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Santos Confirms General's Kidnapping by FARC, Calls for Special Meeting

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17/11/2014



Santos wrote on his Twitter account Sunday that he has instructed Defense Minister Juan Carlos Pinzon to go to Choco and personally oversee the investigation into the kidnapping of Alzate.

Alzate, commander of the Joint Titan Task Force that is fighting the FARC and criminal gangs in Choco, disappeared Sunday when in civilian clothes traveling to a farmhouse in Las Mercedes, 15 kilometers (9 miles) from the provincial capital of Quibdo.

The area where the general and two companions went missing has a strong guerrilla presence.

The president also wrote that all indications are that the FARC, guerillas with whom the government has been negotiating a peace agreement for two years in Havana, were responsible.

Santos demanded the safe release of the captives in his Twitter message.

According to initial information, the general was kidnapped along with Capt. Jorge Rodriguez and lawyer Gloria Urrego, coordinator of special army projects in Choco, while traveling in a motor boat on the Atrato River to Las Mercedes.

Upon reaching the location, apparently 34 FARC guerrillas retained them, according to the soldier who piloted the boat and managed to escape.

Santos also asked the Defense Minister and the General Commander of the Armed Forces, Juan Pablo Rodriguez Barragan, to explain why Alzate broke all security protocols and was in civilian attire in a dangerous area.

For reasons that the military command is investigating, typical security protocols were not followed.

The kidnapping comes three days before the second anniversary of the start of the peace negotiations between the government and FARC in Cuba.

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