

10th International Command and Control Research and Technology Symposium

COVER SHEET

1. Title

Colombian Armed Forces restructuring process

2. Topic

Lessons Learned

3. Authors

Fernando La Rotta (flarotta@strata.com.co)

Alvaro Chaves (achaves@strata.com.co)

4. Organization

STRATA

5. Address

Calle 125 No. 27-89 Of. 201

Bogota, Colombia

Phone +571-637 5892

COLOMBIAN ARMED FORCES RESTRUCTURING PROCESS



Abstract

Since the end of the 1940's Colombia has been affected by an armed conflict that has evolved from peasant movements seeking social reform to illegal armed organizations financed mainly from narcotics trafficking¹. Aided by the vast resources accumulated and by a substantial sophistication in their tactical and operational procedures, in the mid 1990's one of these organizations -FARC²- was able to achieve a pre-mobile warfare stage that led them to inflict the Security Forces³ a series of humiliating defeats in the battle field.

As a consequence the Security Forces were submerged in a re-engineering process aimed at providing them with greater operating capacity, which entailed the introduction of quantitative and qualitative changes in the doctrine of command and

¹ In the 1980's, the actions of illegal leftist organizations combined with the State's inability to effectively repress these movements, motivated important changes in the dynamics of the conflict with the appearance of vigilant organizations (Illegal Self Defense Groups) and the introduction of narcotics trafficking as a source of financing on either.

² FARC stands for "Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia". This organization had its origins in the early 1960's in a cluster of "independent republics" in the central Magdalena River Valley. The so - called independent republics were located in southern Cundinamarca and eastern Tolima Departments. See **MOLANO Bravo, Alfredo**, *Trochas, y Fusiles*. Bogotá, Instituto de estudios Políticos y Relaciones Internacionales, 1994.

³ As of the 1991 constitutional reform, the term Security Forces ("Fuerza Publica") was introduced to categorize the Military and Police Forces together under the same concept.

control. Even though there's no clear evidence that it started with an EBO evaluation, results achieved by the Security Forces show conclusive effects on the enemy's actions and behavior, which were decisive in reverting the key threats in a relatively short period of time.

This paper will analyze the changes brought to command and control and identify the achievements and shortcomings in this process, with a view of outlining key policy directives applicable not only to Colombia but to other countries as well.

Background

During the Cold War, most of the armed movements in Latin America were characterized by a marked ideology, notorious tactical deficiencies and limited military capacity. These elements prevented them from carrying out operations with a degree of complexity that would represent a serious strategic challenge to the government forces. However, these characteristics ceased to be a constant in the Colombian armed conflict by the mid 1990's, when the illegal armed organizations, and particularly the FARC, revealed substantial refinement in their tactical and operational procedures, allowing them to carry out a number of actions of major importance and gravely hitting highly specialized units of the Colombian Army on repeated occasions, such as the action against Mobile Brigade N. °3⁴.

The increase in the military capacity of FARC was materialized in several specific innovations. Unquestionably, the most important development in the operational field was directly related to the optimization of the command and control system⁵ over its structures, with the objective of carrying out high-impact actions⁶. To a great extent, this optimization was due to innovations in questions of doctrine introduced by a group of new leaders formed in the former soviet block, who had started to occupy key positions at different levels in the organization; it was also the result of tactical and

⁴ As Camilo Echandia indicated in his article *"El conflicto armado colombiano en los años noventa: cambios en las estrategias y efectos economicos"* (*The Colombian armed conflict in the 90's: changes in strategies and economic effects*) published in the "Colombia International" (Colombia Internacional) magazine of Universidad de los Andes (Andes University), the actions carried out by the armed illegal groups against the Security Forces were numerous and conclusive. This is how on August 30, 1996, in the Department of Putumayo, the "Las Delicias" military base was attacked. During the attack, 28 Army members were killed and 60 more men were kidnapped. Subsequently, on September 7, 1996, the "La Carpa" military base, in the Department of Guaviare was attacked, causing the death of 30 soldiers. Later on, on December 21, 1996, the offensive headed against the Patascoy military base, in the Department of Nariño. By 1998, the attacks continued and on March 3 of that same year, Mobile Brigade No. 3 of the Army was attacked at El Billar creek, in the Department of Caqueta; during the combat, 63 military members died and 43 more were kidnapped. On August 3 of that same year, guerrilla members attacked the police base in Miraflores, Guaviare and Uribe. Meta and the Army base in Pavarando, Uraba; approximately 100 people died, including civilians and soldiers, and 133 members of the Security Forces were kidnapped. Finally, in November, prior to the creation of the "zona de distension" (exclusion zone) to the south east area of Colombia for the peace talks between the administration of President Pastrana and FARC, this guerrilla group attacked Mitu, capital of the Department of Vaupes.

⁵ **ORTIZ D. Roman.** "Guerrilla y narcotrafico en Colombia" (Guerrilla groups and narcotics trafficking in Colombia) published in Notebooks of the Police Force, Public Security Magazine number XXII, year 2000.

⁶ In 1982 FARC was just a small organization of 15 fronts with maybe 2000 guerilla fighters. By 1990 it had expanded its forces to 43 fronts with about 5000 fighters. Now it has between 15000 – 20000 combatants in 60 fronts and mobile companies (this transformations range from 60 to 400 individuals) This has allowed them to move to mobile or maneuver warfare, the use of large units capable of directly confronting military units of equal size, of overrunning military installations and smaller units. See **Marks, Thomas,** "Colombian Army Adaptation to Farc Insurgency". Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army College. page 7. January 2002

operational coordination improvements thanks to modern communications equipment, the use of special forces to accomplish specific missions against high profile targets, and the inclusion in their arsenals of a new range of modern and highly lethal armament⁷.

In addition to the qualitative improvement achieved by FARC in their operational performance, their most important achievement was the assembly of independent military capacity and logistics, without relevant external support. Such independence was based on total self-funding resulting primarily from their association with the narcotics trafficking, and supplemented by external financing sources originating from other illegal activities such as kidnappings, extortion, robberies, cattle thievery, imposition of the “revolutionary tax” collected indiscriminately from landowners, entrepreneurs and common citizens in both urban and rural areas, as well as through the deviation to their funds of important State resources⁸.

The wide range of political and military maneuverability attained by the guerrilla groups, and the ensuing severe impact on a public opinion that questioned the efficiency of the State armed forces in securing peace and in the effective neutralization of illegal organizations generated a serious crisis profoundly affecting all areas of society and presented, at the same time, a critical opportunity to jump start a restructuring process of the Military Forces and the National Police, based on a redefinition of the operational doctrine aimed at introducing substantial improvements in the command and control system⁹.

The restructuring process

The restructuring process was specifically based on the notion that the Security Forces needed to acquire greater capacity and improved operational effectiveness in order to confront a strong and aggressive enemy¹⁰. This resulted in the re-sizing of the Military and Police institutions and in the enhancement of their human and material resources, along with a reassessment of the strategies that had been predominated until then, to adapt the forces to the needs of the conflict and to make them more competitive and successful. To that end, a dynamic and continuous program was implemented during the 1998-2002 Pastrana presidential term, at which time an effective restructuring

⁷ FARC included in their arsenals light weapons such as mortars, rocket launchers and machine guns, acquired in exchange for drugs or through direct purchase in the important and growing black market of Central America.

⁸ For the Colombian case, it is important to bear in mind that the main reason for the prolongation of the armed conflict is the autonomy acquired by guerrillas, especially in the financial field, making it less important to seek greater social and political support, which is the inherent need of any guerrilla group.

⁹ **General MORA RANGEL, Jorge Enrique.** “La visión militar del apoyo de la sociedad civil a las Fuerzas Militares” (The military vision on civil society’s support to the Armed Forces) essay presented at the seminar Instituciones Civiles y Militares en la Política de Seguridad Democrática (Civil and Military institutions in the Democratic Security Policy), Cartagena, Colombia, October 3-5, 2003.

¹⁰ The Colombian security forces were quite unprepared for this sequence of events after more than 3 decades of small scale, counterinsurgency operations. The police, a national organization (Policia Nacional), thought roughly 100000 men, were spread throughout the country in small posts from which they engaged in the routine associated with law enforcement as opposed to warfare. The armed forces, too, in their disposition, reassembled the dispersal of the U.S. Army during the Indian Wars rather than an organization geared up for mobile warfare. The Army (Ejercito) had a plethora of battalion cantonments rarely conducted operations of even that size. The Air Force (Fuerza Aerea) and the Navy (Armada) were both small. **See MARKS, Thomas.** “Colombian Army adaptation to FARC Insurgency”, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army College. page 10. January 1992

process took place, “born from an intense activity of critical introspection and the objective review of the existing situation within the military institutions and in the development of the missions that are characteristic of the armed forces”¹¹.

This process allowed the identification of a series of flaws and deficiencies that had limited the actions of the Security Forces to defensive postures, simply reacting to the activities carried out by the enemy. One of the main flaws detected was the existence of an orthodox doctrine unable to adapt to the new operational requirements, on neither logistics nor military units organization and design. This circumstance facilitated guerrilla actions against smaller military and police operating away from the key urban areas, hardly receiving any support or assistance given the immense limitations of the Security Forces at that time¹². On the other hand, profound failures were evidenced in the strategic planning processes, often getting confused with the tactical levels and producing intelligence services that were merely operational and lacking the technical tools that could have permitted anticipating guerilla actions, leading to an absolute lack of any categorical operational successes¹³.

Other failures identified referred to a clearly obsolete strategy, to outdated development processes insofar as regulations and personnel management systems are concerned, to the almost total absence of norms to meet the defense and security requirements, and to a culture of individual development by each separate force making a joint vision within the Security Forces impossible. Limited technological and leadership capacities at the different levels and outdated instruction and training processes were also evidenced.

Upon identification and evaluation of such weaknesses, the Ministry of National Defense defined a series of strategic objectives around six fundamental issues. These were specifically aimed at improving operational performance with actions defined for each one of the issues.

The first objective was to improve the quality of human talent through institutional development and organizational culture. In this regard, a process was initiated to attain a higher degree of professionalism of those in active duty, seeking to maximize the combat capacity of the troops by reducing the number of soldiers who did not have the

¹¹ **COMANDO GENERAL DE LAS FUERZAS MILITARES (GENERAL COMMAND OF MILITARY FORCES)**. Report on restructuring of Colombian Military Forces in the year 2001, presented by General Fernando Tapias Stahelin.

¹² The low ratio of counter-insurgency troops is exacerbated by the small numbers of force multipliers (light weapons and especially support aircraft) available to these soldiers. The Colombian military only owns around 20 operational helicopters. For the sake of comparison, in El Salvador the military had 60 helicopters during the height of its campaign against the insurgents there for an armed force that was 60,000-strong in a country with a land mass 1/50th the size of Colombia. For the Colombian soldier this means that air insertion, resupply and evacuation is not normally available. The situation is not much better in terms of combat support aircraft. For example, there are only three AC-47 gunships, while in El Salvador there were six. Artillery support is virtually non-existent, and most places are inaccessible to the few armored vehicles available. **JANE'S INTELLIGENCE REVIEW** - APRIL 01, 2003

¹³ As indicated by Colonel **Pedro Ramirez**, former Intelligence Director of the Colombian National Police, up until the 90's, intelligence was full of paradigms, lacked structure and capacity because up until then no professionalization processes had been developed in this field by the Military Forces or the National Police. On the other hand, no substantial unification aspects were seen in the different intelligence services and the principle of sharing among agencies was very rigid.

necessary training to be “militarily productive”¹⁴. This effort was accompanied by a substantial improvement in the living standards of the troops, the modernization and transformation of the legal framework regulating professional soldier related matters, and the strengthening of human management systems¹⁵.

Increased and improved manpower Change in the composition of soldiers´manpower

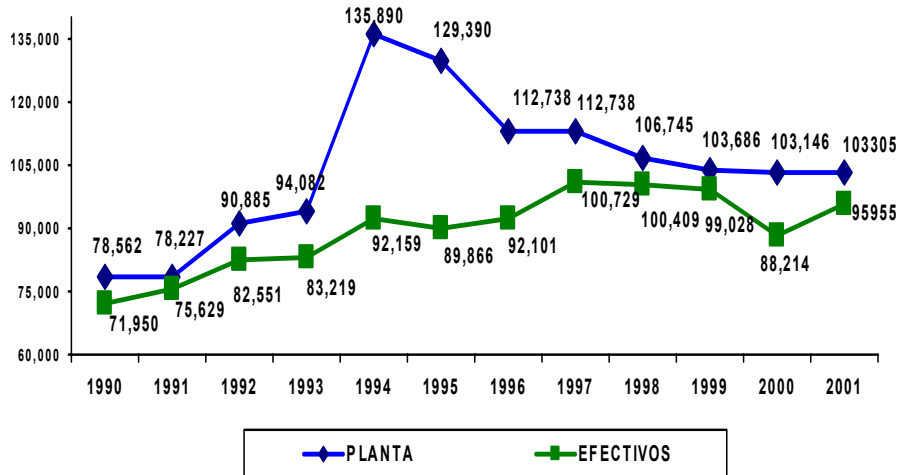


Source: Departamento Nacional de Planeacion, Subdireccion de Seguridad y Defensa

¹⁴ In this regard, it must be indicated that of the 145.000 men that the Colombian Army had then, only about 30.000 were professionals. Of these, some 20.000 were being used in operations against subversion (This means that the troops were composed mainly by conscripts that did not participate in frontal combat in counter-guerrilla operations). They were deployed in 3 Mobile Brigades (Brigadas Moviles) and 47 Counterguerrilla battalions (Batallones Contraguerrillas).

¹⁵ A new military leadership emerged following Pastrana's inauguration, by putting together a command team which began to turn things around. General Fernando Tapias Stahelin and general Jorge Enrique Mora Rangel, were former commanders of the elite mobile brigades, and under them, the Army was reorganized for combat. For details see **MARKS, Thomas** in "Colombian Army adaptation to FARC Insurgency".

Improved and Increased Manpower National Police (1990-2001)



Source: Colombian National Police

This objective was particularly well achieved within the National Police, an entity that besides increasing its operational force underwent a cultural transformation process, the essence of which was aimed at generating changes in the mindset and, consequently, the behavior of the individuals, vis-à-vis the relationship and true contact with the community. In this regard, this institution started the so called “human talent management scheme”, a practice that eventually proved effective in measuring and taking full advantage of the abilities and skills of the individuals, on the basis of a well defined police vocation and strict behavioral ethics.

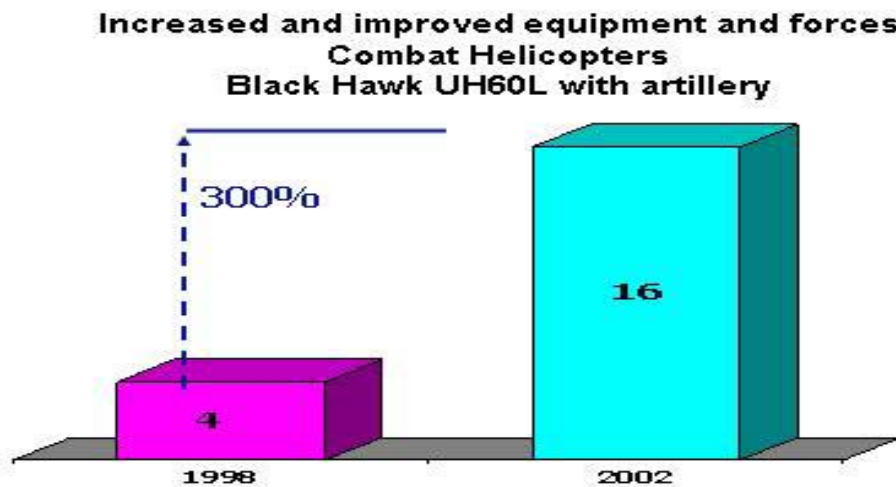
To this effect, a diagnosis was made to analyze the structural characteristics of the organization, the administration and communication systems, the leadership styles and the motivation and evaluation/appraisal schemes, along with the interdependent procedures related to the productivity of the human resource of the institution. Simultaneously, a review of the personnel contracting processes was conducted to define better selection practices. Attractive incentives were created to attract personnel, and a new “executive level” was introduced, thus demilitarizing the Police structure.

The second strategic objective consisted in the introduction of substantial improvements to the intelligence and investigation agencies, and for this purpose services at each force were made independent to give them their own identity. This generated a process to modernize the structure and to acquire technical intelligence equipment for a large number of units, coupled with the training of the personnel to maximize its use and optimize results¹⁶. Concurrently, a process was put in place to

¹⁶Among actions implemented in terms of intelligence are the activation of the Joint Central Intelligence, creation of Intelligence offices of the National Police and of the military, purchasing of state of the art equipment and technology for new intelligence processes, development of the Project High Mobility System, upgrading of 11 Naval technical intelligence

modernize the communications system and to integrate it with other State agencies. These actions had direct effects in the command and control system¹⁷.

It is generally agreed that the most important and ambitious objective set by the Ministry of Defense was that of strengthening the operational capacity through a redefinition of the strategic concept. This objective entailed the design of a new operational concept and the adaptation of jurisdictions for a more effective response to the actions of all violence generating agents¹⁸. It also led to redesigning and updating troop training and retraining practices, enhancing mobility and airborne support, and flexibility and reaction capabilities, all to develop the attitude and mindset for broad coordinated offensive operations that would produce positive and convincing results, as a direct strategy to undermine the fighting capacity of irregular groups. Finally, this objective resulted in the updating of the operational doctrine, rewriting the rules of operation, organization and response that the public order situation demanded.¹⁹



Source: Departamento Nacional de Planeacion, Subdireccion de Seguridad y Defensa

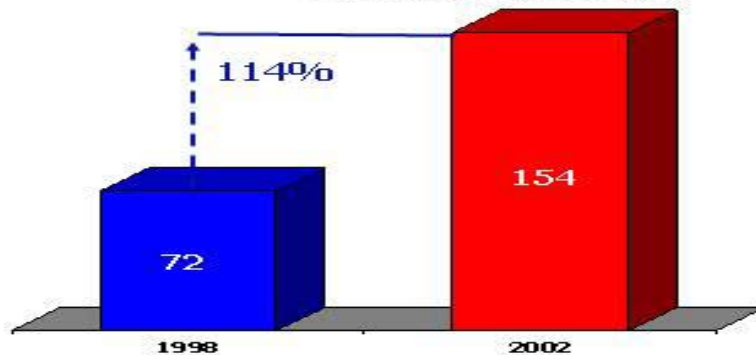
stations, providing equipment to air platforms- signals intelligence, upgrading the coverage of the Extended Reach Network, implementation of geographic information systems, installation of an intelligence platform in the multipurpose vessel ARC Buenaventura, upgrading of the coverage of signals intelligence by 80%, purchasing of reconnaissance aircrafts, installation of radars and purchasing of the Schweizer aircraft.

¹⁷ To develop this objective following actions were implemented: 60% of the equipment was modernized, the 5th stage of RIC was developed (RIC – Integrated Communications Network), UHF and VHF equipment were purchased, effective protection and physical security systems were implemented in tactics' areas, the communications' detection capacity was upgraded by 35%, the aeronautics coverage was upgraded by 65%, and air and land intelligence was integrated.

¹⁸ Changes adopted implied the reallocation of the 18 Maneuver Brigades within the 5 existing territorial Divisions, aiming at generating a more coherent order of battle. Besides, 4 new Directorates were created to optimize the administrative management of the military apparatus. At the beginning of the Uribe administration a 6th Division was created to reinforce the military action in the southern end of the country, where the guerrilla strategic front is concentrated.

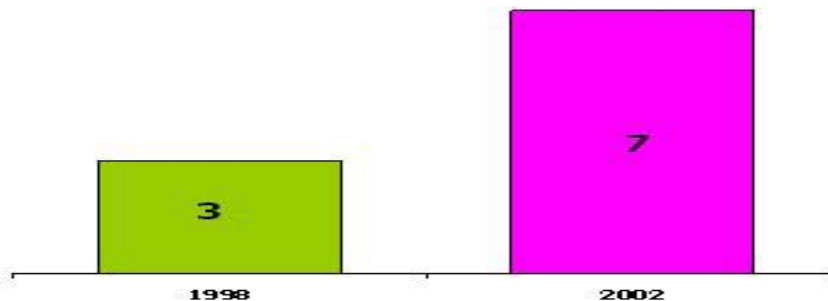
¹⁹ To develop this objective, the following actions were implemented: creation of the Fast Deployment Force and the Aviation Brigade, jurisdiction was given anew to Mayor Operating Units, reaction and fire capacity was increased, installation of electronic early warning systems, creation of the scheme High Mountain Battalions and Anti Narcotics Brigades, development of a new operational strategy, creation of new stations, purchasing of multipurpose support vessels for the National Navy, modernization of 16 aircraft for the Colombian Air Force, and purchasing of new fight aircraft.

**Increased and improved equipment and forces
Transport Helicopters**



Source: Departamento Nacional de Planeacion, Subdireccion de Seguridad y Defensa

**Increased and improved equipment and forces
Mobile Brigades**



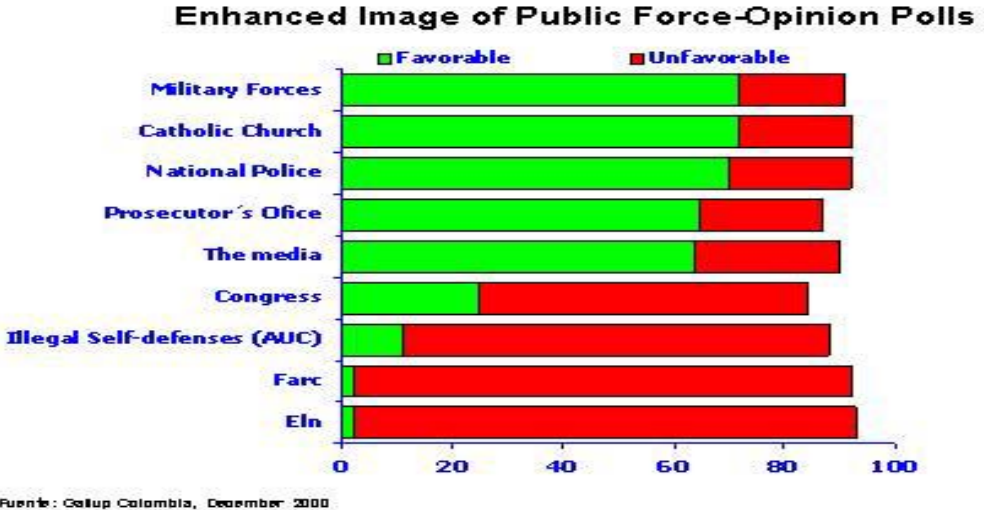
Source: Departamento Nacional de Planeacion, Subdireccion de Seguridad y Defensa

The National Police focused its efforts on improving results in the fight against common and organized crime by strengthening the Operational Headquarters and by raising the performance standards for regional units (Department /Provincial Commands). This came along with significant efforts to renew the motor vehicle fleet and communications equipment, to purchase high power armament and supporting gear, and the creation of new Emergency Response Centers (CAD- Centros Automaticos de Despacho).

Acknowledging the need for improved logistic processes within the framework of the newly strengthened and modernized Security Forces, the fourth objective set forth focused on increasing efficiency by improving the logistic and administrative function. In this sense, a process was launched to adapt the logistic and combat support services to the new needs, increasing efficiency in budget execution and decentralizing supply and support services.

Along this line, the awareness of the need for a highly agile logistics structure created a process of evolution in the functional scheme, moving to process driven structure, more dynamic in decision making, and expediting and reducing administrative procedures to a minimum. To introduce control measures, performance appraisals were improved by implementing management indicators and by strengthening the mechanisms of self control, internal control, quality and transparency, all of which had evident effects in corruption control.

Given the importance of regaining the social confidence in the Security Forces, the fifth objective focused on generating mechanisms capable of increasing credibility in security institutions among the civil population. A strong media campaign was developed, together with distinct efforts to promote a crusade for the respect of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, the reinforcement of legal and disciplinary control mechanisms and the integration of NGOs. In turn, the National Police made efforts to improve its positioning and acceptance by the society as a whole, getting closer to the community by creating a special community police.



Lastly, the sixth objective was to prepare the Security Forces to adequately face future scenarios in times of war and peace. For this, the mission and vision of the Security Forces were redefined, emphasizing the importance of achieving strategic alliances with other nations, developing technology, reducing costs and implementing the new operational doctrine and strategy. At the same time, the possibility of having access to modern mobility equipment was left open.

Political Component

Through a good part of the administration of President Andres Pastrana (1998-2002) a peace process without cease fire was undertaken with FARC, aiming at finding a negotiated solution to the conflict. FARC conditioned the negotiations to the government's clearing and withdrawal of military presence from an exclusion zone the

size of Switzerland, located in an area historically considered their safe haven²⁰. This complete control of a portion of the territory allowed FARC to increase their operational and logistic capacity to levels like never before, leading to a direct confrontation with the State through terrorism, drug trade, arms and explosives trafficking, kidnapping, and homicides, which all together financed the guerrilla's illegal activities attuned.

The new administration of President Alvaro Uribe Velez reacted to the overwhelming public disapproval of FARC's abusive treatment of a government perceived to be acting in good faith, and to the increase in the guerrilla's military and criminal capabilities, by implementing the Defense and Democratic Security Policy (DD&SP)²¹ in 2003. This policy emphasized the need for assertive military action in response to all threats and was formulated on the premise of transforming all previously adopted initiatives into a continuous and permanent State policy.

From a theoretical standpoint, the democratic security concept is not essentially based on the State exerting on society its powers of coercion, intimidation and penalization, but rather on promoting a culture of coexistence among citizens in terms of solidarity, and respect for differences, and an environment of growing equality where the postulates and principles of a distributive justice prevail. Notwithstanding, in the case of Colombia the policy was conceived from the start on the basis of the military repression of threats. The goal of this strategy was to support the military action with a true long term policy involving the government and the other branches of the State, as well as the civil society as a whole.

In general terms, the policy is based on the strengthening of the State institutions across the board, highly focused on directing resources to the modernization of its Security Forces and on the adoption of a judicial accusatory system supported by the enactment of special legislation to combat terrorism in a more effective manner. On the other hand, it includes defined actions to consolidate territorial control and to protect civilians by increasing the State's presence in all regions and appealing to concepts of solidarity among the general population through the establishment of cooperation networks working with volunteers and paid informants.

It is precisely in the implementation of this policy that we find the central theme of the command and control issue: the President has assumed his Constitutional duty of being the Commander in Chief of the Security Forces to the edge and has assumed a true and acting leadership over them. He has taken it upon himself to give orders and to invite direct communication with officers at all levels, and has on his own judgment removed officers from duty when in his opinion this officers have failed to perform their obligations. This controversial "walk-the-talk" attitude that has often generated resentment and rejection of the concept of civil interference in military matters, often

²⁰ Lack of government leadership during Pastrana years had left security matters to the military. The State, in other words did not engage in counterinsurgency.

²¹ National Security Strategy emphasized (1) rule of law and protection for the population; (2) Colombian government control of Colombian territory; (3) a fight against both drug-trafficking and terrorism, and (4) and an agenda of transparency and transformation in the way government does business. In taking the war directly to the armed groups, Uribe took advantage of Pastrana's SF restructuring efforts and was able to draw upon a strengthened and modernized Colombian armed forces, with new mobility and new doctrine better adjusted to the demands of the conflict.

causing substantial friction, has nonetheless proven to be effective from the perspective of command and control and has been a key factor in setting an unprecedented standard of performance appraisal of the security forces against objective results. This strong attitude has leveraged the increased empowerment of the Military and Police Forces –excessive for some political analysts-, as the decision-making process continues to be under the direct control of the President.

Last but not least, Uribe has taken advantage of the new doctrine of “war against terrorism” emerging after 9-11, thus obtaining a waiver from the U.S. government to depart from the original “war against drugs” to use the military equipment provided through Plan Colombia for counterinsurgency operations. Furthermore, from the financing perspective the “democratic” concept associated with the policy has gone all the way up to the collection of a one-time patrimonial “war tax”, as a way to signify that the cost of security has to be shared by everybody. In turn, this is intended to send the international community the message that the country as a whole is making an important effort, but nevertheless requires external aid to continue facing the conflict.

Results (Annex)

The adoption of the corrective measures that have been cited generated new command and control dynamics that in turn allowed for fine tuning and better implementation of the doctrine, thus creating an environment where top military commanders became more receptive to changing their traditional operational habits (mindset).

With a restructuring process in place, and as part of the general objective included in the operations guide of the Military Forces General Command, one of the main items addressed was putting an end to the practice of operating in isolation, switching to a strategy of integral action. In this concept the actions undertaken by individual tactical units are not perceived as isolated procedures but as parts of a larger operational effort. This translates into the development of a joint and integrated action at the strategic level, permitting a consolidation of operational successes.

On the other hand, in light of the positive results that the area control strategic scheme has had in different countries around the world, one of the policies dictated by the government has been to increase the presence of the Security Forces throughout the country, as it is clear that this strengthens the control on the territory and its governance, while reducing the areas where the terrorist guerrilla groups can operate.

This explains the need for more mobile and flexible units, readily available to be deployed for the protection of roads and access corridors, and actively looking to engage in combat wherever illegal armed groups are present. To this end, such units must have a strategic and operational offensive attitude, based on the objectives set forth in the campaign plans, with the main purpose of overcoming such organizations from a military standpoint, weakening their financial structures, reducing their willingness to fight and forcing their demobilization, in order to defend and protect the institutions, the civil population and the nation’s resources, and to recover normal internal security levels.

To summarize, in the military field it is evident that, as a result of the restructuring process and the Democratic Defense and Security Policy, the Military Forces have managed to halt the strategic accomplishments of FARC and to affect their structures to a certain extent. This is confirmed by the weakening of FARC's initiative and the critical strategic blows that they have suffered. These realities are reflected in the reduction of their rear guards, the erosion of their support bases, the death of important ring leaders, the loss of vital logistic and combat resources, and especially in the reduction of their capabilities for high-impact attacks against strategic objectives. All this has been the result of the offensive of the troops in FARC's base areas.

In the field of actions that were made possible by the new legal and constitutional environment, special zones were established to expedite the recovery of areas deeply affected by the subversive presence, with the consequential reversal in the development of such organizations. Nevertheless, the application of a statute of limitations and an adverse interpretation of the Constitutional Court impeded a more complete development of a consolidation phase within the concept of integrality. Despite this, the terrorist organizations saw their influence diminish and also lost important sources of financing in these areas.

Conclusions

Achievements

- It was possible to reverse the trend of a conflict that, at a certain point in time, had put the institutions and the democratic stability at risk.
- With the DD&SP the military effort is no longer perceived as isolated but as a coordinated effort involving the State and society at all levels.
- The President's clear and evident leadership is a fundamental element of C2; in addition to fully complying with the mandate of the Constitution, his actions have real implications on the command and control system.
- The command and control chain has improved with the aid of a balanced combination of technical intelligence equipment and communications and data transfer means and equipment.
- The collaboration and coordination between the Military Forces and the National Police, and the restructuring and strengthening processes undergone have been key factors in the positive results achieved to this date.
- Emphasis has been made on highly mobile forces, thus changing the paradigm of static, vulnerable units, prone to attacks.
- In strict operational terms, a better coordination of intelligence activities has led to the prevention of important actions by irregular groups.
- Legislative initiatives that have been promoted along with the military actions have permitted a more effective defense against the terrorist threat.
- Through the coordinated action between the State and the civil society it has been possible to directly affect the logistic chains and the financial structure of irregular groups.
- There is evidence of an improved operational performance and a more efficient use of available resources.

- Parallel processes of efficiency and transparency in terms of defense and security spending, as well as an increase in foreign aid to initiatives such as Plan Colombia, have been key factors in making the war effort sustainable and in improving the aspects of mobility and tactical support.
- The involvement of the civil society and of the different branches of the State highlights this initiative as one of national policy, with distinct levels of support and popularity.
- The Policy has proven to be quite successful if measured against the behavior of the key violence indicators, and there is a generalized feeling that the government and its Security Forces have regained the strategic initiative in the conflict.

Democratic Security Policy Results

	2002	2003	2004 (Jan – Aug)	Growth rate (2002 - 2003)	Growth rate (Jan Aug 03-04)
Number of homicides	28837	23013	14088	-20,2%	-10,76%
Rat of homicides per 100 inhabitants	65,8	51,6	35,41	-21,5%	-12,2%
Kidnappings	2966	2200	1013	-26%	-38,5%
Attacks on small towns	32	5	1	-84%	-80%
Municipalities without military & police presence	157	18	0	-88%	-100%
Internal Displaced families	7482	4055	3001 (jan –jul)	-45,8%	-26% (jan-jul)
Number of terrorist acts*	1695	1226	555	-28%	-33,53%

Source: Ministerio de Defensa Nacional; DJS – DNP; SUR-RSS

*Terrorist includes attacks on population and infrastructure among others

- As a result of a comprehensive set of government policies that are yielding results, Colombians recovered their optimism and hope in the future.

Shortcomings

- Absence of statistical data and a proper methodology to measure success in both political and tactical levels do not facilitate a coherent analysis of relevant information resulting from the dynamics of the internal conflict.
- Many aspects of the DS&D Policy are strongly questioned from the Human Rights perspective, frequently creating a complex international environment around it. Criticism centers on the humanitarian crisis in many areas of the country, the alleged limitation to some civil liberties, the government's attitude towards NGO's, the increase of paramilitary activity and the continued evidence of connections with members of the Security Forces.
- The military strategy and the economic resources have been directed mainly to the increase in manpower, leaving the technological/equipment component behind. Forces have shown no signs of willingness to enter into new introspection

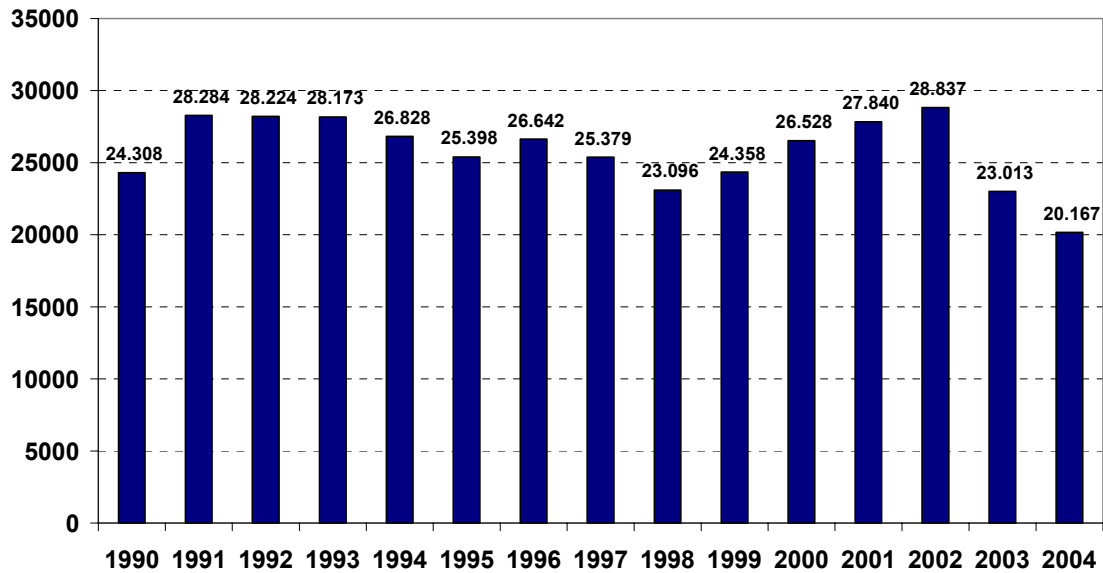
processes to define size force efficiency indicators, roles and missions, scale economics, etc.

- Sustainability of the military effort is at high risk due to the nation's fiscal constraints. Besides, true military strengthening is affected by a poor S&D resource planning that stimulates short-term solutions.
- Despite progresses made, internal struggles between the intelligence units of the forces (army, navy, air force and police) prevail, with each looking for spot successes thus jeopardizing the joint strategic handling of the issue.
- Excess emphasis on Security has left the Defense front of the policy quite unattended. Current nation's deterrent capacity shows serious deficiencies in major maintenance processes.
- The social component of the DS&D Policy has also been relegated. In a conflict like Colombia's this could very well be the difference between winning a battle and losing the war.
- Under current circumstances, the terrorist label that Uribe has put on FARC and his posture towards confrontation has almost closed any possibility of a negotiated solution to the conflict.

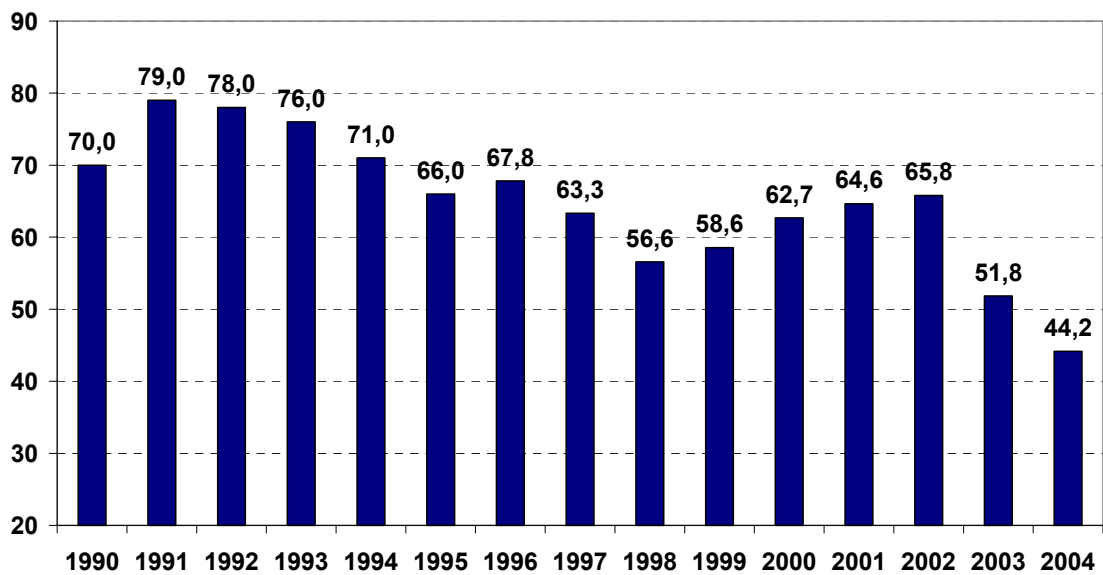
Annex

Source of following statistics: Colombian National Planning Department (DNP)

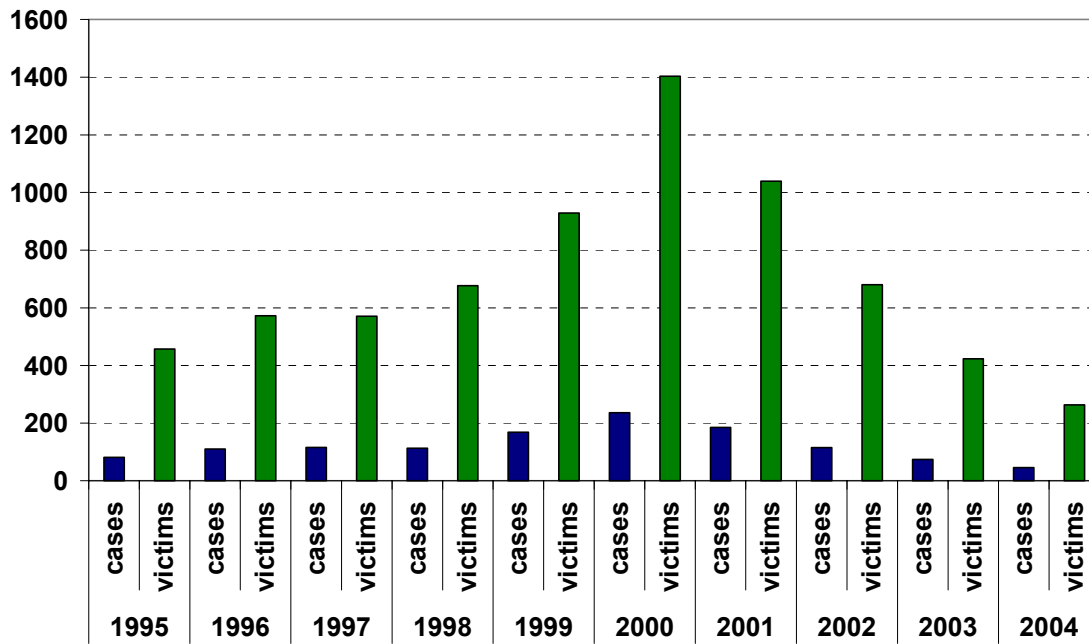
Homicides



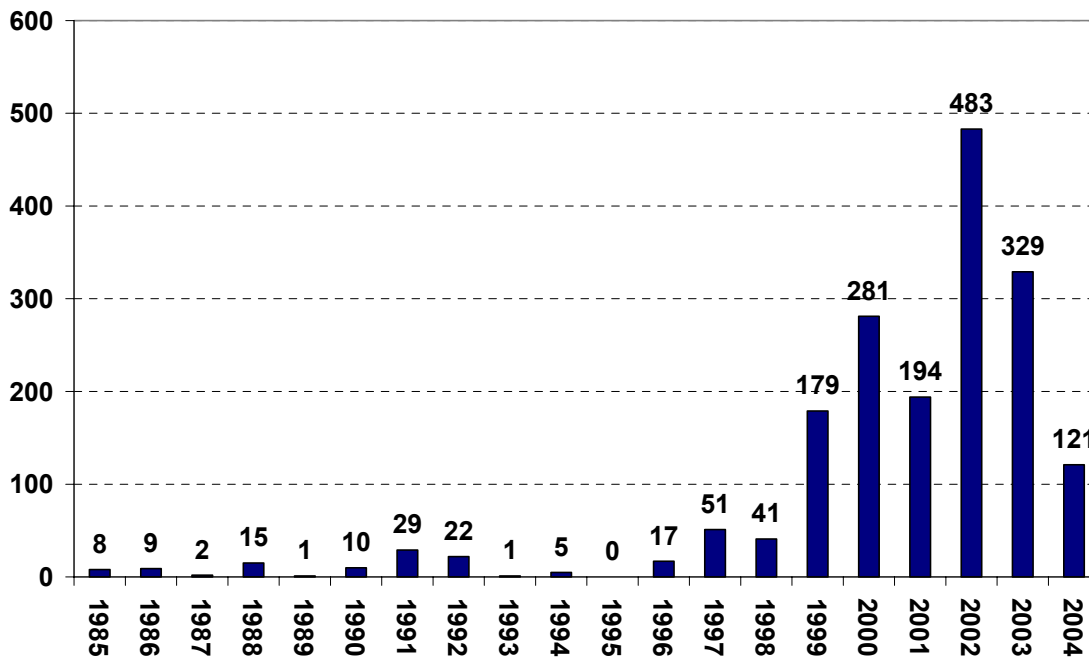
Homicide rate per 100.000 persons



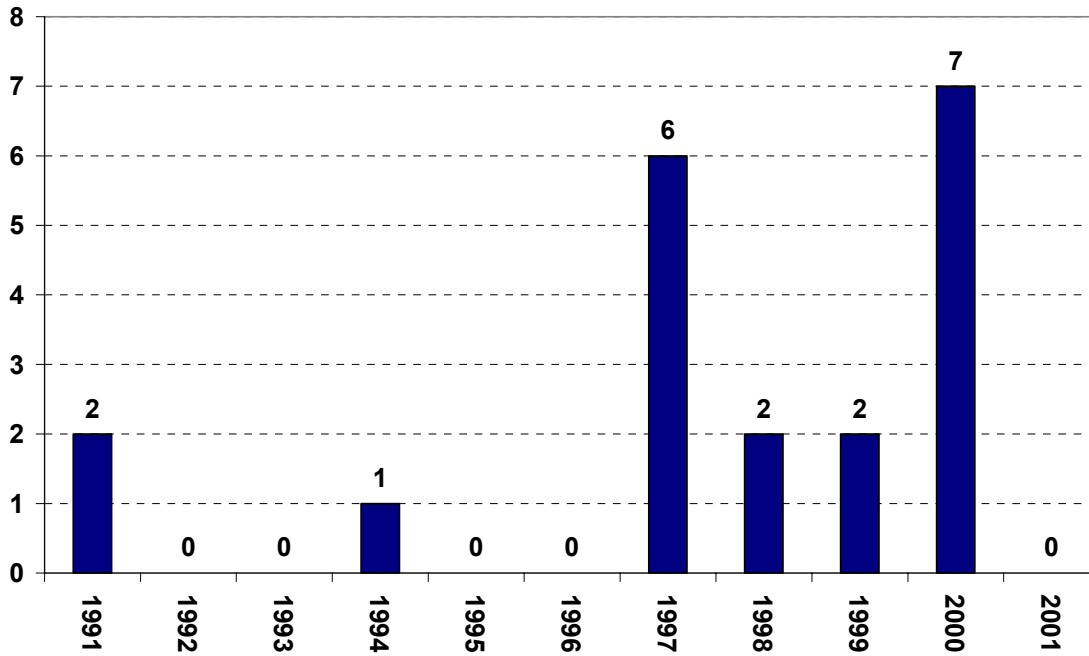
Massacres (4 or more victims)



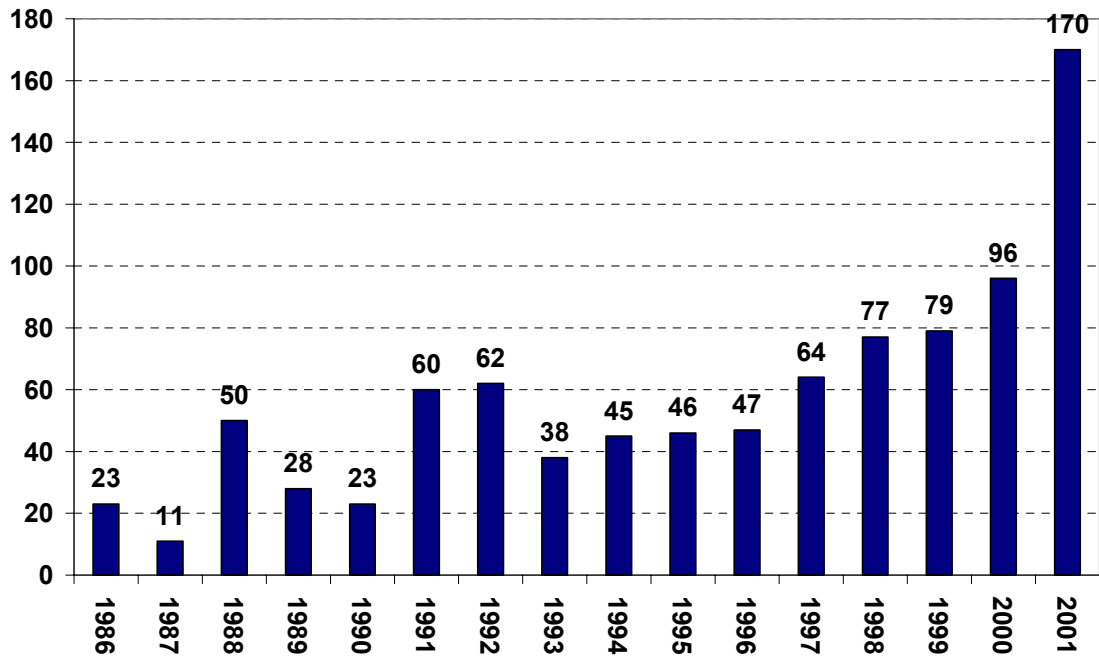
Attacks to electrical infrastructure



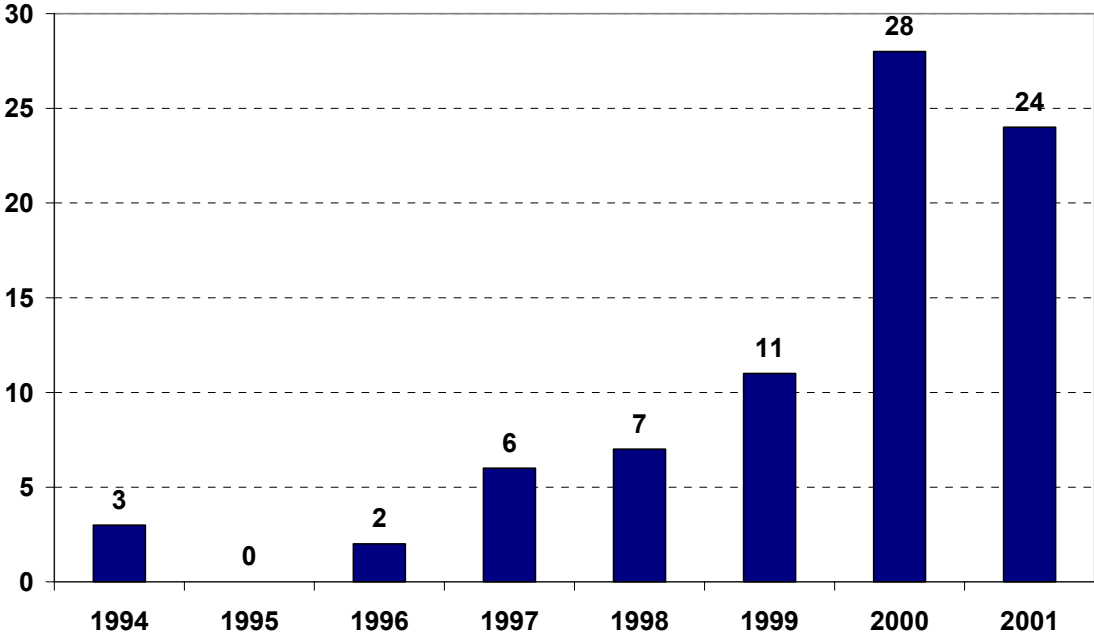
Attacks to airport infrastructure



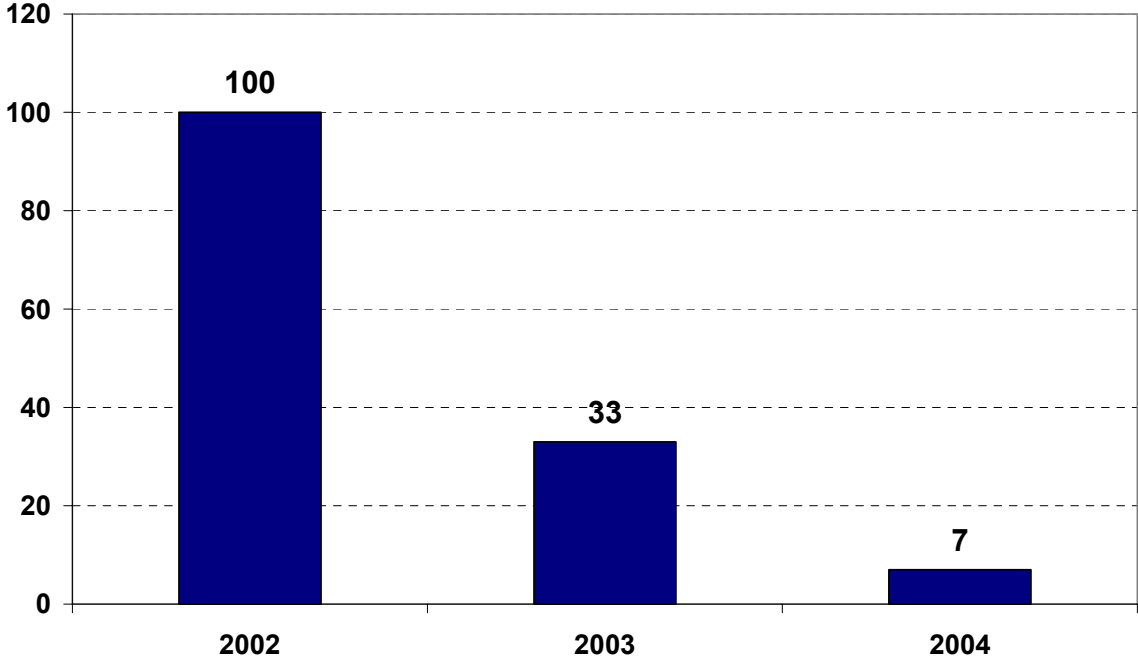
Attacks to oil pipelines



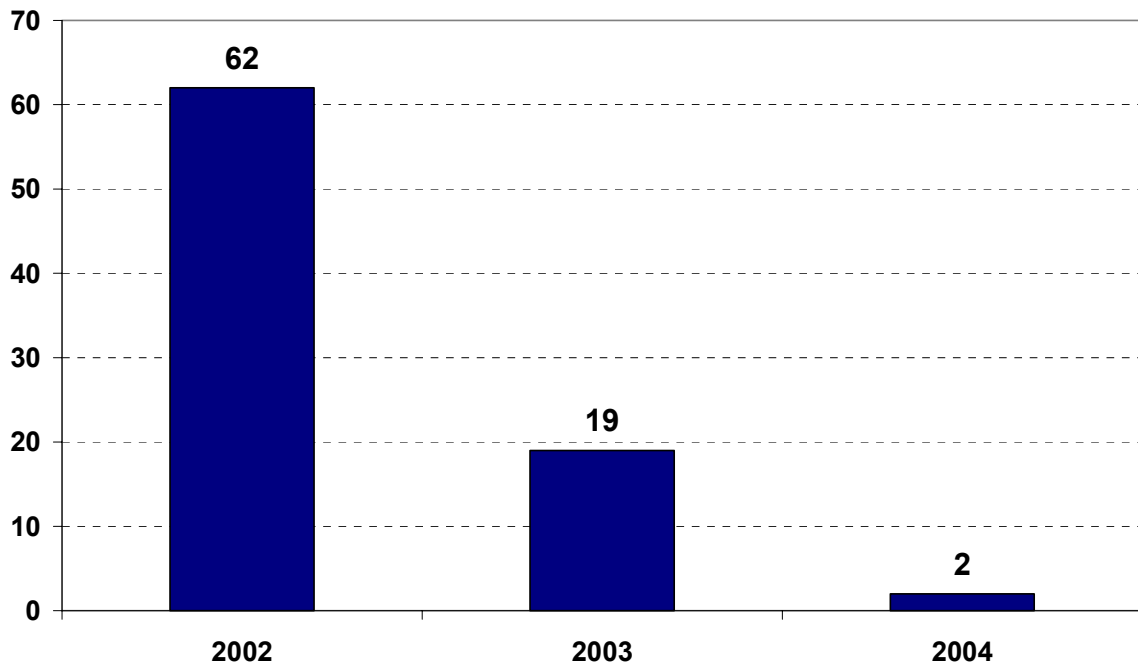
Attacks to roads



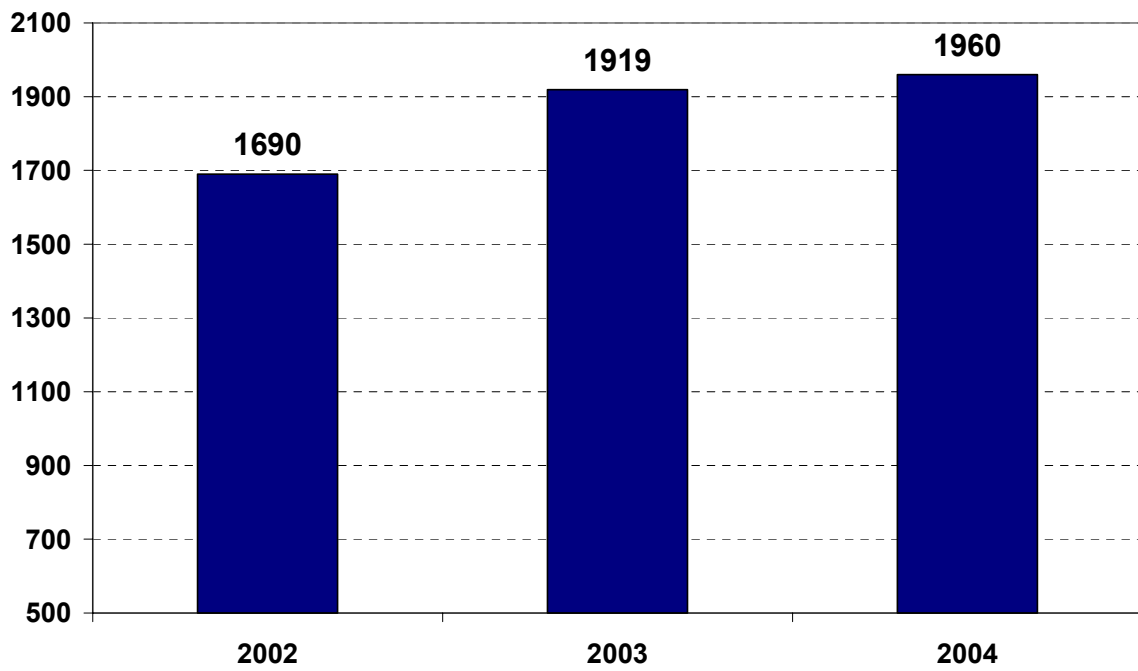
Attacks to bridges



Attacks to communication infrastructure



Guerrilla casualties



Guerrilla detentions

