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Colombia: Eln Rebels Release Brazilian Engineers

by John Neagle

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On June 2, the National Liberation Army (ELN) released three Brazilian engineers captured April 19 in Colombia's Puerto Wilches oil industry center. Police said Paulo Cesar Paim de Oliveira, Augusto Carneiro Moreira and Jose Roberto Reis were in good health. They were delivered to local officials in Barrancabermeja, about 300 km. northeast of Bogota. Brazilian Acting Foreign Minister Paulo Tarso Flecha refused to comment on negotiations carried out for the release of the engineers, saying the process was "complex and involved many secret elements." He also refused to comment on reports appearing in Brazilian newspapers that said the Brazilian petroleum workers union played a role in securing their release. When they were taken hostage, the three engineers were working at the state-owned Braspetro installations in Sagamoso, about 120 km. northeast of Bogota. (Basic data from AFP, 06/02/89)

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