

Bolivia: Paramilitary Death Squadrons Kill Men, Women and Children

By [Global Research](#)

Region: [Latin America & Caribbean](#)

Global Research, September 13, 2008

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Paramilitaries ambush farmers and Fern\u00c3\u00a1ndez lied about the massacre Cobija",
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“context”: “something that we should not allow,\u0022 said the rural worker. In September 2006, then-Minister of Government, Alicia Mu\u00c3\u00b1oz, accused Governor Leopoldo Fern\u00c3\u00a1ndez”,

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Paramilitaries ambush farmers and Fernández lied about the massacre

Cobija (Pando), 12 Sep (ABI) – A bridge located seven kilometers from the city of Porvenir where one thousand farmers were marching from the city of Cobija in protest against the violence backed by the governor of Pando, Leopoldo Fernández, was the scene of a massacre when paramilitaries, trained and financed by the head of Pando, were unleashed this Thursday against defenseless marchers.

Roberto Tito, one of the rural workers who was on this bridge when the shooting against the defenseless people began, testified that they were marching unarmed, and soon they heard shots and people began falling, mortally wounded.

Snipers located in the treetops fired at the group without caring who they hit: children, women, and old people were amongst the farmers, whose only weapons were sticks and machetes.

“We were unarmed, contrary to what they say. They stopped us seven kilometers from Porvenir and then they attacked us, when we advanced to the height of the bridge they ambushed us and started shooting with machine guns,” said Tito, heartbroken over the death of at least ten of his comrades, as on Friday an unknown number of people were still reported as disappeared.

“The comrades had to flee in all directions. They didn’t even spare the children or women. This was a massacre of farmers, this is something that we should not allow,” said the rural worker.

In September 2006, then-Minister of Government, Alicia Muñoz, accused Governor Leopoldo Fernández of training, in Cobija, at least one hundred paramilitaries, under the guise of forming a force “for citizen’s security.”

While Fernández denied the truth of this claim, even though Muñoz had photo and video evidence, the chief of Citizen’s Security for the Government of Pando, Alberto Murakami,

admitted to the training of civilians.

Murakami alleged that the force was comprised of one hundred trained “neighbors” who would carry out vigilance activities in the face of the rise in “crime” and the “lack of police.”

Muñoz made the accusation as proof that the opposition governors where not acting lawfully as they had assured they were. Time and the massacre of defenseless people have unfortunately proven the former state dignitary was right.

Because two years later, these members of the “citizen’s security” force perfectly fulfilled the role they were trained for: firing risk-free against unarmed people. Not only this, the paramilitaries, many of them Brazilian, took it upon themselves to kidnap those who couldn’t escape the assassins’ bullets.

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