8-15-1989

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Colombian Guerrilla Coalition Responds To Government Peace Talk Initiative

by John Neagle
Category/Department: General
Published: Tuesday, August 15, 1989

On Aug. 8, the Simon Bolivar National Guerrilla Coordinator (CNGSB) released a communique asserting that direct dialogue with the government must be conducted on the highest level and with an open agenda. The communique was in response to an Aug. 4 statement by the government delivered to Coordinator that it accepts contacts aimed at guerrilla demobilization and disarmament. The Coordinator responded to the government's initiative on behalf of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the People's Liberation Army (ELP), Quintin Lame and the Revolutionary Workers Party (PTR). The CNGSB communique said dialogue must proceed jointly with the four groups, adding that guerrilla leaders had arranged "a committee at the highest level, and expect the same from the government." The government has avoided direct dialogue with the National Liberation Army (ELN), a member organization of the GNGSB. According to government officials, the ELN has not observed a cease-fire and continues attacks against petroleum pipelines and other facilities. The April 19 Movement (M-19), also a member group of the Coordinator, was the first guerrilla organization to carry out direct talks with the government this year. (Basic data from Xinhua, 08/09/89)

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