe thus becomes the first former Colombian president to face trial. He faces several years in prison for recounting a process that he himself initiated. Now it remains to be seen what happens in the coming months.

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