

Figure 12.1 ► Chronology of Key Events in Colombia (*Continued*)

Date	Event
1993	Medellin drug cartel leader Pablo Escobar killed while trying to evade arrest.
1998	President Andres Pastrana (conservative) initiates peace talks with guerrillas, grants the FARC safe haven in the <i>despeje</i> , an area in the southeast the size of Switzerland.
1999	The FARC kills three US Indian rights activists kidnapped in Colombia.
January 1999	Pastrana and FARC leader Manuel “Sureshot” Marulanda meet.
July 2000	Pastrana and the United States launch Plan Colombia with nearly \$1 billion in aid.
April 2001	A report issued by the US House of Representatives Committee on International Relations notes that fifteen IRA members traveled to Colombia over three years to provide military training to the FARC in return for \$2 million in drug money.
October 2001	Pastrana and the FARC sign the San Francisco agreement, committing to negotiate a cease-fire and extend life of the <i>despeje</i> until January 2002.
August 2001	A FARC insurgent and two IRA urban warfare specialists are arrested with explosives in their possession; three more IRA members are arrested and charged with training FARC guerrillas to make bombs.
January 2002	Pastrana accepts the FARC’s cease-fire timetable and extends safe haven to April.
February 2002	Pastrana breaks off three years of peace talks following an aircraft hijacking and orders rebels out of safe haven.
May 2002	The FARC kills 119 civilians in the Choco Department using <i>rompas</i> , homemade propane gas mortars.
August 2002	The FARC attacks rock Bogotá as President Alvaro Uribe (Independent) is sworn in; Uribe promises to crack down hard on insurgents.
June 2004	Uribe launches the “Patriot Plan” and deploys fifteen thousand troops to search for and capture the FARC leadership.
May 2006	President Uribe wins second term in office.
June 2007	Colombian government releases dozens of jailed FARC guerrillas to spur a dialogue, but the FARC rejects move.
September 2007	Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez in his role as mediator invites the FARC for talks on a possible hostage release deal.
November 2007	Chávez withdraws his country’s ambassador to Bogotá in a row over his role in negotiations between the FARC and Colombian government.