

Colombia

Republic of Colombia



Key Facts



OAS Membership Date: 30 April 1948

Head of State / Head of Government: President Ivan Duque Marquez

Capital city: Bogotá

Population: 48,168,996

Language(s): Spanish (official)

Religions: Roman Catholic 79%, Protestant 14%, other 2%, unspecified 5%

Ethnic Groups: mestizo and white 84.2%, Afro-Colombian 10.4%, Amerindian 3.4% (2005 est.)

Currency: Colombian peso (COP)

Gross domestic product (PPP): \$711.6 billion (2017 est.)

Legal System: civil law system influenced by the Spanish and French civil codes

Political system: Colombia is a presidential republic. The president is elected by absolute majority popular vote for a single 4-year term. The Cabinet is appointed by the President. The bicameral Congress, or Congreso, consists of: the Senate, or Senado (108 seats; 100 members elected by proportional representation vote, 2 members elected for indigenous communities, 5 members of the People's Alternative Revolutionary Force (FARC) political party for the 2018 and 2022 elections as per the 2016 peace accord, and 1 seat reserved for the runner-up presidential candidate in the recent election; all members serve 4-year terms), and the Chamber of Representatives, or Cámara de Representantes (172

seats; 166 members elected by proportional representation vote, 5 members of the FARC for the 2018 and 2022 elections as per the 2016 peace accord, and 1 seat reserved for the runner-up vice presidential candidate in the recent election; all members serve 4-year terms). There are four high judicial bodies: the Supreme Court of Justice, the Constitutional Court, the Council of State, and the Superior Judiciary Council. Supreme Court judges are appointed by the Supreme Court members from candidates submitted by the Superior Judiciary Council for individual 8-year terms. Constitutional Court magistrates are nominated by the president and elected by the Senate for individual 8-year terms. Council of State members are appointed by the State Council plenary from lists nominated by the Superior Judiciary Council.

Economy: Colombia heavily depends on energy and mining exports, making it vulnerable to fluctuations in commodity prices. Colombia is Latin America's fourth largest oil producer and the world's fourth largest coal producer, third largest coffee exporter, and second largest cut flowers exporter. Colombia's economic development is hampered by inadequate infrastructure, poverty, narcotrafficking, and an uncertain security situation. Colombia's economy slowed in 2017 because of falling world market prices for oil and lower domestic oil production due to insurgent attacks on pipeline infrastructure. Colombia has signed or is negotiating Free Trade Agreements (FTA) with more than a dozen countries; the US-Colombia FTA went into effect in May 2012. Colombia is a founding member of the Pacific Alliance—a regional trade block formed in 2012 by Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru to promote regional trade and economic integration. Colombia is an associate member of Mercosur, a South American trade bloc.

Diplomatic Relations

Relations with the OAS

Colombia is one of the original OAS member states; the foundational documents of the OAS, including the OAS Charter, the American Treaty of Peaceful Solutions, and the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man, were signed in Bogota in April 1948. In September 2018, Colombia was chosen by the OAS Permanent Council to be the host country of the 2019 meeting of the organization's General Assembly. Recent OAS projects in Colombia include assisting the government in creation of a comprehensive cybersecurity strategy, and the ongoing Mission to Support the Peace Process in Colombia (MAPP/OAS), an OAS initiative which since 2004 has carried out monitoring and accompaniment tasks related to maintaining peace in the nation. MAPP/OAS provided considerable material support to the Colombian government in its conflict with the FARC rebel group until the signing of a peace treaty between the government and the insurgents in 2016.

Relations with Venezuela

A rocky relationship has characterized Colombia-Venezuela relations over the course of the nations' histories. The two nations share a border, and were once both part of the state of Gran Colombia which gained independence from Spain in 1819 and dissolved in 1831 – as such, they have historically had frequent diplomatic interaction. In 2010, a diplomatic standoff occurred between the two nations due to allegations that the Venezuelan government was permitting armed segments of the FARC rebel group to seek refuge in its territory. Anticipating a possible war, the two nations broke off diplomatic relations, but following de-escalation of the conflict relations were re-established in August 2010. Since the 2013 election of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, tensions have increased amidst border disputes, accusations of illicit Colombian militia activity within the borders of Venezuela, and Venezuelan threats of military aggression towards Colombia. In July 2018, the Venezuelan military placed missiles and anti-air equipment on its border with Colombia, placing Colombian forces on alert and earning criticism from the Latin American community. Along with the United States and Brazil, Colombia has amassed hundreds of tons of medical and food aid along its border with Venezuela, which the Venezuelan government refuses to let through.

