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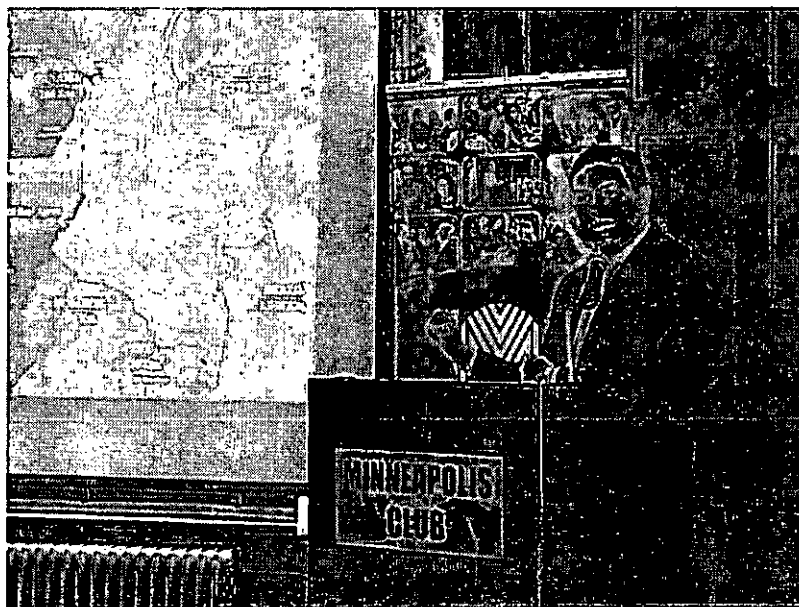
Embassy of Colombia in the United States

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## **Minnesota Extends a Warm Welcome to Ambassador Pinzón**

*Governor Declares Today "Republic of Colombia Day"*



**Washington, DC** — Colombian Ambassador to the United States Juan Carlos Pinzón is in Minnesota today and tomorrow meeting with policymakers and business leaders about Colombia's transformation on the path to peace and the Minnesota-Colombia partnership.

Minnesota is home to a Colombian population of 5,000. Ahead of the Ambassador's visit, Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton declared today "Republic of Colombia Day." The official proclamation reads in part:

*"... Whereas the commercial and investment relationships between Colombia and Minnesota contribute to the economies of both; and academic research partnerships and cultural exchanges between schools, colleges and universities in Colombia and Minnesota advance academic excellence and foster international friendship and understanding; and Colombia President Juan Manuel Santos and the people of Colombia were honored with the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts to establish a just and lasting peace in Colombia. ... I, Mark*

*Dayton, Governor of Minnesota, do hereby proclaim Monday, April 24, 2017 as Republic of Colombia Day."*

"It is a privilege to be in Minneapolis to meet with Governor Dayton, leaders of key industries and the Colombian community," said Ambassador Pinzón. "It is also an honor to build on the ties between Colombia and Minnesota at this critical moment in Colombia's history when we are working to build a stable and lasting peace."

This year, Global Minnesota, a thought leadership organization advancing international connections and dialogue, is honoring the nation with its "Year of Colombia" celebration.

This afternoon, the Ambassador delivered an address during a Global Minnesota luncheon, during which he discussed the historic Peace Agreement the government of Colombia reached with the FARC last year. He also talked about the challenges and opportunities ahead related to implementation of the accord, and the ways peace will make a positive impact on the U.S.-Colombia partnership.

Ambassador Pinzón stated:

*"For peace to be another major turning point for Colombia, like the transformation that we have achieved in the past 20 years, it has to be sustainable. And for sustainable peace, we need the commitment of leaders at a local, state and national level in Colombia, and also the continued support of the global community, including the United States through the Peace Colombia initiative.*

*"Through Plan Colombia – one of the most successful joint U.S. foreign policy initiatives in a generation – Colombia transformed remarkably and went from the brink of failure to one of the most dynamic economies and security leaders in this hemisphere. And through Peace Colombia, those gains will be maximized and we will become an even stronger U.S. ally and economic partner. That is good for Colombia and the United States, and it's good for Minnesota."*

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**Get to know Colombia.**  
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