

Excerpt from:
Press Conference from Bogota

Secretary Colin L. Powell
Bogotá, Colombia
December 4, 2002

2:20 p.m. EST

QUESTION: (Via interpreter) Secretary Powell, what response, Mr. Secretary, did the Government of Colombia give to the request for immunity for US personnel and military and civilians.

SECRETARY POWELL: We did discuss what is called Article 98 of the International Criminal Court, the Rome statute. As you know, the United States is not a member of the Court. We have not ratified that statute and won't be ratifying it, Colombia has.

The statute provides for Article 98 agreements with those countries who do not wish their citizens to be subject to the Court when serving in other countries.

We have asked the Government of Colombia to provide Article 98 coverage for all American servicemen who are in Colombia, and they believe, after their examination of it so far, that they can only do it with respect to respect to official presence.

So we did not resolve that issue. We laid out our respective positions and I told the President we look forward to continuing this discussion until we find a solution that is mutually acceptable to both of us. Thank you.