The government of Colombia, the largest recipient of American aid outside the Middle East, has been hit with a series of revelations of an alliance between high-level members of President Alvaro Uribe’s administration and paramilitary death squads. The widening scandal threatens to put Plan Colombia in jeopardy, as the U.S. Congress has been demonstrating an increasing willingness to call into question how funding for Plan Colombia is being spent. Senator Gustavo Petro and Carlos Rodriguez Mejia will discuss the implications of these recent revelations. CIP analyst, Adam Isacson, will add comments and open the floor for a Q and A session with the audience.

Gustavo Petro has been particularly well-known for his role documenting and uncovering, in recent years, the connection between paramilitaries and figures in government, an issue that has been at the forefront of the day-to-day debate in Colombia in recent months; has been one of the top vote-getters in the last few congressional elections.

Carlos Rodriguez Mejia is the Deputy Director of the Colombian Commission of Jurists. He was a visiting fellow at the Kellogg Institute at the University of Notre Dame while in exile from 1998 to 1999. He was recognized for his work in 1998 by Human Rights Watch.

Adam Isacson has worked on Latin American Security Issues, particularly U.S. policy toward Central America and Colombia, since 1995 as a Senior Associate at the Center for International Policy. Mr. Isacson holds an M.A. in International relations from Yale.