

6-9-1988

Venezuelan Political Leader Cancels Trip To Bogota Due To Colombian Government's Failure To Handle Crisis

John Neagle

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

Recommended Citation

Neagle, John. "Venezuelan Political Leader Cancels Trip To Bogota Due To Colombian Government's Failure To Handle Crisis." (1988). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/notisur/2095>

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.

Venezuelan Political Leader Cancels Trip To Bogota Due To Colombian Government's Failure To Handle Crisis

by John Neagle

Category/Department: General

Published: Thursday, June 9, 1988

At a press conference in Caracas on the morning of June 7, former Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez told reporters that he had cancelled a trip to Bogota because the Colombian government has thus far failed to confront the country's crisis. Perez, the ruling Democratic Action (AD) party's candidate for the December presidential elections, was scheduled to lead a discussion at a ceremony in Bogota commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Andean Reserve Fund (Fundo Andino de Reservas). The FAR is one of the institutions under the Andean Pact, established when Perez was president in 1978. "The situation in Colombia is lamentable. As a Latin American and Venezuelan, I believe [government officials] are not facing the issues they must confront in such a dramatic crisis," said Perez. "For all practical purposes, Colombia lives in a state of war." The Venezuelan leader said his decision to cancel his trip to the Colombian capital was a difficult one, but that he could not "go to Bogota to keep my mouth shut. I cannot be silent. From the perspective of a Latin American, I must say the truth as I see it." Perez continued: "The state of war in Colombia is an extremely volatile situation...It is a war of several armed groups, including patrols or armies, combined with terrorist actions. This literal war led recently to the disappearance of the great Colombian leader, Dr. Alvaro Gomez Hurtado...I emphasize disappearance because the fate of [Gomez] remains unknown. "In the face of an emergency of this nature, we Latin Americans have the right to demand that the Colombian government use all means at its disposal to adequately confront the crisis." Perez reiterated statements made on previous occasions to the effect that Colombia's problem of violence and turmoil is not grounded in the historical animosities and competition between the Liberal and Conservative parties. "Colombia's problem is a conflict between civil society and the drug mafia and guerrillas. In order for civil society to adequately deal with the drug mafia and the rebels, it must be reconstituted and restructured. This does not mean a restructuring in rhetoric, but rather one of the government and government action in responding to the crisis." (Basic data from AFP, 06/07/88)

-- End --