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Embassy of Colombia in the United States

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Colombia Participates in Conference on Prosperity and Security in Central America

Washington, DC — Senior Colombian government officials and military leaders are in Miami today and tomorrow for the Conference on Prosperity and Security in Central America. Organized by the United States in partnership with Mexico, the Conference brings together regional government and business leaders to address the challenges and opportunities for creating prosperity in the region, particularly in the Northern Triangle countries of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. Colombian leaders participating include: Minister of Defense Luis C. Villegas, Minister of Finance Mauricio Cardenas, Deputy Minister of Multilateral Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Francisco Echeverri, Deputy Minister of National Defense Anibal Fernandez de Soto, the Commander General of the Military Forces and the Director of Citizen Security of the National Police.

Colombia, in its commitment to development in the region, supports Central American countries, in particular the Northern Triangle, through programs that strengthen institutions in areas including nutrition, health, agriculture, modernization of the State, social inclusion, vocational training and environment, among others. Additionally, Colombia supports the Mesoamerican Project and cooperation in social promotion, quality management, public services, local governance, security, support for small businesses, trade facilitation and competitiveness, entrepreneurship, telecommunications, risk management, food security and health. Colombia also seeks to advance regional interconnection.

In terms of security and as part of Colombia's security strategy toward the region, since 2013, the capacity of Central American and Caribbean security institutions have been strengthened, with the training of 16,632 officers in 979 activities. Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama and the Dominican Republic, particularly through the Joint Action Plan of Colombia and the United States for Central America and the Caribbean, have all supported these efforts.

Colombia also promotes investment and trade with its Northern Triangle partners, with whom it has a free trade agreement, as well as with Costa Rica. Colombia is among the top 10 investors in the Northern Triangle countries, with investments that total approximately \$2.4 billion.

During the Conference, the Government of Colombia will also seek to establish bilateral dialogues with senior U.S. officials on the process of Colombia's accession to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.

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Colombian Receives Award for Leadership in Conservation from National Geographic and The Howard G. Buffett Foundation

Washington, DC – The annual National Geographic Society/Bufett Awards for Leadership in Conservation were established by the Society and The Howard G. Buffett Foundation to recognize and celebrate unsung heroes working in the field. Two awards are presented each year: one for achievement in Africa (established in 2002) and the other for achievement in Latin America (established in 2005).

One of the two winners is Rosamira Guillén, a Colombian landscape architect and environmentalist designer turned conservationist. Guillén holds a master's degree in landscape architecture from the State University of New York in Syracuse and was director of the Barranquilla Zoo in her hometown. There, she discovered cotton-top tamarins, a Colombian native species that is critically endangered due to deforestation and illegal pet trade.

Guillén's team conducted awareness and education campaigns for zoo visitors and local schools to draw attention to the charismatic primate. Guillén is now executive director of Fundación Proyecto Tití, an organization she cofounded that is dedicated to the protection and conservation of the cotton-top tamarin.

Recipients of the National Geographic Society/Bufett Awards for Leadership in Conservation have demonstrated outstanding leadership in managing and protecting the natural resources in their regions and countries. In addition, they are each inspirational conservation advocates who serve as role models and mentors. Award recipients are chosen from nominations submitted to the Committee for Research and Exploration, which screens each nominee through a peer-review process. The awardees chosen each year are honored at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., and receive a one-time grant of \$25,000 to support their ongoing work.

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