

SECRET/NOFORN



INTERNATIONAL  
SECURITY AFFAIRS

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

2400 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-2400

2002 AUG 26 11 43 ACTION MEMO

AUG 13 2002

(24)



OFFICE OF THE  
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

I-02/011396-WH

USDP *JMR for*

26 AUG 2002

*Handwritten signature*  
FOR: SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

FROM: Assistant Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs  
(Peter W. Rodman, 695-4351) *JMR* 26 AUG 2002

SUBJECT: Congratulations to new Colombian Defense Minister

- Ms. Marta Lucia Ramírez was appointed the Colombian Minister of Defense on 13 June 2002. She formally assumed her duties on 7 August 2002 following President Uribe's inauguration.
- Ms. Ramírez replaces former Vice President and Defense Minister Lemus Bell. She is a business lawyer whose previous governmental post was Ambassador to France. Biographical information is provided at Tab B.
- A congratulatory letter has been prepared for your signature.
- RECOMMENDATION: Sign the letter and release the transmittal cable at Tab A.

COORDINATION: TAB C

Attachments: As Stated

Prepared by LTC (b)(6) ISA WHA, (b)(6)

*Handwritten signature*

SPL ASSISTANT DI RITA	9/3
SR MA GIAMBASTIANI	
MA BUCCI	
EXECSEC WHITMORE	4 9/27

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(Unclassified when removed  
from attachments)



SECDEF CONTROL# X02735 102

**TAB A**

# TAB B

**"Profile" of Martha Lucia Ramirez, new Colombian Defense Minister  
(from "El Tiempo" of 14 June 2002)**

Among her collaborators the phrase goes around that "she makes the people march like a militia," by which they refer to her firm hand, strong character, her demand for results and her capacity for work.

An independent Liberal, Martha Lucía Ramírez de Rincón, the first woman to hold the Defense portfolio, participates in the current government under the aegis of Noémi Sanín, whom she advised in the presidential campaign that resulted in the election of Andrés Pastrana, although it was always said that her connection was not through the Colombia Yes! movement but rather was personal.



Since February, this lawyer from the Javier University [Bogotá] with specialties in business management and financial legislation and who studied at Harvard University, has been Ambassador to France, to which she departed after having worked for almost four years as the head of the Foreign Trade Ministry. There she designed the 10-year strategic export plan, which has gained support from Colombian business because for the first time it had a clear long-term vision for the external sales of the country.

Disconnecting herself from work was an objective she set for herself in her time at the Ministry, but she did not succeed in this, which is the reason she does not sleep more than four hours each night - not even when she goes for a rest at her small farm in the hot lowlands - and additionally she works out regularly in the gym, where she arrives at six in the morning.

Without being a great speaker - her long interventions are well known - the international community recognizes her tenacity in promoting the trade policy of her country and her active participation in launching the round of negotiations of the World Trade Organization, where she strongly opposed the agricultural subsidies of the industrialized countries.

Her great friendship with Robert Zoellick, the Secretary of Commerce of the United States [sic - he's actually the U.S. Trade Representative] and one of the strong figures in the Bush government, will serve her well now in broadening her contacts with the U.S. administration, on which depends the fate of Plan Colombia and, in no a small measure, that of the Defense portfolio.



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**Military Intelligence Digest**  
**MID-145-02**  
**31 July 2002**

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## Colombia: Unexpected Choice for Defense Minister

~~(S//NF)~~ President-elect Uribe selected Ambassador to France and former Foreign Trade Minister Marta Lucia Ramirez as Defense Minister. Many news media commentators predicted Ramirez would be Defense Minister in name only, with Uribe making key decisions and setting strategy. However, Ramirez already has helped draft a new national security strategy and will oversee reorganization of the military bureaucracy and the budgeting process. Ramirez has the background and skills necessary to be a successful Defense Minister.

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### A Surprise Decision

~~(S//NF)~~ Uribe's selection startled defense analysts. Men still dominate Colombian politics, and machismo colors debate over military issues. Many observers believed Ramirez would merely manage the Defense Ministry bureaucracy, with Uribe establishing strategic goals. Uribe wants to focus first on countering the insurgency.

### Ramirez's Strong Record

~~(S//NF)~~ Even if President-elect Uribe orchestrates strategy, he still can benefit from Ramirez's strong qualifications. She is an experienced politician and has presided over large bureaucracies and budgets as a former vice cabinet minister and a minister. She was regarded as a stellar Trade Minister, overseeing a surge in nontraditional exports in a troubled economy. Ramirez may have many of the managerial, planning, and political skills necessary to lobby for more Defense Ministry funds, to streamline bureaucracy, and to adjust military doctrine and force structure to current counterinsurgency requirements.

## Following in Her Predecessors' Footsteps?

**(S//NF)** To be successful, Marta Lucia Ramirez most likely will have to emulate two recent Defense Ministers, Rodrigo Lloreda Caicedo and Luis Fernando Ramirez. These men began the process of revamping the armed forces under President Pastrana's administration. In the wake of humiliating military defeats from 1996 to 1998, Lloreda and Ramirez strengthened military mobility, emphasized airpower and close air support, improved intelligence, and promoted combined-arms and interservice operations. These improvements changed the equation on the battlefield, forcing the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia to revert to small-unit tactics and to escalate terrorist attacks.

**(S//NF)** Defense Minister-designate Ramirez needs to finish this task. She is responsible for overhauling the Defense Ministry's unwieldy bureaucracy, enlarging the security forces, improving management practices, and implementing the necessary changes in doctrine. Moreover, she will have to complete the outgoing administration's human rights reforms, promote interagency cooperation, and lobby the Colombian Congress and Washington for aid and more weapons.

**(S//NF)** Ramirez already is taking action. As Ambassador to France, she has helped write the new national security strategy, using current Vice Defense Minister Ortiz as her point man. Uribe and Ramirez reportedly have asked Ortiz to remain as Vice Defense Minister. Ramirez and Ortiz hope to have the final draft of the strategy ready shortly after Uribe's inauguration in August.

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**(U)** Defense Minister-Designate Ramirez

## Ramirez and Londono

**(S//NF)** Defense Minister-designate Ramirez will have to collaborate closely with new Interior and Justice Minister Fernando Londono Hoyos on some issues. Both Ramirez and Londono are experienced lawyers and will need to use their skills in addressing legal problems that have undermined counterinsurgency and counterterrorist efforts.

**(S//NF)** These key ministers will have responsibility for reviving the National Security Statute that the Constitutional Court vetoed or, alternatively, for coming up with a substitute. The statute would have allowed the Prosecutor General and the Colombian National Police to delegate certain functions to the military in emergencies, particularly during combat operations. Since the Court ruled the law unconstitutional, Londono has spoken of reviving long-lapsed presidential state-of-siege authority. Ramirez and Londono would have to cooperate on any such initiative to finesse political, constitutional, and human rights complications. They also would have a common interest in overhauling the nation's prison system, which is notoriously corrupt and subject to escapes, sometimes abetted by Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia insurgents.

UNCLASSIFIED



**(U)** Interior and Justice Minister-Designate Londono

**(S//NF)** As current Ambassador to France and former Foreign Trade Minister, Ramirez also has an extensive network of contacts in the United States and Europe. Uribe quite likely hopes she will be able to secure additional foreign security assistance, including upgrading Colombia's arsenal and pursuing intelligence exchanges with the United States and Europe. In light of her background, the Defense



Minister-designate may be uniquely qualified to improve European and nongovernmental organizations' views of Colombia, especially with regard to human rights.

### A Shattered Paradigm?

~~(S//NF)~~ Defense Minister Ramirez does not share the news media's consensus, insisting she will have as much influence in formulating counterinsurgency policy as her predecessors had. She is a hard-driving, tireless power player and a micromanager from the same mold as Uribe. Her supporters say that although Ramirez has no defense expertise, she is a gifted conceptualizer and planner. As a lawyer, Harvard fellow, and former cabinet minister, she is arguably as well qualified as Rodrigo Lloreda Caicedo and Luis Fernando Ramirez, two highly regarded predecessors under outgoing President Pastrana. She is also much better prepared than current Vice President and Defense Minister Bell, who does not have her experience or goal-oriented personality.

#### *Uribe's Reliance on Women in Key Positions*

(C//NF) President-elect Uribe greatly trusts women to handle difficult and demanding assignments. In addition to appointing Merta Lucia Ramirez Defense Minister, Uribe named Carolina Barco Foreign Minister.

(C//NF) Barco is the daughter of late former President Barco, who was a counterinsurgency and counternarcotics hardliner. The Foreign Minister-designate speaks fluent English and has many contacts in the United States. She also has traveled extensively in Europe and in Latin America — including Venezuela — which is of great interest to Uribe.

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(U) Foreign Minister-Designate Barco

~~(S//NF)~~ President-elect Uribe once said his new Defense Minister has the political skills of a future President. Uribe considered her for a number of different positions, including Vice President and Foreign Minister.

### An Individual With Great Promise

~~(S//NF)~~ Despite her strong qualifications, Ramirez has political baggage. As an ambitious politician, she often was mired in disputes with other figures in the Pastrana administration, including Foreign Minister Fernandez and Ambassador to Washington Moreno. Some congressional leaders regard her as domineering and argumentative. Even so, she has been successful. Despite her disputes with Fernandez and Moreno, Ramirez achieved most of her goals as the Foreign Trade Minister. Political observers may end up ranking Ramirez as one of Uribe's best cabinet selections if she follows the activist precedents set by President Pastrana's first two Defense Ministers, who made considerable progress in bolstering the security forces. Uribe is counting on Ramirez to finish the job they began.

— Mr Robert Davis, DIA, Directorate for Analysis and Production (RAL), STU III (202)  
231-4549, DISTS 981-2483; MID 145-3A

— *Coordinated With: USSOUTHCOM*

***How Does This Product Rate***

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# TAB C



**SECRET/NOFORN**

**DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS**

I-02/011396-WH

**MEMORANDUM FOR ASD RODMAN**

**SUBJECT: Congratulations to new Colombian  
Defense Minister**

Attached is a congratulatory letter from the SECDEF to the new Colombian Minister of Defense (MOD) Marta Ramirez. MOD Ramirez formally assumes her responsibilities on 7 August 2002.

Recommend you initial and forward to the USDP.

(b)(6)

Reviewed by: PDIR

*JS 8/6/02*

LTC

(b)(6)

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Upon removal of attachments,  
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20 AUG 2002 RM-

ok

*ASD  
Rodman*

*WHA*

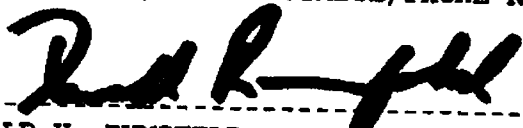
*for  
Review*

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 DONALD H. RUMSFELD

SEP 6 2002

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SECDEF WASHINGTON DC//USDP-CHAIRS//

UNCLAS

SUBJECT: LETTER FROM SECDEF RUMSFELD TO COLOMBIAN MINISTER OF  
DEFENSE (MOD) MARTA LUCIA RAMIREZ DE RINCON

1. REQUEST YOU DELIVER THE FOLLOWING LETTER TO MINISTER OF DEFENSE  
RAMIREZ.

QUOTE

HER EXCELLENCY

MARTA LUCIA RAMIREZ DE RINCON

MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENSE OF THE REPUBLIC OF COLOMBIA

BOGOTA, COLOMBIA

(b)(6)

LTCOL, CNTRY DIR

OASD/ISA/WHA, (b)(6)

DONALD H. RUMSFELD, SECDEF  
CRC:

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NO

QUOTE

DEAR MADAM MINISTER:

(PARA) CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR RECENT APPOINTMENT AS MINISTER OF  
NATIONAL DEFENSE. I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU TO CONTINUE THE  
CLOSE AND COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR ARMED FORCES.

(PARA) WITH BEST WISHES,

//SINCERELY//

DONALD H. RUMSFELD

END QUOTE

2. HARD COPY TO FOLLOW.

(b)(6) LTCOL. CNTRY DIR  
OASD/ISA/WHA, (b)(6)

DONALD H. RUMSFELD, SECDEF  
CRC:

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SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

SEP 6 2002

Her Excellency  
Marta Lucia Ramírez de Rincón  
Minister of National Defense of the Republic of Colombia  
Bogotá, Colombia

Dear Madam Minister:

Congratulations on your recent appointment as Minister of National Defense. I look forward to working with you to continue the close and cooperative relationship between our Armed Forces.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donald Rumsfeld".



U11437-02