



AMA

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Colombia, Country of Contrasts

On view September 21 - October 7, 2011

AMA | OAS Terrace Level Photo Gallery

1889 F Street, NW (corner of 18th Street)

Washington, DC 20006

Hours: MON - FRI 9AM - 5PM

Wednesday, September 21 at 6pm:

Opening Reception



Colombia, Country of Contrasts, presented by AMA | Art Museum of the Americas of the Organization of American States, is a photo exhibition illustrating the incredible biodiversity of that country, the social and environmental damage caused by illicit crops and narco-trafficking, and what Colombians are doing to protect themselves from this problem.

This exhibit was organized by the Permanent Mission of Colombia to the OAS, the U.S. State Department's International Narcotics Bureau, the U.S. Embassy in Colombia, and AMA.

Fifteen photographs were selected from 7,000 submissions received from every Colombian state and many national parks. The nationwide competition was organized by the U.S. Embassy in Colombia and the Colombian Ministry of Interior and Justice, with support from El Tiempo, Colombia's leading newspaper, and was facilitated through Facebook.

To see all the photos submitted for the contest, visit: www.facebook.com/colombiapaisdecontrastes

Consumers of cocaine are not always aware of the environmental and social costs borne by or-

dinary Colombians. Colombia is the second-most bio-diverse nation on Earth (after Brazil), and contains ten percent of the plant species that exist in our world. But narcotrafficking is threatening this balance because coca cultivation causes the deforestation of thousands of acres of pristine tropical forest equivalent to the size of the state of Kansas --each year. To top it all, thousands of gallons of gasoline, acids, and other chemicals are spilled in Colombia's waterways by cocaine production labs.

Social costs are even more frightening: thousands of Colombian armed forces and civilians have died in guerrilla conflict, as farmers are often forced to grow coca. Fields of coca are guarded with landmines, making a war zone of the farmland of ordinary Colombians.

Colombia is second only to Afghanistan in mine explosions; every eight hours, an explosion occurs there, adding to the loss of life and limb that comes with them.

Colombia, Country of Contrasts seeks to raise awareness of these brutal realities.

