

# *US Army to Investigate Soldier Sexual Abuse Claims in Colombia*

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Washington, April 7 (teleSUR-RHC) U.S. army criminal investigators will examine claims that U.S. military personnel sexually assaulted more than 50 Colombian women and children, USA Today reports.

The joint probe will investigate "all credible allegations of sexual assault" by U.S. forces in Colombia the Army's Criminal Investigation Command spokesperson, Chris Grey, said.

The allegations refer to the years between 2003 and 2007, when military contractors abused, sometimes filming it, dozens of young women. "Special agents from the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command are currently coordinating with Colombian authorities and will initiate an investigation into any credible allegations of sexual assault or criminal acts committed by U.S. soldiers while in that country," Grey said.

"We take this issue very seriously and will aggressively pursue all credible allegations." According to Renan Vega of the Pedagogic University in *Bogotá*, who helped write a report containing the damning allegations, the crimes went unpunished due to diplomatic accords. "There is abundant information about the sexual violence, which occurred under absolute impunity because of the bilateral agreements and the diplomatic immunity of United States officials," he said.

Last month, more U.S. law enforcers in Colombia were disgraced when further reports revealed that various Agents from the United States Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) held sex parties paid for by Colombian drug cartels.

The new information comes from an ongoing investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice Inspector General Michael Horowitz, opened after a congressional inquiry into allegations that several secret service and DEA agents were involved in a prostitution scandal in *Cartagena*.

Only seven out of the 10 DEA agents involved in the sex parties, admitted their guilt. They will be put on suspension – a minor punishment – which could range from two to 10 days.

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