

COLOMBIA: IN FOCUS

A WEEKLY UPDATE FROM THE EMBASSY OF COLOMBIA

August 13, 2010

Did You Know...

New Leadership Takes Office in Colombia



Last Saturday, August 7, Juan Manuel Santos was sworn-in as Colombia's 59th president. Following the inauguration ceremony, President Santos conducted a swearing-in ceremony for members of his new cabinet, including:

- Minister of Agriculture: Juan Camilo Restrepo
- Minister of Commerce, Industry and Tourism: Sergio Díaz Granados
- Minister of Culture: Mariana Garcés Córdoba
- Minister of Defense: Rodrigo Rivera Salazar
- Minister of Environment, Housing and Regional Development: Beatriz Uribe Botero
- Minister of Finance: Juan Carlos Echeverry
- Minister of Foreign Affairs: Maria Angela Holguin
- Minister of Interior and Justice: Germán Vargas Lleras
- Minister of Mines and Energy: Carlos Rodado Noriega
- Minister of Transport: Germán Cardona Gutiérrez

To learn about these cabinet members and others, visit <http://tinyurl.com/24hanke>.

Inside Colombia

President Santos Calls for National Unity, Diplomacy in Inauguration Speech

In his inauguration speech last Saturday, President Juan Manuel Santos invoked a "new dawn" for Colombia – one of unity, diplomacy, and prosperity:

"...I do solemnly reassert here today in this historical Bolivar Square, that I shall lead a Government comprised of National Unity that will strive to accomplish social prosperity for all Colombians...We are the Bicentennial generation: A generation with a sense of the past and a calling for the future."

"...I encourage you all to partake in the construction of a new dawn. In this new dawn we have the never before seen opportunity to transform Colombia and assume a positive leadership in the international arena. In this new awakening we are going to develop the potential of our people, our land, our regions, to conquer the global opportunities of the next 50 years."

"During this new dawning and in less than a decade, we will enable Colombia to be acknowledged internationally for its very high quality human capital, for its social equity, financial, corporate and technological world-class capacity."

"...It will not be an easy task, and let this be known, but we can achieve it if we work together, reaching national consensus and moving everyone in the same direction, the direction of peace and prosperity."

To read the full text of President Santos' speech, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/24ft9vx>

What's News

"Free Trade, Now" – Los Angeles Times Editorial Calls for Approval of U.S.-Colombia FTA

In an editorial published yesterday, August 12, the *Los Angeles Times* editorial board wrote: "...President Obama has indicated that he intends to finalize a long-overdue free trade agreement with Colombia...It is unfortunate that Congress did not ratify the agreement when Colombian President Alvaro Uribe was in office...But the election of his successor, President Juan Manuel Santos, offers a chance to demonstrate continued friendship and to begin an era of new economic opportunities." To read the full text, visit <http://tinyurl.com/24telrp>.

Get to know Colombia.