



UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE PRESS RELEASE

OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS
950 H STREET N.W., SUITE 8400
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20223
202-406-5708

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
PUB 07-03

JANUARY 30, 2003

UNITED STATES SECRET SERVICE SUPPRESSES SECOND COIN COUNTERFEITING PLANT IN COLOMBIA THIS YEAR

WASHINGTON, D.C. – For the second time in as many weeks, the United States Secret Service, working together with the Colombian National Police (DIJIN), suppressed a counterfeit U.S. coin plant. Nearly \$100,000 in counterfeit “Golden Dollars,” the U.S. \$1 Sacagawea coin, was seized on Monday, January 27th in Bogota.

U.S. Secret Service and Colombian DIJIN agents also seized materials and dies that, if used, could have manufactured \$1,000,000 in bogus U.S. coins. The coins were intended for distribution in Ecuador, which uses the U.S. dollar as its official currency.

“With the increased use of the dollar coin outside of the United States, the seizure of this number of counterfeit coins is a significant success,” said U.S. Secret Service Director Ralph Basham.

This is the third U.S. dollar coin plant identified and suppressed by Colombian police the Secret Service in Colombia. The first coin plant was suppressed in Colombia in July 2002. The second suppression was just two weeks ago, on January 14th, and resulted in the seizure of enough material to produce 10,000 coins. Both plants were producing coins intended for distribution in Ecuador.

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.

###

Editor’s Note: Questions regarding this release may be directed to the U.S. Secret Service Office of Government and Public Affairs at 202-406-5708.