

## CRUZ 1<sup>st</sup> Degree 1 to [S. 3589](#), the Western Hemisphere Security Strategy Act of 2022

In November 2021, the Biden administration withdrew the designations of the Revolutionary Forces of Colombia (FARC) as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), and as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT). The following day, Treasury removed 275 individuals and entities associated with the FARC from OFAC's Specially Designated National List.

In December 2021, Colombia's Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP), tasked with implementing the peace accords, issued [summons](#) for 47 FARC members for alleged involvement in (1) forced recruitment of children for the conflict and for (2) child trafficking. Five of these individuals had been sanctioned by the United States for their association with the FARC until the Administration removed them by withdrawing the FARC's group designation. The Administration has not re-imposed sanctions on these individuals.

By withdrawing the FARC's group designation, the Administration gave up a key tool through which the US was keeping individuals accountable for their role in a half-century armed conflict. This bill reimposes FARC's group designation, mandates a determination of the nature and extent to which these five individuals were involved with the FARC, and for such determination to be made of two previously unsanctioned individuals.

The five individuals selected are:

1. **Jose Benito Cabrera Cuevas** (aka Fabian Ramirez ) was the FARC's 14th Front Commander until 2004. He has an outstanding Red Notice from INTERPOL, 32 arrest warrants, 17 detention orders, and two convictions in absentia. He was responsible for all drug related operations of the FARC's drug trade and was a notorious executioner. The State Department offered a reward of up to \$2.5 million for information leading to his arrest. He was presumed dead but turned up alive. On December 11 2021, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace issued a summon for him to appear before it due to credible charges of child trafficking.
2. **Erasmo Traslavina Benavides** (aka Jimmy Guerrero) was the FARC's 33th Front Commander, one of FARC's most violent battalions. There is an outstanding US extradition order against him since 2005 for overseeing FARC's drug trafficking operations aimed at getting drugs into the US. He is responsible for several terrorist acts, with the most notable being the bombing of a radio station in 2010. In 2012, Colombia's then-Minister of Defense (and current Ambassador to the US) Pinzon [announced](#) a \$2 million reward for information leading to his arrest and/or conviction. On December 11 2021, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace issued a summon for him to appear before it due to credible charges of child trafficking.
3. **Emiro Roperro** (aka Ruben Zamora) was the FARC's 33th Front Commander before Benavides. He left the post to take on a role as a FARC envoy to the peace negotiations in Havana. On December 11 2021, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace issued a summon for him to appear before it due to credible charges of child trafficking.

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4. **Guillermo Enrique Torres Cueter** (aka Julian Conrado) was the FARC's artist in residence and arguably its chief propagandist. He was part of a particularly violent FARC battalion, yet he is best known for the "revolutionary" songs he composed. He is the current Mayor of Turbaco, a municipality south of Cartagena. On December 11 2021, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace issued a summon for him to appear before it due to credible charges of child trafficking.
5. **Rodrigo Granda** (aka Gallopinto) was considered something of a foreign minister for the FARC. He has an outstanding Red Notice from INTERPOL, ten arrest warrants, four detention orders, and an unserved 15 year prison sentence. He is perhaps best known for being responsible for the kidnapping, torture, and murder of the daughter of a former president of Paraguay. He was a FARC envoy to the Peace Negotiations in Havana. On December 11 2021, the Special Jurisdiction for Peace issued a summon for him to appear before it due to credible charges of child trafficking.

The two additional individuals are:

1. **Piedad Cordoba** is a Senator-elect from the Liberal party. She stands credibly accused of having discharged leadership duties in the FARC under the *nom de guerre* "Teodora". Specifically, she is accused of having been in charge of hostage-release decisions at the time she was brokering talks between Hugo Chavez, the FARC, and the Santos government. Recently, she was detained in Honduras for failing to disclose \$68,000 in cash she was transporting into Colombia.
2. **Sandra Ramirez Lobo Silva** (aka Griselda Lobo) is the widow of Manuel Marulanda (aka Tirofijo), the founder and senior commander of the FARC. She is a Senator for the FARC political party, Comunes.