

Ex-Colombia Security Chief on Trial for Death of Top Politician



Bogota, June 2 (teleSUR-RHC)-- A trial began Monday in Colombia's highest court of former intelligence chief Miguel Maza over the assassination of a left-leaning presidential candidate just over a quarter of a century ago.

In 1989, Luis Carlos Galan, a favorite for the country's top post, was riddled with bullets by cartel members while campaigning in a huge rally in Soacha. Maza, who has been behind bars since 2013, is accused of taking payments from late drug lord Pablo Escobar to reduce the anti-mafia politician's security detail. The former intelligence agency chief denies the accusations.

Galan is remembered for opposing the growing power of drug cartels and for his left-leaning proposals. He was also one of the first critics of the growing ties between the Colombian state and paramilitary groups.

His assassins have not been caught so far. According to investigations related to the case, it was Carlos Castaño – an Israeli-trained, CIA collaborator, paramilitary leader – who planned the death of the late candidate.

The court case comes amid a stream of allegations of state corruption and collusion in violence in the disturbed Latin American country. “These aren’t isolated incidents,” Senator Juan Manuel Galan, the presidential hopeful son, said. “There’s a common thread linking all these crimes.”

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