



East Colombian Conference headquarters.

Photo courtesy of North Colombia Union Conference.

East Colombian Conference

ROBERTO CARVAJAL

Roberto Carvajal Rojas, D.Min. (Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan), is president of the East Colombian Conference. Prior to this position, he had served as executive secretary and youth department director. He is married to Lady J. Oviedo Aparicio and has three children.

East Colombian Conference is an institution under the [North Colombian Union Conference](#). Its territory consists of the Colombian province of Santander and the municipalities of Boavita, Chitaraque, Chiscas, Cocuy, Covarachia, El Espino, Guican, La Uvita, Moniquira, Panqueba, Soata, San Jose de Pare, San Mateo, Santana,

Susacon, Tipacoque, and Togui in the northeast area of the Boyaca Department. As of June 2024, it had 171 churches and 21,717 members in a total population of 1,732,729. Its headquarters are located in Calle 55 No. 28-05, Bucaramanga, Santander, Colombia.¹

East Colombian Conference oversees the following institutions: Libertad Adventist School in Bucaramanga; Libertad del Norte Adventist School; Adventist Medical Unit (Bucaramanga); and Adventist Book Center in Bucaramanga

Organizational History

On September 8, 1985, East Colombia Mission was organized from part of the territory of Alto Magdalena Conference. Their nascent mission encompassed the departments of Santander and Norte de Santander, the northern part of the department of Boyacá, the Intendancy of Arauca, the eastern part of Casanare, and the commissaries of Vichada and Guainía. The headquarters was established in the city of Bucaramanga.²

Pastor Félix Fernández was elected as president with Pastor Eliseo Bustamante as secretary, Haroldo Cárdenas as treasurer, and Francisco Garzón as auditor. It had 22,112 members and 70 churches in a population of 5,696,872.³

Establishment of East Colombian Conference

On February 12, 1990, Pastor Félix Fernández Flórez, president of East Colombia Mission, presented a report at a special mission session regarding the growth and the activities the Mission had accomplished since it was established. A vote was taken to acknowledge North Colombian Union Conference and the Inter-American Division for their efforts, and the study conducted for the change of category from Mission to Conference.⁴

In 1993, East Colombia Mission's status was changed to East Colombia Conference.⁵ In 2006, the Conference's name was clarified to read East Colombian Conference.⁶ East Colombian Conference continued its growth organizing new programs and conducting events throughout its territory.

In 1996, a house was bought in which to operate the Obra Filantrópica y Asistencia Social Adventista (Adventist Philanthropic and Social Assistance Work). A year later, its name was changed to Centro Médico Adventista (Adventist Medical Center). In 2001, East Colombian Systems Sole Proprietorship (SOCOL, E.U.) was established as a business solely owned by East Colombian Conference. Its purpose was to dedicate part of its assets to strengthen and sustain the program to update technology of its educational institutions and the local field.

New Conferences Established from East Colombian Conference

In 2008, Northeast Colombian Conference was created from a part of the East Colombian Conference's territory. The new conference's territory included the departments of Arauca, Boyaca (northeast), North Santander, and

Vichada.⁷

In 2016, East Central Colombian Conference was created from a part of the East Colombian Conference's territory. The new conference's territory included the east central portion of Santander State with the municipalities of Barrancabermeja, Cimitarra, El Carmen, Giron, Landazuri, Lebrija, Puerto Parra, Puerto Wilches, Sabana de Torres, San Vicente del Chucuri, Santa Helena de Opon, Yarima, Zapatoca; the municipality of Yondo in Antioquia State; the municipalities of Cantagallo and San Pablo in Bolivar State; and the municipality of San Alberto in Cesar State.⁸

Strategic Objectives and Goals

East Colombian Conference strives to achieve its goals by:

Strengthening and motivating attendance at prayer services;

Encouraging daily reading of the Holy Bible and the spirit of prophecy;

Educating members regarding the devotional life of each believer;

Maintaining the revival plan to welcome Christ at dawn;

Praying for the Holy Spirit and missionary unity in the Church;

Forming permanent groups for prayer and study of the Bible; and

Observing faithfulness and tending to member retention.

The following is being implemented:

Member group events to engage in healthy social activities;

Churchwide outings to encourage a vision of unity and support;

Youth programs and clubs to engage youth in having healthy habits; and

Healthy lifestyle programs to encourage healthy habits like walking, etc.

Purchase

a plot of land on which to begin the construction of the Barbosa School

Build

a church for 600 people in Floridablanca, Santander

a church for 400 people in the northern part of Bucaramanga

the Arenales School and the San Gil School

an auditorium on the fourth floor of the conference building

a children's pool, an auditorium, and cabins on the El Bambú farm

Establish

a new congregation every two years

Share

the Adventist Message in the Santander municipalities of Albania, Cabrera, California, Carcasí, Charta, Chipatá, El Guacamayo, Gambita, Jesús María, Ocamonte, Onzaga, San Benito, San Joaquín, San Miguel, Santa Bárbara, and Vetas

The major challenges are to involve seasoned church members in missionary work and engage newly baptized members in sharing Christ's love and His transforming power. Church members who are committed to giving Bible studies, witnessing, preaching, participating in evangelistic campaigns, and supporting the church's youth, children, and women ministries will assist in the growth of the church.

East Colombian Conference is committed to organizing events for religious and social interaction for church members and their communities. This will encourage healthy relationships in which all, especially the youth, will feel accepted and loved.

Presidents

East Colombia Mission: Félix Fernández (1985-1993).

East Colombian Conference: Norberto Carmona (1993-1996); Henry Noel Anaya (1996-2006); Ezequiel Rueda (2007-2010); Roberto Carvajal (2011-2023); Manuel Luna (2023-).

SOURCES

East Colombia Mission Special Session Minutes, "Change of Status." February 12-13, 1990. Accessed September 17, 2025. East Colombia Mission secretariat archives, Bucaramanga, Santander, Colombia.

East Colombia Mission Special Session Minutes, "Division of Alto Magdalena Conference Territory." September 8, 1985. Accessed September 17, 2025. East Colombia Mission secretariat archives, Bucaramanga, Santander, Colombia.

Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook. Various years. <https://www.adventistyearbook.org/>.

NOTES

1. "East Colombian Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Online Yearbook*, accessed September 17, 2025, <https://www.adventistyearbook.org/entity?EntityID=14034>.
2. East Colombia Mission Special Session, "Division of Alto Magdalena Conference Territory," September 8, 1985, 2, accessed September 17, 2025, East Colombia Mission secretariat archives.
3. "Colombian East Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1986), 163, accessed September 17, 2025, <https://documents.adventistarchives.org/Yearbooks/YB1986.pdf>.
4. East Colombia Mission Special Session, "Change of Status," February 12-13, 1990, 218, accessed September 17, 2025, East Colombia Mission secretariat archives.
5. "East Colombia Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1994), 164, accessed September 17, 2025, <https://documents.adventistarchives.org/Yearbooks/YB1994.pdf>.
6. "East Colombian Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2007), 117, accessed September 17, 2025, <https://documents.adventistarchives.org/Yearbooks/YB2007.pdf>.
7. "East Colombian Conference" and "Northeast Colombian Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2009), 121, accessed September 17, 2025, <https://documents.adventistarchives.org/Yearbooks/YB2009.pdf>.
8. "East Central Colombian Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2017), 150, accessed September 17, 2025, <https://documents.adventistarchives.org/Yearbooks/YB2017.pdf>.

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