

COLOMBIA: IN FOCUS

A WEEKLY UPDATE FROM THE EMBASSY OF COLOMBIA

August 13, 2013

“Colombia is a Success Story,” Says U.S. Secretary of State Kerry in First Official Visit



Photos: Secretary Kerry and President Santos at the Casa de Nariño in Bogotá, Photo Credit: Javier Casella – GIS; Secretary Kerry and Minister Holguín, Photo Credit: U.S. Department of State; Secretary Kerry and Coldeportes Director Botero with disabled veterans, Photo Credit: Coldeportes

Strengthening Dialogue, Deepening the Bilateral Agenda

On Monday, August 12, in his first official visit to Colombia, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry met with President Juan Manuel Santos and Minister of Foreign Affairs María Ángela Holguín in Bogotá. The officials discussed efforts to continue strengthening dialogue and deepening and diversifying the bilateral agenda. In a press briefing following the meeting, Kerry [stated](#):

“We have built a very, very strong relationship on shared values and on common interests. I was a member of the United States Senate starting in 1985 ... when there was a very tough set of choices facing Colombia. Today I come here to congratulate as completely as I can the people of Colombia who have together joined in an amazing transformation. This is one of the great stories not just of this hemisphere, but really of the world ... Colombia is a success story, and the United States of America is proud of whatever small part we’ve been able to be sharing with our friends in Colombia in an effort to get where we are, moving towards, hopefully, stability throughout the region.”

Kerry also highlighted the economic importance of the U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement, and expressed U.S. support for the ongoing peace process, calling the talks “a very courageous and necessary effort to find a political solution to one of the longest running conflicts around the world.”

Honoring Colombia’s Wounded Warriors

While in Bogotá, Kerry visited the Coldeportes Center and delivered [remarks](#) before an audience of disabled law enforcement and military veterans who participate in Colombia’s Arcangeles Wounded Warrior Program. Kerry discussed his own personal experience as a veteran and said, “We will do everything possible that we can do to try to be helpful to support this program and other programs and ultimately to try to help bring peace in Colombia.”

He and Coldeportes Director Andres Botero also played a game of seated volleyball with a group of veterans.

Click [here](#) for more of Secretary Kerry’s remarks and [here](#) for additional photos from the visit.

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