

Colombian Supreme Court Absolves Colonel Over 1985 Massacre



Bogota, December 17 (RHC-teleSUR) -- Colombia's highest court on Wednesday acquitted the retired Colonel Luis Alfonso Plazas Vega over charges he was involved in crimes committed during the military assault following the 1985 Palace of Justice siege, which left over 100 people dead.

About 40 rebels from the group MS-19 took the palace and held more than 400 people hostage. The state responded the next day by sending in 48 armored tanks, as well as helicopters and more than 1,000 soldiers to retake the justice building. Among the killed were hostages, Supreme Court officials, soldiers and rebels. Many others also disappeared.

The ongoing legal investigation is attempting to answer many suspending questions, such as: What happened to those who disappeared that day? And why did the military not take more precautions before storming the palace? And why did the state remove the palace's security detail two days before the attack?

Critics and lawmakers continue to question the actions of the state and accuse it of censoring the media when it tries to inform the public of the day's events.

Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos recently asked for forgiveness from the victims. The Organization of American States' Inter-American Commission on Human Rights also recently condemned the Colombian state for the attack.

The recent court investigation saw three ministers from former President Betancur's administration forced to testify on their version of events.

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