



# Colonel Alberto Sepúlveda Riaño

## Assistant Commandant

### Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation



Colonel Alberto Sepúlveda Riaño was born in Bogotá, Colombia, on 8 April 1963. He enrolled in the Military Cadet Academy on 24 January 1982, when he was 16 years old, completing his bachelor's degree and earning the rank of Second Lieutenant, Infantry.

He also received a degree in Management from ESMIC; Completed Advanced management studies at the Jorge Tadeo Lozano University; Studied Human Rights and Humanitarian International Law at the New Granada Military University; Received a Teaching Certificate from the Pilot University of Colombia; and completed a Senior Management Education Program at Sabana INALDE University. Initially, he served as Commander, Counterguerrilla Platoon, "Francisco de Paula Vélez" Infantry Battalion at the Uraba Antioqueño Colombiano, being the first of 470 Officers in the course to be awarded the Distinguished Service Medal in Law Enforcement for successful operations conducted against FARC terrorists, during which he was wounded. He commanded infantry units at the company level and held the following positions: Instructor, Non-commissioned Officers School; Infantry School Instructor; Academic Director of the Civilian and Military Relations School, Chief of Operations and Deputy Commander of the Junín Infantry Battalion, and National Deputy Director of the GAULA Anti-Kidnapping Units, achieving outstanding performance as recognized by the Department of Defense.

These actions, consisting of more than 100 successful operations, resulted in the freeing of more than 250 people who had been kidnapped by terrorist groups. Colonel Sepúlveda completed the Staff Course at the Army War College and was designated Commander of the 50<sup>th</sup> Jungle Infantry Battalion in the city of Leticia, capitol of the Amazonas Department. There he directed Operation "Dignidad," which resulted in the recovery by infiltration of more than 100 kilometers of Amazonian Jungle over a 19-day period, during which he was successful in stationing his troops in the Municipality of Taraira, Department of Vaupés, the only Colombian municipality that in 2004 did not have any law-enforcement presence. This population had been under the terror of the FARC for 15 years. He dismantled the drugtrafficking organization servicing the terrorists in the Department of Amazonas, which resulted in the capture of more than 50 drugtraffickers, the destruction of 15 laboratories used to process cocaine hydrochloride, and the eradication of more than 500 hectares of coca leaves. He assumed the position of Presidential Advisor at the Nariño Palace for three years during the administration of former president Alvaro Uribe Vélez, serving as the military coordinator for the Interagency Consolidation Plan. He also served as the Director of the Weapons and Services School. During his last assignment in Colombia, he was the Director of the Colombian Army's Military Education Center. On 8 June 2012, Colonel Sepúlveda assumed the position of Assistant Commandant, Western Hemisphere Institute of Security Cooperation, Fort Benning, Georgia.

His military education includes the following courses: Counterguerrilla Course, Colombia "Lanceros" School, Basic Psychological Operations Course, Psychological Operations Instructor Course, Military Airborne Course, Human Rights and Humanitarian International Law Instructor, U.S. Special Operations Course, and the GAULA Anti-Kidnapping Operations Course.

Colonel Sepúlveda's awards and decorations include the following: Medal for Wounds Received in Combat; Law Enforcement Distinguished Service Award; José María Córdoba Award from the Army Command; Antonio Nariño Award from the Presidency; Ferguson Award from the Military House of the Presidency of the Republic; Simón Bolívar Award from the Congress of the Republic; Infantry Weapons Award; Cavalry Award; Artillery Award; Communications Award; Cadet Military School *General José María Córdoba* Award; Award from the *Sargento Inocencio Chínca* Non-Commissioned School; Award from the Professional Soldiers School; Award from the National Navy, Marine Corps School; Distinguished Service Award from the National Police, and 14 additional military medals.