5-13-1992

Peruvian Military Aircraft Attack U.S. Plane

Erika Harding

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/notisur

Recommended Citation

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Latin America Digital Beat (LADB) at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in NotiSur by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact amywinter@unm.edu.
Peruvian Military Aircraft Attack U.S. Plane

by Erika Harding

Category/Department: General
Published: Wednesday, May 13, 1992

April 25: Peruvian Air Force spokesperson Col. Jorge Barboza said that on April 24, two of its Soviet-made Su-22 fighter jets fired on a US C-130 Air Force plane, injuring two crew members and killing a third. Barboza said the pilot ignored repeated warnings to land when it was intercepted about 80 miles off Peru's Pacific coast. The plane was about 300 miles west of its flight path. Barboza said Peruvian pilots made radio and visual contact with the US plane and fired warning shots in front and to the side of the aircraft before firing a machine gun blast at a "non-vital" part of the plane. The Peruvian Air Force statement contradicted information provided by a US Embassy spokesperson in Lima that the plane received no warning and was on an approved flight path. In Washington, Defense Department spokesperson Glenn Flood said he had "no information" on whether Peruvian pilots provided warnings to the US pilot, or whether the US plane was off course. Flood added that the C-130 plane was unarmed, and the crew was engaged in an anti-narcotics mission. After describing the shooting as a "lamentable accident," President Alberto Fujimori said he had called for a top-level investigation. April 27: The US State Department announced that all Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) operations and military surveillance overflights in Peru had been suspended. After President Fujimori dissolved the congress on April 5, Washington suspended all non-humanitarian aid to Peru, including almost US$55 million in anti-narcotics assistance to the Peruvian military. April 28: The Pentagon released a communiqué stating that three Peruvian planes participated in the interception of the C-130. After an initial contact with a Peruvian Tucan fighter plane, the C-130 pilot decided to return to base in Panama by flying over international waters. The plane was attacked by the two Su-22s about 80 miles off the coast. The statement emphasized that the Peruvian government claims sovereignty over 200 maritime miles, compared to the 12 miles recognized by the US and international law. The statement said the US pilot attempted in vain to communicate with the Peruvians via two emergency signals, but ignored hand signals to land since he believed his plane was over international waters. The machine gun attack caused a sudden loss of pressure, sucking one person from the plane, and forcing an emergency landing in El Pato. The Pentagon said the US plane was marked with standard US identification markings, which should have been visible to the Peruvian pilots. May 7: US Rep. Robert Torricelli warned that US relations with Peru would not be normalized until the April 24 shooting incident was sufficiently clarified. (Sources: Washington Post, 04/25/92; Agence France-Presse, 04/28/92, 05/07/92)

-- End --