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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6225

May 13, 2008

The Honorable José Miguel Insulza
Secretary General
Organization of American States
17th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Secretary General Insulza:

I commend the Organization of American States (OAS) for the valuable role it has played in the reduction of serious tensions resulting from the March 1, 2008 raid by the Colombian military of a Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) camp in Ecuador. The FARC's second in command, Luis Edgar Devia, better known by his *nom de guerre* "Raul Reyes" was among those killed in the attack. Evidence found in the Reyes camp, and in particular a series of computer and digital storage devices, has continued to strain the relationship between Ecuador, Colombia and Venezuela, and could lead to new confrontations or instability.

It was reported that the U.S. intelligence community has confirmed the authenticity of the documents. Moreover, the results of INTERPOL's ongoing technical evaluation of the hardware, software and files of the "Reyes Computers" will be released soon.

According to a member of my staff who has been briefed on the contents of the computer files, the information reveals extensive collaboration on the part of Venezuela and Ecuador with the FARC. These findings could be interpreted by Colombia as a hostile challenge to its sovereignty. As a result, Colombia could respond by invoking Article 17 of the OAS's Inter-American Democratic Charter, which would allow for it to call for OAS support if "it considers that its democratic political institutional process or its legitimate exercise of power is at risk." This could lead to unforeseeable consequences.

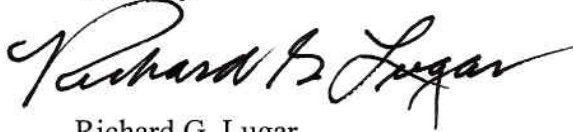
If INTERPOL confirms the U.S. intelligence community's findings, the international community will look to the OAS to provide constructive and prompt guidance as to the appropriate next steps. I would recommend that the OAS consider holding a series of public hearings to make public the methodology used by INTERPOL to assess the authenticity of the "Reyes Computers".

In order to properly disseminate the content of the "Reyes Computers" to member nations, I would also encourage you to ask the Inter-American Committee against

Terrorism (CICTE) to examine all information pertinent to the allegations of country assistance to the FARC, including but not limited to sources, financing structure, and communications mechanisms, with a view to crafting a report and conducting hearings that could lead to appropriate actions by the OAS. Information from such a report could also help in devising a proper response if countries are found to have been in violation of the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism, which was signed by all 34 OAS member states, and entered into force in July 2003. If in this process there is discovered evidence of effective country support for the FARC's activities, this evidence will have to be pursued by relevant multilateral authorities and followed by appropriate international legal action.

In light of these important considerations, I urge you to take a lead role to ensure that the OAS continues to play an objective role in this difficult situation through all its phases. We must ensure that tensions are defused, but also that the principles that sustain the integrity of the OAS and relations between countries in our hemisphere prevail.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard G. Lugar". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "L".

Richard G. Lugar
Ranking Member

RGL/cmm

cc: Deputy Secretary of State, John Negroponte