

**Panama Cases, 1970-2012**  
**Last Updated: 2 July 2019**

torg	gname	onset	min	max
T1302	SOVEREIGN PANAMA FRONT (FPS)		0	0
T1383	VANGUARDIA PATRIÓTICA TORRIJERA 20 DICIEMBRE		0	0
T412	REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES OF COLOMBIA (FARC)		1964	2012
T1277	REVOLUTIONARY STUDENT FRONT (FER)		1980	1980
T1438	OMAR TORRIJOS COMMANDO FOR LATIN AMERICAN DIGNITY		1989	1990
T147	20 DECEMBER MOVEMENT (M-20)		1990	1992
T454	AUTODEFENSAS CAMPESINAS DE CORDOBA Y URABA		1990	1998
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T1861	PANAMA DEFENSE FORCE		1992	1992
T54	ANSAR ALLAH		1994	1994

I. SOVEREIGN PANAMA FRONT (FPS)

Torg ID: 1302

Min. Group Date: 0

Max. Group Date: 0

Onset: NA

Aliases: Sovereign Panama Front (Fps), Frente Panama Soberano (Frepaso), Panama Sovereignty Front

**Part 1. Bibliography**

- GTD Perpetrator 1727. Global Terrorism Database. Study for Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. Last modified July 2018.

<https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=1727>

- “Sovereign Panama Front.” Terrorist Organization Profile No. 4275. MIPT Knowledge Base. 2008. National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. (MISSING).  
[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vwr8J2DB-SNip8h\\_McsgO6\\_NxVGxKixY4Osj\\_qQ\\_xoig/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vwr8J2DB-SNip8h_McsgO6_NxVGxKixY4Osj_qQ_xoig/edit)
- Silvio Hernandez. “Analysts Accuse US of Fomenting Armed Conflict in Darien.” IPS News Agency. 1997.  
<http://www.ipsnews.net/1997/11/panama-analysts-accuse-us-of-fomenting-armed-conflict-in-darien/>
- Seth Jones and Martin Libicki. How Terrorist Groups End. RAND Corporation. 2008. P. 182. <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a484504.pdf>

## **Part 2. Basic Coding**

Aliases: Sovereign Panama Patriotic Front, FREPASO

Group Formation: 1992

Group End: 1999

## **Part 3. Narrative**

### **Group Formation**

In 1989, the United States invaded Panama and overthrew Manuel Noriega. At the time, the US government also exercised control over the Panama Canal. In 1999, the US planned to hand off authority of the canal to the Panamanian government and withdraw its remaining military forces from the area. The Sovereign Panama Front seemed to emerge in response to the US presence. The Sovereign Panama Front is a Panamanian nationalist organization that opposed the U.S. military presence and attributed Panama’s poverty-related problems to the U.S.’ intervention on the war against drugs (Hernandez 1997; Jones and Libicki 2008). The organization came to attention as a violent group when it attacked the government building in Panama City on July 29, 1992 (GTD 2018; Jones and Libicki 2008).

### **Geography**

The group operated from Panama where it aimed to promote Panama’s sovereignty and remove the U.S.’ presence within the country (Hernandez 1997; Jones and Libicki 2008). The attack they conducted on the government building took place in the capital of Panama, Panama City (GTD 2018).

### **Organizational Structure**

The group has approximately hundreds of members, not exceeding a thousand (Jones and Libicki 2008). There is no information about the group's leadership and funding.

### **External Ties**

There is no information about the group's external ties. However, considering the Sovereign Panama Front's ideology and goals, it may have had ties with similar groups such as FARC and Peasant Self-Defence patrols of Cordoba and Uraba (Hernandez 1997).

### **Group Outcome**

The last known violent attack by the group is in 1992 when it bombed the Finance and Treasury Ministry (GTD 2018). In 1999, a spokesman for the group claimed without evidence that the US military had moved into Darien, one of the poorer areas of Panama, to exploit the local population (Hernandez 1997). In 1999, the United States handed over the Panama Canal to the government and withdrew as expected. It is unclear -- and also unlikely -- that this group had anything to do with this. However, it is stated that the group ended in a victory, suggesting that after the group's goals were met, it had no reason to continue operating (Jones and Libicki 2008).

Notes for Iris:

-Jones and Libicki code it as a victory (unclear exactly why) there is a lot of ambiguity in how they code "victory" (e.g. they code ANC and ASALA as 'victories' but it is relatively rare. Unclear how it's distinct from politics)

- we also don't know what happened to the group exactly
- they only had one attack so unlikely to be credible
- it opposed the US government, not the Panama government

## **II. VANGUARDIA PATRIÓTICA TORRIJERA 20 DICIEMBRE**

Torg ID: 1383

Min. Group Date: 0

Max. Group Date: 0

Onset: NA

Aliases: December 20 Torrijist Patriotic Vanguard (Vpt-20), Vanguardia Patriótica Torrijera 20 Diciembre

### **Part 1. Bibliography**

- "December 20 Torrijist Patriotic Vanguard." Terrorist Organization Profile No. 4004. MIPT Knowledge Base. 2008. National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism.

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vwr8J2DB-SNip8h\\_McsgO6\\_NxVGxKixY4Osj\\_qQxojg/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vwr8J2DB-SNip8h_McsgO6_NxVGxKixY4Osj_qQxojg/edit)

- Donald Busky. "Communism in History and Theory: Asia, Africa, and the Americas." Greenwood Publishing. 2002. P. 196.  
<https://books.google.com/books?id=K5Bxd7sq9KcC&pg=PA196&lpg=PA196&dq=December+20+Torrijist+Patriotic+Vanguard&source=bl&ots=YxsQLQE0q2&sig=ACfU3U3nTlCIDWGz-06z0MB--P5hTnmBKg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjD78Cdl57jAhUWVs0KHd8CCxUQ6AEwAAnoECAoQAQ#v=onepage&q=December%2020%20Torrijist%20Patriotic%20Vanguard&f=false>
- Edward Mickolus and Susan Simmons. "Terrorism 1992-1995: A Chronology of Events." ABC-CLIO. 1997.  
<https://books.google.com/books?id=UIBzCC0c2McC&pg=PA284&lpg=PA284&dq=December+20+Torrijist+Patriotic+Vanguard&source=bl&ots=AmUPlYMEFT&sig=ACfU3U0dEUcBUynWnQjOkHPmHG9xey4UxQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjD78Cdl57jAhUWVs0KHd8CCxUQ6AEwAXoECAkQAQ#v=onepage&q=December%2020%20Torrijist%20Patriotic%20Vanguard&f=false>

## **Part 2. Basic Coding**

Aliases: none

Group Formation: 1991 or 1993

Group End: 1993

## **Part 3. Narrative**

### **Group Formation**

VPT-20 was a leftist, anti U.S. organization that derived part of its name from the U.S. invasion of Panama on December 20, 1989 when the U.S. arrested General Noriega (Mickolus and Simmons 1997). Noriega was arrested for illegally selling cocaine and giving confidential U.S. security information to Cuba (Mickolus and Simmons 1997). The group's name implies they might have supported Omar Torrijos, the Panamanian leader from 1969 to 1981, but there is no other evidence to support this (MIPT 2008).

VPT-20 came to attention as a violent group after it took credit for the grenade attack of a U.S. embassy in 1991 (MIPT 2008; Mickolus and Simmons 1997). However, there are disputes regarding whether or not VPT-20 actually conducted the attack because the December 20 Movement claimed credit (MIPT 2008).

In 1993, the group came to attention again for claiming credit for the kidnapping of three American missionaries: Mark Rich Grane, David Mankins, and Rick Tenenoff, who were

members of the New Tribes Mission in Colombia (Mickolus and Simmons 1997). The group claimed that American missionaries were spies doing intelligence operations in Panama and Colombia (Mickolus and Simmons 1997). Although VPT-20 took credit for the attack, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) detained the missionaries and later murdered them (Mickolus and Simmons 1997). The group claimed it was acting to help defend Panamanian and Colombian sovereignty from US forces (Busky 2002, 196; Mickolus and Simmons 1997; MIPT 2008).

## **Geography**

VPT-20 operated in both Panama and Colombia. The kidnapping took place in a Colombian missionary (Mickolus and Simmons 1997).

## **Organizational Structure**

The group is very small with only a few individuals (MIPT 2008). There is no clear membership information about the group's leadership and funding. Although VPT-20 took credit for the attack, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) detained the missionaries and later murdered them (Mickolus and Simmons 1997). As a result, it is unclear whether there is overlap in the membership of the two groups. Some claim that VPT-20 was a subset of FARC or December 20 (MIPT 2008).

## **External Ties**

The group has ties with the FARC because the two worked together to conduct the missionary kidnapping (Mickolus and Simmons 1997; MIPT 2008). There is also a possibility that they are allied with the December 20 Movement group (Busky 2002; MIPT 2008). Some claim that VPT-20 was a subset of FARC or December 20 (MIPT 2008).

## **Group Outcome**

Some claim that VPT-20 was a subset of FARC or December 20 (MIPT 2008).

The group's last known violent attack was in 1993 when they kidnapped the Colombian missionaries in Panama (Mickolus and Simmons 1997; Busky 2002; MIPT 2008). Several years after the kidnapping, FARC members killed the missionaries (MIPT 2008). The group claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement they sent to the news saying they had no choice but to take up arms in order to defend Panama from US forces (Mickolus and Simmons 1997). The group was not heard from again after this attack.

Notes for Iris:

-there's a lot of ambiguity in whether this is an independent group or not

- FARC also said they were responsible for the kidnapping
- VPT-20 might be a faction of one of the groups
- operating in the same time period as December 20 movement and same political aims
- no ties between December 20 and FARC so maybe this is a subset of FARC?

### III. REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES OF COLOMBIA (FARC)

Torg ID: 412

Min. Group Date:

Max. Group Date:

Onset:

Aliases: Revolutionary Armed Forces Of Colombia (Farc), Armed Revolutionary Forces Of Colombia (Farc), Bolivarian Movement For A New Colombia, Farc, Farc [Armed Revolutionary Forces Of Colombia], Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias De Colombia - Ejercito Del Pueblo (Farc-Ep), Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias De Colombia (Farc)

#### Part 1. Bibliography

- “Who are the FARC?” BBC, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-36605769>
- Martha Crenshaw. “Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia - People’s Army.” Mapping Militant Organizations. Last Updated 2015. <http://web.stanford.edu/group/mappingmilitants/cgi-bin/groups/view/89>
- Danielle Renwick and Claire Felter. “Colombia’s Civil Conflict.” Council on Foreign Relations. 2017. <http://www.cfr.org/colombia/colombias-civil-conflict/p9272>
- “FARC.” Insight Crime. Last Updated 2017. <http://www.insightcrime.org/colombia-organized-crime-news/farc-profile>
- “The guerrilla groups in Colombia.” UN Regional Information Center for Western Europe. <http://www.unric.org/en/colombia/27013-the-guerrilla-groups-in-colombia>
- “Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia.” Mackenzie Institute. 2015. <http://mackenzieinstitute.com/fuerzas-armadas-revolucionarias-de-colombia-farc-2/>
- “Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.” Para-Military Groups Latin America. Global Security. No Date. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/para/farc.htm>
- “Profile: Colombia’s Armed Groups.” BBC. 2013. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-11400950>
- GTD EventID 19960706001, Global Terrorism Database, START Project, Last Modified June 2016, <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/IncidentSummary.aspx?gtdid=19960706001>

#### Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: Southern Bloc, Ejército del Pueblo

Group Formation: 1964 (new)

Group End (Outcome): 2017 (disarm)

### **Part 3. Narrative**

#### **Group Formation**

The FARC was formed in 1964 as the armed wing of the Colombian Communist Party to overthrow the central government after La Violencia and the Marquetalia Massacre (BBC 2016; Crenshaw 2015; Mackenzie Institute 2015). Its primary grievance was due to income inequality and discrimination against rural communities by the Colombian government (BBC 2016; Crenshaw 2015). The group ascribes to a Marxist-Leninist ideology (BBC 2016). Its first violent attack occurred in 1964 after the Marquetalia Massacre (Crenshaw 2015).

#### **Geography**

The group primarily operates in rural areas in Colombia (BBC 2016). It controls territory in eastern and southern Colombia (BBC 2013). This includes Cauca, Valle del Cauca, Narino, Choco, and Antioquia (InSight Crime n.d.). It originally operated out of Marquetalia, Tolima (InSight Crime n.d.).

It has a transnational presence in Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela, Mexico, and Panama (Crenshaw 2015). It receives sanctuary in Venezuela, Panama, and Ecuador (Global Security n.d.). There is one attack by FARC in Iquitos, Peru in 1996 (GTD 2016).

#### **Organizational Structure**

FARC was founded by Manuel Marulanda and Jacob Arenas (BBC 2016). In 2016, the leader of the group was Rodrigo Londono Echeverri (BBC 2016). It recruits farmers, peasants, and other "land workers" as fighters (BBC 2016). There are disputed reports about whether it recruits members forcibly (BBC 2016). It also recruits men and women (BBC 2016). Approximately 20-30% of FARC members are minors when they join (Mackenzie Institute 2015). When it started in 1964, the group has approximately 50 members, but quickly grew (Crenshaw 2015; InSight Crime n.d.). The group had approximately 18,000 fighters in 1999, 20,000 fighters in 2002 and 6,000-7,000 fighters in 2016 (Crenshaw 2015; BBC 2016). In addition, FARC relies on a large cadre of civilian support which numbers or even slightly outnumbers the total active fighters it has (BBC 2016).

The group has a political wing known as the Patriotic Union, which it created in 1985 to run in legislative elections (Crenshaw 2015). The political wing fell apart due to a series

of high-profile assassinations and kidnappings of UP members during the 1980s and early 1990s (Crenshaw 2015). The group is organized regionally into small platoon-like divisions, which are organized into regional brigades (BBC 2016). It is a very hierarchical structure (InSight Crime n.d.). There is a leadership council composed of a dozen individuals known as the High Command or Secretariat group (Mackenzie Institute 2015; BBC 2016). One senior military commander is Jorge Briceno (Global Security n.d.).

The group primarily funds itself through extortion, drug trafficking, and kidnapping (Crenshaw 2015; BBC 2016). One report estimates that it collects \$150-500 million per year from drug trafficking (InSight Crime n.d.; Renwick and Felter 2017; UN n.d.).

### **External Ties**

The group fought against Colombian para-military groups like Death to Kidnappers and the United Self-Defense Force of Colombia (Crenshaw 2015). There is conflicting reports about its relationship with the ELN. It fought against ELN from 2005-2009 (InSight Crime n.d.). It also cooperated and got support from the ELN at an unknown point (Mackenzie Institute 2015).

FARC received funding from Cuba and Venezuela (Crenshaw 2015). Chavez was a well-known advocate for FARC and lobbied for them to be recognized as “belligerents” which provides certain international legal protections (Global Security n.d.; Crenshaw 2015).

It has allegedly “been in contact and worked together in the drug trade” with Shining Path in Peru (Crenshaw 2015). It may also coordinate bomb training techniques with the IRA and Sinn Fein (Global Security n.d.).

It was a member of the Simon Bolivar Guerrilla Coordinating Board, which was an umbrella group of Marxist groups in Latin America, from 1987-1991. Members included ELN, EPL, and M-19 (Crenshaw 2015).

### **Group Outcome**

FARC initially emerged from the Marquetalia Massacre (BBC 2016). They engage police, military, and paramilitary forces who they believe are fighting on behalf of the Colombian government (BBC 2016). The government had peace talks with the Colombian government for the first time in 1982 which resulted in the Uribe Accords (Crenshaw 2015). The ceasefire fell apart when private Colombian citizens began to create their own right-wing paramilitary groups to attack like the AUC and MAS (Crenshaw 2015).

In 2002, President Alvaro Uribe launched a huge counterinsurgency offensive against the FARC, which was highly successful (BBC 2013). The group was resilient for many



years, but the death of key leaders and Plan Colombia (the U.S. plan to train and equip Colombian security forces) has severely damaged the group's capacity to fight (BBC 2016). Manuel Marulanda died in 2008 and his successor, Alfonso Cano, died soon after in 2011 (BBC 2016). In 2008, Colombian forces also killed Raul Reyes, a military leader and influential member in the Secretariat (Crenshaw 2015).

Many fighters have demobilized or been killed, which eventually led the FARC to pursue peace talks with the Colombian government starting in 2012 (BBC 2013; BBC 2016). The group signed a formal ceasefire agreement with the Colombian government in June 2016 (Global Security n.d.)

#### IV. REVOLUTIONARY STUDENT FRONT (FER)

Torg ID: 1277

Min. Group Date: 1980

Max. Group Date: 1980

Onset: NA

Aliases: Revolutionary Student Front (Fer), Student Revolutionary Front (Fer)

##### **Part 1. Bibliography**

- GTD Perpetrator 4108. Global Terrorism Database. Study for Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. Last modified July 2018.  
<https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=4108>
- Freedom House, Freedom in the World 2014 - Panama, 8 September 2014, available at:  
<https://www.refworld.org/docid/5417f1929.html>
- "Political Violence Against Americans." DIANE Publishing. US State Department. 1999.  
<https://books.google.com/books?id=B6aqcilXBdQC&pg=PA61&lpg=PA61&dq=fer-29+panama&source=bl&ots=xCxiQspw6&sig=ACfU3U1yLJ6P8la04OkUf1dSSuxX6bJhoQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjYp8vVmp7jAhVTBc0KHazZCVoQ6AEwC3oECAkQAQ#v=onepage&q=fer-29%20panama&f=false>

##### **Part 2. Basic Coding**

Aliases: FER-29

Group Formation: 1980

Group End: 1980 (last violent), 2013 (non-violent)

##### **Part 3. Narrative**

###### **Group Formation**

FER-29 is a leftist student organization which protested against the Panama government's corruption (Freedom House 2014). In 1999, they also peacefully protested against US military interventions in Yugoslavia and US military occupation of Panama (State Department 1999). The group first came to attention as a violent group on February 28, 1980 when 12 members attacked the El Salvador Embassy in Panama City (GTD 2018). Although Panama respects freedom of expression, several times, the protests are shut down and group members are arrested (US State Department 1999; Freedom House 2014).

## **Geography**

The group protested the Panama government and the US government (US State Department 1999). Their first attack was in Panama City which is the capital of Panama and the home of the governmental buildings (GTD 2018).

## **Organizational Structure**

FER-29 is a leftist student organization which protested against the Panama government's corruption (Freedom House 2014). On February 28, 1980, the group saw 12 members attack the El Salvador Embassy (GTD 2018). On April 20, 1999, 23 FER-29 demonstrators protested at the U.S. embassy after the U.S.' continuous occupation in Panama and the NATO airstrikes against Yugoslavia (US State Department 1999). At another demonstration the same day, 25 group members burned a U.S. military aircraft (US State Department 1999). In 2013, 59 group members also protested against the government's corruption at a public school (Freedom House 2014). The group members were students (Freedom House 2014).

## **External Ties**

There is no information about the group's external ties.

## **Group Outcome**

The group's last violent attack was in 1980 when they attacked the El Salvador Embassy in Panama City (GTD 2018). After this attack, the group continued to exist as a peaceful student protest organization aimed at opposing the United States government (US State Department 1999). In 1999 when they were peacefully conducting protests outside the U.S. Embassy (State Department 1999). In October 2013, the group was peacefully protesting Panamanian corruption at a school (Freedom House 2014). Police arrested 59 student members (Freedom House 2014).

Notes for Iris:

-the group's political opposition is against the US and Panama. The Panamanian government was perceived as too Western or too pro-US which drew the discontent of the student protesters. The group also opposed corruption. The group was later more explicit in their political opposition

-the group's primarily nonviolent. they are only associated with one attack in 1980

-their political demands are unclear. They primarily criticize and don't have a policy agenda (emblematic of the larger groups in Latin/Central America)

-no rationale given for why they attacked the El Salvador embassy specifically and no evidence of politicized opposition against that state

#### V. OMAR TORRIJOS COMMANDO FOR LATIN AMERICAN DIGNITY

Torg ID: 1438

Min. Group Date: 1989

Max. Group Date: 1990

Onset: NA

Aliases: Omar Torrijos Commando For Latin American Dignity, Omar Torrijos Anti-Intervention Command Group

#### Part 1. Bibliography

- "Omar Torrijos Commando." Terrorist Organization Profile No. 4173, MIPT Knowledge Base, 2008, National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1F5OaS\\_pTJg52rjAbH1YPQBazAZ5sSpR29XXjD-p-d9E/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1F5OaS_pTJg52rjAbH1YPQBazAZ5sSpR29XXjD-p-d9E/edit)
- GTD Perpetrator 2015. Global Terrorism Database. Study for Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. Last modified June 2017. <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=2015>
- "Panama Group Says it Bombed LDS Chapel." Deseret News. 1990. <https://www.deseretnews.com/article/79617/PANAMA-GROUP-SAYS-IT-BOMBED-LDS-CHAPEL.html>
- "Mormon church bombed, Panamanians claim responsibility." UPI. 1990. <https://www.upi.com/Archives/1990/01/03/Mormon-church-bombed-Panamanians-claim-responsibility/6470631342800/>

#### Part 2. Basic Coding

Aliases: None

Group Formation: 1989

Group End: 1990 (loses raison d'être)

#### Part 3. Narrative

## **Group Formation**

It is unknown precisely when the group formed, but the group's first violent attack was on March 24th 1988 (GTD 2017). This was about a week after, in Panama, troops from the United States overthrew Manuel Noriega, a dictator (MIPT 2008). The group reportedly formed to protest against the United States invading Panama (MIPT 2008; UPI 1990; Deseret News 1990).

The group also reportedly holds very anti-Western views (MIPT 2008). The group typed a letter, stating that it plans on taking "an eye for an eye" by launching violent acts upon citizens from the United States, as well as targets of the American government (MIPT 2008; Deseret News 1990). The group reportedly planned on carrying out these attacks until the United States Marines had completely departed Panama (MIPT 2008). The group also opposes any sort of imperialism of the United States as well as American domination in South America as well as Latin America (MIPT 2008).

The group also reportedly targeted Mormon temples in 1990 (MIPT 2008; UPI 1990; Deseret News 1990). The group also reportedly embodies leftist views (MIPT 2008). The group also attacked an LDS church (Deseret News 1990).

## **Geography**

The group has launched attacks in Bogota, Colombia and Cabudare, Venezuela (GTD 2017). The group reportedly informed the United Press International that they launched an attack in Cabudare, a town 220 miles west of Venezuela's capital (Deseret News). The group has also launched attacks in Mormon temples and LDI chapels in Cabudare, Venezuela (MIPT 2008; UPI 1990; Deseret News 1990).

## **Organizational Structure**

The group's organizational structure is unknown.

## **External Ties**

The group's external ties are unknown.

## **Group Outcome**

The group has not launched any attacks since 1990 (MIPT 2008; GTD 2017). The United States pulled troops from Panama at the end of January 1990 so the group's cause became irrelevant (MIPT 2008).

Notes for Iris:

-GTD says 1988, but MIPT says 1989

-search on PQ finds no evidence of '88 attack in Colombia

VI. 20 DECEMBER MOVEMENT (M-20)

Torg ID: 147

Min. Group Date: 1990

Max. Group Date: 1992

Onset: NA

Aliases: December 20 Movement (M-20), 20 December Movement (M-20), 20 December National Liberation Movement, December 20 Movement, M-20, Movimiento De Diciembre 20, Movimiento De Diciembre 20 (M-20)

**Part 1. Bibliography**

- "December 20 Movement." Terrorist Organization Profile No. 233, MIPT Knowledge Base. 2008. National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1F5OaS\\_pTJg52rjAbH1YPQBazAZ5sSpR29XXjD-p-d9E/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1F5OaS_pTJg52rjAbH1YPQBazAZ5sSpR29XXjD-p-d9E/edit)
- GTD Perpetrator 272. Global Terrorism Database. Study for Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. Last modified June 2017. <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=272>
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- Edward Mickolus and Susan Simmon. "Terrorism, 1992-1995: A Chronology of Events and a Selectively Annotated Bibliography." ABC-CLIO. 1997. P. 173. [https://books.google.com/books?id=UIBzCC0c2McC&pg=PA173&lpg=PA173&dq=panama+december+20+movement+terrorism&source=bl&ots=AmPQkuLCHQ&sig=lg30MzyHoodcKlsfd2d5tpnGvac&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjE0ZuH\\_ofYAhVJw2MKHRFhDzcQ6AEIPjAE#v=onepage&q=panama%20december%2020%20movement%20terrorism&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=UIBzCC0c2McC&pg=PA173&lpg=PA173&dq=panama+december+20+movement+terrorism&source=bl&ots=AmPQkuLCHQ&sig=lg30MzyHoodcKlsfd2d5tpnGvac&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjE0ZuH_ofYAhVJw2MKHRFhDzcQ6AEIPjAE#v=onepage&q=panama%20december%2020%20movement%20terrorism&f=false)

**Part 2. Basic Coding**

Aliases: None

Group Formation: 1990

Group End: 1992

**Part 3. Narrative**

**Group Formation**

The December 20 Movement formed between 1989 and 1990 (Los Angeles Times 1990). The group's first attack was in March 1990 when it attacked a US helicopter and discotheque (Global Terrorism Database 2017). The December 20 Movement formed initially as a violent group emerging after the U.S. invasion that overthrew Gen. Manuel A. Noriega, on December 20, 1989 (Los Angeles Times 1990). The group's aim is to destabilize the Panamanian government, and the group targets members of the post-Noriega Panamanian government (MIPT 2008). It is allegedly right-wing (MIPT 2008).

## **Geography**

The December 20 Movement has conducted attacks in cities within Panama, such as Panama City, Arrican, San Salvador, and David (Global Terrorism Database 2017). The group is not transnational.

## **Organizational Structure**

The December 20 Movement's leadership, size estimates, and wings, are unknown. However, the group's political aims are influenced by their resistance to the Panamanian government, and so the membership type may include individuals who express similar aims to resist. A man claiming to be part of the group called the office of ACAN to notify authorities of an attack the group carried out on February 27, 1992 (Mickolus and Simmons 1997, 173). Many individuals of the Colombian April 19 Movement, have been suspected to have joined the December 20 Movement (Mickolus and Simmons 1997, 175). These individuals have been identified as Julio Cesar Alvarado Rivera, Ruben Arturo Villareal, and Amado Sanchez (Mickolus and Simmons 1997).

## **External Ties**

The December 20 Movement has not alleged any support with other organizations and groups.

Many individuals of the Colombian April 19 Movement, have been suspected to have joined the December 20 Movement (Mickolus and Simmons 1997, 175). These individuals have been identified as Julio Cesar Alvarado Rivera, Ruben Arturo Villareal, and Amado Sanchez (Mickolus and Simmons 1997).

## **Group Outcome**

The December 20 Movement has not been active in attacks since their last attack in Panama City on November 6, 1992 (Global Terrorism Database 2017). Panama police arrested 5 members of M-20 in June 1992 (Mickolus and Simmons 1997, 175).

Notes for Iris:

-unclear why Colombian members are opposing the US invasion in Panama, but the similar name and membership might indicate a larger shared goal between the two groups?

VII. AUTODEFENSAS CAMPESINAS DE CORDOBA Y URABA

Torg ID: 454

Min. Group Date: 1990

Max. Group Date: 1998

Onset: NA

Aliases: Peasant Self-Defense Group (Accu), Autodefensas Campesinas De Cordoba Y Uraba, Autodefensas Campesinas De C\_rdoaba Y Urab\_, Autodefensas Campesinas De Cordoba Y Uraba (Accu), Autodefensas Campesinas De C\_rdoaba Y Urab\_ (Accu), Las Autodefensas Campesinas De Cordoba Y Urab (Accu), Las Autodefensas Campesinas De C\_rdoaba Y Urab\_, Peasant Self-Defense Group Of Cordoba And Uraba, Peasant Self-Defense Group Of C\_rdoaba And Urab\_, Self-Defense Groups Of C\_rdoaba And Urab\_, Self-Defense Groups Of Cordoba And Uraba (Accu)

**Part 1. Bibliography**

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<https://search.proquest.com/docview/311052088?accountid=14026>.

## **Part 2. Basic Coding**

Aliases: no other aliases found

Group Formation: 1994 (Vargas 2015)

Group End: 1997 ("merged" with the AUC), 1998 last attack (GTD 2017), 2004 (McGirk 2006)- peace agreement signed in 2006 (Insight Crime 2015)

## **Part 3. Narrative**

### **Group Formation**

In 1994, Carlos Castaño formed Las Autodefensas Campesinas de Córdoba y Uraba (ACCU). The ACCU first came to attention as a violent group in 1995 (GTD 2017).

After peace negotiations with the EPL in 1992, the Castaño family disarmed and focused instead on assisting families attacked by the guerrilla group (Human Rights Watch 1998; Vargas 2015). In 1994, Fidel Castaño was kidnapped. This event inspired Carlos Castano to ACCU in order to fight against guerrillas (HRW 1998). Under the ACCU, Carlos Castaño worked with remaining paramilitary leaders, who also desired to continue fighting FARC and guerrilla sympathizers (Verdad Abierta N.D.; MIPT 2008; Human Rights Watch 1998; Insight Crime 2015).

The ACCU was right-wing and sought to destroy the leftist guerrilla groups in Colombia. The ACCU did not oppose the Colombian government and military and government (Human Rights Watch 1998; Vargas 2015).

### **Geography**

The group largely bases its operations out of Colombia. The group was very active in northwestern Colombia and along the border with Panama (1997). Within Colombia, the group operated in Uraba, Guaviare, Putumayo, Bolivar, Magdalena, Cesar, Valencia, and Tierralata, (Vargas 2015; Human Rights Watch 1998).

The group was transnational. The group entered Panama in pursuit of guerrillas there (Human Rights Watch 1998). The ACCU also conducted an attack in Panama (GTD 2017).



## **Organizational Structure**

The group had a central command, led by Carlos Castaño, and different smaller teams for different regions affected by guerillas (Human Rights Watch 1998). Each regional team had local groups and mobile groups, which had better training (Human Rights Watch 1998). Regional groups were paid for by the civilians of that region, if they desired a group there for protection (Human Rights Watch 1998). Many former EPL members joined the regional groups (Human Rights Watch 1998). All members received supplies and a salary (Human Rights Watch 1998).

The Castaño family is also allegedly linked to drug trafficking. Money from the drug trade may have provided funding to the ACCU (Human Rights Watch 1998; MIPT 2008).

In 1996, the group leaders claimed to have 6,000 members (Human Rights Watch 1998). At its peak, the ACCU had an estimated 31,000 paramilitary fighters (McGirk 2006),

## **External Ties**

Under the leadership of the Castaño brothers, the ACCU originally operated in the early 1990s as a non-violent local militia for the self-defense of northwestern Colombia. In 1994, Carlos Castaño formed the ACCU and then the AUC, an umbrella organization, in 1997. The ACCU later operated under the AUC (MIPT 2008).

In 1996, "Bloque Elmer Cardenas" joined the ACCU (Verdad Abierta n.d.). The group also became increasingly violent, taking responsibility for 90 deaths within 22 days that year (Human Rights Watch 1998). This outraged the Colombian government. The US allegedly offered money to the Colombian government to assist in the capture of Carlos Castaño (Human Rights Watch 1998).

## **Group Outcome**

In 1996, the group became increasingly violent, taking responsibility for 90 deaths within 22 days (Human Rights Watch 1998). This outraged the Colombian government. The US allegedly offered money to the Colombian government to assist in the capture of Carlos Castaño (Human Rights Watch 1998). Nevertheless, the Colombian government could not find him. Carlos continued attacking civilians on account for their alleged support of guerrilla groups (Human Rights Watch 1998). The ACCU conducted their last attack in 1998 (GTD 2017).

In 2004, Castaño participated in peace talks with the Colombian president (McGirk 2006). That same year, a fight broke out between group members and government body guards that resulted in Castaño's death (McGirk 2006). In 2006, the entire AUC -- the umbrella organization which the AUCC now operated under -- signed a peace agreement with the government (Insight

Crime 2015). The government, however, did not have enough manpower to verify the organization's compliance with the accord. As a result, many AUC members splintered into paramilitary, narco groups or joined existing ones, including Urabeños, Rastrajos, and Águilas Negras (Insight Crime 2015).

Notes for Iris:

- 1996 timing of attack prompts large government response and tied soon to 1997
- government COIN decimates the group's organizational capabilities and incentivizes them to merge with other paramilitaries → increase violence

VIII. OCTOBER 11 GROUP  
Torg ID: 1851  
Min. Group Date: 1992  
Max. Group Date: 1992  
Onset: NA

Aliases: None

### **Part 1. Bibliography**

- GTD Perpetrator 1761. Global Terrorism Database. Study for Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. Last modified July 2018.  
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  - october 11 panama city attack from 1992/10/01 to 1992/10/31
  - october 11 panama city immigration from 1992/10/01 to 1992/10/31
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  - panama
- Panamá Vieja Escuela. "El Golpe De Estado Del 11 De Octubre De 1968." Panamá Vieja Escuela. November 21, 2018. Accessed July 12, 2019.  
<http://www.panamaviejaescuela.com/golpe-estado-11-octubre-1968/>.

### **Part 2. Basic Coding**

Aliases: none

Group Formation: 1992 (GTD 2018)

Group End: 1992 (GTD 2018) (unknown)

### **Part 3. Narrative**

#### **Group Formation**

The first date the group was violent was on October 11, 1992 when it bombed the Immigration Directorate in Panama City (GTD 2018). The reason for the violence is unknown.

Historically, October 11 was a significant date in Panamanian politics because it was the day there was a coup in 1968 led by the National Guard to overthrow the newly elected president, Arnulfo Arias (Panamá Vieja Escuela 2018). A lot of the public was angry with the Guard's actions, and many protestors and Arias supporters were arrested (Panamá Vieja Escuela 2018). However, there is not enough evidence to code whether the group had ties to this event or was simply called this because of the date of its attack.

### **Geography**

The group operates from Panama, and the attack they conducted against the government on October 11, 1992 was in Panama City (GTD 2018).

### **Organizational Structure**

There is no information about the group's organizational structure. However, it can be inferred that the members who participated in the attack against the government were opposed to the government.

### **External Ties**

There is no information about the group's external ties.

### **Group Outcome**

There is no information about the group's ending. The last known attack was also their first attack on October 11, 1992 against the government (GTD 2018).

Notes for Iris:

-unclear what they want. They might be symbolically protesting the government in general and chose this date because it was the date a military government came to power in Panama.

-there's like no evidence about the group which makes it hard to understand

## **IX. PANAMA DEFENSE FORCE**

Torg ID: 1861

Min. Group Date: 1992

Max. Group Date: 1992

Onset: NA

Aliases: None

### **Part 1. Bibliography**

- GTD Perpetrator 1721. Global Terrorism Database. Study for Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. Last modified July 2018.  
<https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=1721>
- Nathaniel Sheppard Jr, Chicago Tribune. 1992. Panama hit with 3 bombings: Forces put on alert after attacks by suspected anarchists. Chicago Tribune (1963-Current), Sep 20, 1992.  
<https://search-proquest-com.stanford.idm.oclc.org/docview/1688701402?accountid=14026> (accessed July 5, 2019). PDF. gDrive.
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<https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/centam/pa-fdp.htm>
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<http://countrystudies.us/panama/57.htm>
- "Panama Campaign." US Army Center of Military History. N.d.  
[https://history.army.mil/html/reference/army\\_flag/panama.html](https://history.army.mil/html/reference/army_flag/panama.html)

### **Part 2. Basic Coding**

Aliases: PDF, FDP

Group Formation: 1978. It dissolved and turned against the government in either 1990, 1991, or 1992.

Group End: 1992 (last violent attack)

### **Part 3. Narrative**

#### **Group Formation**

The PDF was formed in the late 1970s, as the military arm of Panama's General Commander Noriega (Meditz and Hanratty 1987). Although Panama's Constitution did not allow for military intervention in politics, Noriega proclaimed himself as the leader of the country in 1983 and used the PDF to suppress civilian rebellions and uprisings (Meditz and Hanratty 1987; US Army Center of Military History n.d.). Since the scope of PDF's power was very broadly outlined, they would use violent tactics including acid attacks and tear gas against civilians (Global Security n.d.). Specifically, there was a lot of unrest after the elections in 1989, and the PDF arrested, robbed, and detained several protestors and even killed 90 PDF members who were involved in the rebellion (Global Security n.d.).

After the United States government detained Noriega in January of 1990, the PDF no longer operated under the government and was disbanded (Meditz and Hanratty 1987). It later reformed in a non-governmental paramilitary organization, in either 1990, 1991, or 1992, and conducted three attacks on September 18th, 1992 (GTD 2018). Two of the attacks were targeted against the government and one was against airports and aircraft (GTD 2018). Two people were injured in the airport attack (Chicago Tribune 1992). The new formed PDF wanted to abolish the military and grant clemency to personnel who were part of Noriega's government and being punished for violent crimes (Chicago Tribune 1992).

## **Geography**

Under Noriega's rule, the PDF operated nationally across Panama in an effort to establish strong military power and suppress rebellions or civilian uprisings (Meditz and Hanratty 1987; Global Security n.d.; US Army Center of Military History n.d.). After its reformation in either 1990, 1991, or 1992, it conducted two attacks in Panama City and one in Tocumen (GTD 2018).

## **Organizational Structure**

Initially, in 1978, the group had 8,700 members (Meditz and Hanratty 1987). By 1987, the group expanded and included approximately 15,000 members who were members of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and police departments (Meditz and Hanratty 1987; Global Security n.d.).

Before Noriega was detained by the US military, the PDF had a hierarchical, rank structure of officers (Meditz and Hanratty 1987). The officers of PDF were very united and severely punished for any deviation (Meditz and Hanratty 1987). It operated using government funding as it was the country's military organization; it succeeded the National Guard in 1983 (Global Security n.d.).

## **External Ties**

PDF may have had some connections with other paramilitary organizations that suppressed rebellions in 1989 (Global Security n.d.). The newly formed PDF worked with the Movement of December 20 and the Patriotic Front for National Liberation in conducting the three bombings in 1992 (Chicago Tribune 1992).

## **Group Outcome**

There is no information about how and why the group ended. The last attacks were on September 18th, 1992 when they bombed the electoral tribune center and foreign ministry in Panama City (Chicago Tribune 1992; GTD 2018).

Notes for Iris:

- The PDF formed in the 1970s under Noriega to replace the previous military organization. It functionally replaced the National Guard. As Noriega gained more more power, the group also gained power and prominence
- Noriega used the PDF to squash military challenges
- interesting pause in activity between 1990 and 1992
- what happened to the group after 1990? Likely disbanded in face of his removal
- political aims and organization after 1992 attack are super ambiguous. Not really an organized group/one-hit wonder

X. ANSAR ALLAH

Torg ID: 54

Min. Group Date: 1994

Max. Group Date: 1994

Onset: NA

Aliases: Ansar Allah, Ansar Allah Battalions

\*alias for Hezbollah?

**Part 1. Bibliography**

- GTD Perpetrator 1721. Global Terrorism Database. Study for Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. Last modified July 2018.  
<https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?perpetrator=1387>
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[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vwr8J2DB-SNip8h\\_McsgO6\\_NxVGxKixY4Osj\\_qQ\\_xoig/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vwr8J2DB-SNip8h_McsgO6_NxVGxKixY4Osj_qQ_xoig/edit)
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<https://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Palestinian-jihadist-group-splits-from-Hezbollah>
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**Part 2. Basic Coding**

Aliases: Hezbollah

Group Formation: 1983 (Lebanon), 1994 (Panama)

Group End: 2019 (active)

### **Part 3. Narrative**

#### **Group Formation**

Ansar Allah, which translates to Followers of God, is a Palestinian jihadist organization that was led by the Fatah (anti-Israel) official, Jamal Suleiman. There is also evidence that Ansar Allah is led by Hezbollah's former secretary general, Sobhi Tufaili (MIPT 2008). Its first attack was in July 1994 in Colon, Panama against airports and aircrafts (GTD 2018). The bomb was on a plane which was flying from Colon to Panama City, and it killed 21 people, including 3 American citizens and 12 Jews (FAS 1995; GTD 2018). The operation was carried out by Lya Jamal (Paraszczuk 2012). After the bombing, Ansar Allah issued a statement to express their support for the bombing (FAS 1995). Like Hezbollah, it attacked Jews and Israelis and wanted the liberation of Palestine (Paraszczuk 2012).

Ansar Allah is essentially a subset of Hezbollah (Paraszczuk 2012). During the Lebanon War in 1982, the group was formed (Paraszczuk 2012). Ansar Allah is a name that Hezbollah uses to take credit for their attacks (Levitt 2017). Hezbollah had an international appearance as they had plans to conduct attacks in Panama around the time of the airplane bombing and were involved in weapons smuggling in Uruguay (Levitt 2017).

#### **Geography**

Hezbollah operated internationally (Levitt 2017). Ansar Allah which is the name Hezbollah used for the airplane bombing conducted an attack in Panama (GTD 2018). After the Panama airplane bombing, there was no evidence of violence perpetrated by Ansar Allah there (GTD 2018).

#### **Organizational Structure**

The group's leader is Jamal Suleiman who was a Fatah official (Paraszczuk 2012). The group is a subset of Hezbollah, and therefore, it has strong ties with it and receives funding from them (Paraszczuk 2012). The group used to receive monthly funding transfers from Hezbollah until December 2012 (Paraszczuk 2012). Although they claim to have no backing from the Iranian government which is known for strongly supporting Palestine and opposing Israel, they have held several demonstrations on Quds Day, an Iranian holiday that advocates for Palestine's liberation, suggesting possible funding from the Iranian government (Paraszczuk 2012).

## **External Ties**

The group has ties with Hezbollah, which can be referred to as its parent organization, and they have potential ties with the Iranian government (Paraszczuk 2012). However, the ties with Hezbollah are not as strong any longer, as they split from the organization for undisclosed reasons (Paraszczuk 2012).

## **Group Outcome**

There is no evidence of the group ending. Considering that it was active till 2012 and there is no evidence to suggest it ended, it may be operating as of now.

Notes for Iris:

- why is Hezbollah in Panama? They targeted a plane with a large proportion of Jewish members
- as part of an international organization, they have a transnational presence
- there's no politicized opposition against the government

Notes for Iris:

- country-level trends: most of the groups leftist, anti-Western, center-seeking, oppose US military presence in Panama and/or US associations
- most of these groups are also one hit wonders that then disappear relatively quickly after their emergence
- most of these groups are concentrated in the early 1990s and then disappear