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**COLOMBIAN POLICE AND UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE WORK
TOGETHER TO SEIZE \$41 MILLION IN COUNTERFEIT U.S. CURRENCY**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In what is described as the largest seizure in Colombia, and one of the largest in the world, the Colombian National Police (DIJIN), working in cooperation with the United States Secret Service, found \$41 million in counterfeit U.S. dollars inside a house in Bogota.

“This seizure is not only significant in its size, but also as an indication of the strong working relationships that the Secret Service has developed with the Colombian National Police,” said U.S. Secret Service Director Brian L. Stafford. “In just the last three years, working together, we have seized nearly \$90 million in counterfeit currency and have dismantled operations that could have produced billions of dollars in bogus bills.”

In the latest operation, authorities on Sunday, December 30, found the fake money packed in boxes in a middle-class neighborhood in southeast Bogota. The bills were printed using lithography and bond paper, and some only lacked the finishing touches in the counterfeiting process – “coloring” the paper to give it a more genuine appearance.

The director of the Colombian National Police, General Luis Ernest Giliberto, called the discovery an “overwhelming blow” to the counterfeiting industry. “These results demonstrate the commitment and professionalism of the men and women that day in and day out fight these crimes.”

The Secret Service opened a resident office in Bogota in 1996. As countries throughout South and Central America “dollarize” – adopt U.S. currency as their own national currency – the office expanded its staff and increased its work with Colombian authorities.

The U.S. Secret Service was created in 1865 with the sole purpose of suppressing counterfeit currency. While the agency’s responsibilities have expanded to include presidential protection, its investigative mission still focuses on protecting the infrastructure of the nation’s financial systems.

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EDITOR’S NOTE: For an interview with a representative from the Secret Service Counterfeit Division or to view some of the counterfeit notes in this case, please contact the United States Secret Service Office of Government Liaison and Public Affairs at 202-406-5708.