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2015-08-18 | **Regional** [\(/en_GB/keywords/topic/regional\)](#) | **Ángel de los Andes Provides Training for Air Forces from the Americas**



On June 23, service members from the Colombian and United States Air Forces trained together in Colombia prior to the Ángel de los Andes international training event. [Photo: Courtesy of the 5th Air Combat Command of the Colombian Air Force]

Julietta Pelcastre

The Air Forces of 12 countries in the Americas will gather from August 17-28 in Colombia to conduct search and rescue exercises during natural disasters and other emergencies.

Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Jamaica, Panama, Honduras, Peru, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Brazil, the United States, and Canada will attend Ángel de los Andes at the 1st Air Combat Command (CACOM 1) in the department of Cundinamarca, and at the 5th Air Combat Command (CACOM 5) in the department of Antioquia.

Ángel de los Andes, an initiative by the Colombian Air Force (FAC), provides an opportunity for “air crews and aviation medical personnel, as well as operational and logistics personnel, to train in a simulated environment on Combat Search and

Rescue (CSAR), evaluations and medical airlifts, and putting out forest fires,” the FAC’s website stated.

The training program will be managed by the FAC’s National Center for Personnel Recovery (CNRP) and led by Lieutenant Colonel Rodrigo Zapata Romero, FAC’s director of Special Air Operations.

Sharpening skills and bolstering cooperation

The FAC’s goals in hosting the training program are to help Air Force service members sharpen their search, rescue, and medical skills, in addition to improving cooperation among partner nations.

“The exercise’s objective is to share the FAC’s 50 years of experience, strengthen operational abilities in the various air crews, be at the forefront in the techniques used to provide humanitarian aid, and improve the close ties of cooperation and interoperability that exist among the participating countries to conduct joint operations intended to save lives at the national and international levels,” the FAC’s Communications Department told *Diálogo*.

“Sharing experiences is a tradition among the world’s Armed Forces; there is a very strong esprit de corps among Military institutions,” Rubén Sánchez, a security analyst at Colombia’s University of Rosario, said.

Members of the FAC will share their knowledge and experience with their counterparts from other participating countries. During the 10 days of Ángel de los Andes, 230 Colombian Air Force members will train with 60 others from partner nations in search, rescue, and recovery of an ejected crew and persons affected by an attack on a Military convoy; practice planning, supervision, and control skills; and learn about the best ways to provide medical treatment during emergencies and disasters, such as earthquakes.

The training program will include lectures by national and international speakers arranged by the Office of the Chief of Air Operations and the National System for Disaster Risk Management (SNGRD). Participants will also engage in discussions regarding rescue techniques using examples of successful recoveries of victims during disasters carried out by Colombian security forces and U.S. combat pilots.

“This is an excellent opportunity for the institution and for the country to demonstrate the Colombian Air Force members’ skills and training, which have allowed them to stay at the forefront of personnel recovery operations and providing treatment in emergencies and disasters,” the FAC said.

Military authorities have planned for this event for several months, beginning in October 2014. The FAC and U.S. Air Force members also met at the end of June 2015 to train together prior to the exercise.

“During this meeting, all the participants demonstrated commitment, bravery, and camaraderie as they prepared to save lives anywhere in the Americas,” the FAC CACOM 5 reported.

Multiple roles for Colombian Armed Forces

Training to deal with natural disasters and other emergencies and to provide medical care paid off for the Colombian Armed Forces on June 22.

On that day, the helicopter crew of a UH-60 FAC 4103 Angel aircraft rescued Staff Sergeant Elver Alberto Santana, 38, who was suffering from acute coronary syndrome and extreme dehydration. The helicopter crew airlifted him from the municipality of Murindó to the Medellín Military Hospital.

Eight days later, on June 30, the 7th Air Combat Command used an Angel UH-60 helicopter outfitted with a Bambi Bucket that held 640 gallons of water mixed with liquid fire retardant to fight a blaze in the municipality of Pradera in Valle del Cauca.

The following month, on July 16, the Caribbean Air Group used a C90 medical-equipped aircraft, known as the “Guardian Angel of Colombia’s Caribbean Coast,” to transport a 62-year-old man from Providencia Island to the Amor de Patria Departmental Hospital in San Andrés Island, 90 km south, after suffering a traumatic brain injury.

The FAC CNRP units have also rendered humanitarian aid in countries such as Chile, Peru, and Haiti.

Such humanitarian missions “rendered by the Air Force and the Army in each nation is critical for many communities located in inhospitable areas,” Sánchez said.

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Honduran Armed Forces Pave the Way for a Boost in Tourism

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2015-04-30

Tourism in Honduras is getting a boost from the new Rio Amarillo Airport, which Armed Forces engineers built. Military engineers are working on several similar projects throughout the country. ([http://dialogo-americas.com/en_GB/articles/rmisa/features/2015/04/30/feature-](http://dialogo-americas.com/en_GB/articles/rmisa/features/2015/04/30/feature-01)

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Colombia closer to reaching peace with the FARC: Juan Carlos Pinzón (/en_GB/articles/rmisa/features/regional_news/2013/12/25/colombia-villegas)

2013-12-25

Peace talks continue in Havana between FARC negotiators and representatives of the Colombian government to end what has become Latin America's longest-running rebel insurgency. (http://dialogo-americas.com/en_GB/articles/rmisa/features/regional_news/2013/12/25/colombia-villegas)



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SOUTHCOM honors, bids farewell to Peruvian Liaison Officer (/en_GB/articles/rmisa/features/regional_news/2013/12/20/peru-pnlo)

2013-12-20

His Partner Nation insight contributed to different viewpoints, allowing for better understanding among partners. (http://dialogo-americas.com/en_GB/articles/rmisa/features/regional_news/2013/12/20/peru-pnlo)
