



### **D68 Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes in Colombia (1978-2005): In Pursuit of Forensic Evidence for Missing Persons**

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After attending this presentation, attendees will gain an understanding of forced disappearance situation in Colombia and the current application of forensic sciences, especially anthropology and archaeology to solve these crimes.

Crimes against humanity and war crimes are being investigated in a social, legal and forensic perspective around the world (Roberge, MC, 1998). Countries such Argentina (Doretti, 2003) Iraq, the Former Yugoslavia, Guatemala, and Rwanda (PHRUSA, 1994), are receiving all the interest from forensic teams attending the United Nations (UN) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) calls. This is not the case in Colombia. Every year from 1988, UN, ICRC and international Non- Governmental Organisations (NGOs), such Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch, produces annual reports about the critical situation of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law in this South American country. National NGOs also reports these crimes but forensic investigations are limited for security, social, political, and economical reasons and especially because the internal armed conflict still remains.

As a result of the pressure from Civil Society, especially Human Rights NGOs and relatives of forced disappearance's victims, from 2000, the Colombian State had been working on the creation of laws (leyes) to judge the offenders (ASFADDES, 2003) as well as the implementation of two Truth Commissions. Both the National Search Commission of Missing Persons" (Comisión Nacional de Búsqueda de personas desaparecidas) and National Reparation and Reconciliation Commission" (Comisión Nacional de Reparación y Reconciliación) (PPDHDIH, 2004) are charged with the search for missing persons. Both Commissions will use forensic sciences, specially archaeology and anthropology in order to achieve their purposes.

Through this presentation the problem of forced disappearance in Colombia (1978-2004) is analyzed from several points of view: historical, legal, cultural, geographical, and forensic. Information comes from NGOs and some governmental institutions as the National Institute of Legal Medicine, the Ombudsman Office (Defensoría del Pueblo) and the Inspector's Office (Procuraduría General de la Nación). Three cases will be exposed. Some of them are already finished with the location and identification of the victim but others are still being investigated.

**Forensic Anthropology, Forensic Archaeology, Human Rights - Colombia**