

FARC: Ongoing Military Operations May Impede General's Release

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The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) released a communique Thursday denouncing Colombia's military for not suspending operations in the region where insurgents are planning to free detained General Ruben Dario Alzate.

According to the guerrillas, the continued military activity may further complicate the planned handover.

"Despite commitments and public statements by the government denying military operations in Choco (...) the operations continue," said the FARC's peace delegation in a statement issued from Havana Thursday night.

President Juan Manuel Santos suspended the Havana peace talks after the general's abduction by the guerrilla, along with corporal Jorge Rodríguez and lawyer Gloria Urrego on November 16. President Santos conditioned the abductees release as essential to the continuity of the Government-FARC peace talks.

FARC declared on Wednesday that the coordinates for the three prisoners release had been delivered to the Colombian government, and urged the army to stop any operation on the area in order to ease the handover operation on Sunday if weather permit.

On Tuesday, the FARC freed two soldiers in their custody who were detained during fighting in Arauca. However the insurgents also stated that the unexpected presence of a military patrol in

the area nearly forced them to cancel the release of the detainees.

Colombia's government and the FARC agreed to release five captives including General Alzate in order to restart the stalled peace process.

"There has been some releases, and we are sure the rest will happen in a matter of days, however it is fundamental to restart the dialogue in Havana," concluded the FARC's statement.

The General and two other detained with him are set to be released by the guerrilla into the custody of the International Committee of the Red Cross as well as representatives from the guarantor nations to the Colombian peace process, Norway and Cuba.

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