

# *Colombian Government Defends Right to Gay Marriage*

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Bogota, July 31 (teleSUR-RHC)-- The right-wing administration of Juan Manuel Santos defended Thursday the right of homosexual couples to get married during a meeting at the country's Constitutional Court.

During the session, Interior Minister Juan Fernando Cristo and Justice Minister Yesid Reyes called the judicial institution to rule in favor of same-sex marriage, considering Congress had failed on various occasions to do so.

As for Reyes, he added that his ministry considered that the rules in force for heterosexuals should also apply to homosexual couples, like the concept of marriage.

In his opinion, no type of discrimination can be justified, and there is no legal justification that prevents same-sex marriage. Moreover, he argued, if marriage were denied to gay people, it would be impossible to prevent more legal complaints.

The Constitutional Court had ordered Congress to rule on the matter before 2013, but lawmakers failed to find a consensus. Since then, the court had to fill the legal void and took back control over the issue.

Colombia's Constitutional Court recognized same-sex unions in 2007, granting to the partner the right of affiliation to health system. In 2008, the court guaranteed them the right to a pension, and in 2009, rights

on inheritance.

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